



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

In Touch

November 2007

Christmas Celebration!

Please join us for this years Christmas celebration!



We are holding a fish and chip supper at
Bradwell Village Memorial Hall
Saturday 15th December



- 16:30 - 18:00 Ringing at Bradwell Village
18:00 - 19:00 Christmas Service
19:00 - 21:00 Fish and Chip supper and entertainment in the
Church Hall. Price £6.00 per head.

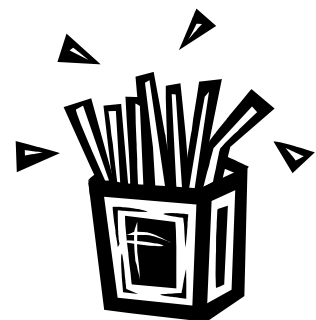
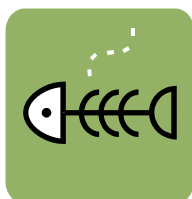
Bring your own drinks – no alcohol.

Followed by drinks at “The Albert” for those needing an alcoholic fix.

Please telephone or email numbers to Helen Stanworth on 01280-814172 secretary@northbucks.org.uk by Wednesday 12th December.

Orders and payment will be collected at Bradwell by 17:00. If you are arriving later than this, please order and pay **in advance** to Helen.

Choice of Cod, Chicken, or Sausage and Chips



Freshly cooked by Reg and Jill – Shenley fish and chip shop

Chairman

Mr Richard Stanworth
Email. chairman@northbucks.org.uk

Secretary

Mrs Helen Stanworth
Email. secretary@northbucks.org.uk

Treasurer / In Touch Editor

Mrs Sheila Watts
Email. treasurer@northbucks.org.uk /
intoucheditor@northbucks.org.uk

Ringling Master

Mr Barry Eglesfield
Email. ringingmaster1@northbucks.org.uk

Assistant Ringing Master

Post Vacant

Training Officer

Miss Christine Cable
Email. training@northbucks.org.uk

Guild Representatives

Mr Alan Marchbank
Email. guildrep1@northbucks.org.uk

Brian Newman

Email. guildrep2@northbucks.org.uk

Archivist

Mr Doug Hird
Email. 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). 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 5th February 2008

Sheila Watts & Sheila Ware, Editors

Chairman's Jottings

Following the outcome of the Autumn Meeting, the Officers are working on setting up the revised e-group and inviting all members who are not yet members of the e-group, and for whom we have an email address, to join the group so that they can receive information about Branch and Guild events directly from the Officers, as well as news about other happenings in the Branch. In connection with this, existing members will be asked to complete a membership information form at the beginning of next year. These forms should be sent out with the subscription renewal notices. If you wish to join the e-group before then, please send an email to the secretary (secretary@northbucks.org.uk).

I hope you will join us at the Christmas Celebration on 15th December at Bradwell. This will be a chance to meet and socialise at an event when ringing is not the primary activity. This is more a chance to socialise over a meal and an informal quiz, and last year was enjoyed by all who came

The Olney Appeal to re-hang the bells and augment them to ten bells has now been launched and is making good progress. I think you will find more information elsewhere in this edition of *In Touch*. I hope you will support this exciting appeal, either individually or as a member of the Branch. In connection with this, please consider Alan Marchbank's comments at the Autumn Meeting as to what the Branch can do to support the appeal. If we are to do something as a Branch, then a decision will need to be taken at the AGM in March, but we need some ideas before then. Please pass your ideas to any officer so that we can consider them all and have a firm proposal by the time of the AGM.

With best wishes.

Richard Stanworth

**OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF
CHURCH BELL RINGERS**

**SIX BELL STRIKING
COMPETITION**

Congratulations!



Following our success in the North Bucks Branch Six Bell Striking Competition earlier this year, the Hanslope ringers went on to represent the Branch at the Guild Six Bell Competition on Saturday 6th October 2007. Normally we would have kept the same band for the final as for the Branch competition but unfortunately Richard Haseldine was unavailable to ring on the appointed date and we were grateful to Barry Eglesfield who agreed to ring in his place.

There were only nine bands entered in the competition and the Guild decided they would dispense with the heats and all the bands would ring at Spelsbury. Hanslope were the second band to ring so we had plenty of time to enjoy the tea which had been provided whilst we listened to the other bands ringing.

The competition was won by St Aldate's, Oxford, followed by St Mary & St Laurence, Reading. Hanslope were placed third which we considered quite a good result for a village tower against bands mostly from larger towns and cities.

Band members: Roy Keeves, Nick Gray, Tony Gray, Jonathan Griggs, Ian Thompson, Barry Eglesfield

Quarters

Dunstable, Priory Church of St Peter

Saturday 18 August 2007

1280 London Surprise Major

- 1 Alan Shepherd
- 2 Peter Tribble
- 3 Alexandra J Marchbank
- 4 B Douglas Hird
- 5 Jonathan Pawley
- 6 Richard Horne
- 7 Alan J Marchbank
- 8 Barry R Eglesfield (C)

First in method—2 & 3

St James the Great, Hanslope

Saturday 8 September 2007

1264 Plain Bob Major

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

First in method—3 & 6

Rung for the opening of the Hanslope Street Fayre

St Peter, Stoke Goldington

Friday 2 November 2007

1260 Minor (540 St Clements College Bob, 720 Cambridge Surprise)

- 1 Alan Cozens
- 2 Roy Keeves
- 3 Ian Thompson
- 4 Nick Gray
- 5 Tony Gray
- 6 Jonathan Griggs (C)

Rung to mark the retirement of the Reverend Alex Murdoch as Vicar of Stoke Goldington, Weston Underwood, Ravenstone and Gayhurst

Training

It's been a bit quiet on the training front in North Bucks for the last 6 months. I should like to change that – but I need your help! There have been a number of things offered (Calling Stedman doubles, Calling called changes) and although these have been asked for, there have been no takers, (even from those who asked for them). I need to know what it is the Branch would like so that I can organise it. Please email me with suggestions for courses.

Chrissy

Belfry Maintenance Course Tutor: Alan Marchbank

I would like to organise a one day belfry maintenance course—if there is interest shown by Branch members in attending.

The day would be split between two towers. The morning could be spent amongst the bells identifying areas that require maintaining and what techniques are appropriate.

After a lunch break we would visit another tower, this time for the delegates to undertake an inspection and make their recommendations

Please let me know if you are interested (contact details on page 2).

Alan Marchbank



More Secretarial Snippets!

Guild Six Bell Striking Competition 2008

North Bucks will be hosting this Competition on the first Saturday in October 2008. We are at the early stages of planning this event, which needs two towers for heats in the afternoon and a third tower for the final in the evening. Further details will be published when known.

Tower Information

The Secretary recently sent out a letter to all tower correspondents, giving the details that are held about them as tower correspondent, and of the bells and ringing at their tower. Please check these details, amend as necessary and return the letter by the end of the year. This will help with ensuring that entries are correct in the Guild Report.



Olney Update

The Appeal was well and truly launched on Saturday 27th October by the Rt. Revd. Alan Wilson, Bishop of Buckingham. After the opening, cheques totalling £13,150 were handed over being an anonymous donation of £5,000, an amount of £6,150 from the Soul family of Olney in sponsorship of the new treble bell and in memory of Bob Soul, and a cheque from the Olney Belfry Fund for £2,000 (that is a lot of 'free' weddings from the Band). An excellent start and further information can be found on our website:

www.olneybells.com

also see Bishop Alan's blog at <http://bishopalan.blogspot.com>



Liz Sheaf presenting the £2,000 from the Olney Belfry Fund to Bishop Alan

Monday 29th October was also the anniversary of many of our band touching a rope for the first time and we celebrated with some chocolate cake. The evening saw the following achievements:

- * An entirely local band, including Charles and myself, rang plain hunt on 6.
- * An entirely local band, **excluding** Charles and myself, rang rounds on 6.
- * 4 of the 'novices' (I am not allowed to call them learners any longer!) rang in Plain Hunt on eight.
- * Ella Sheaf at 10 years of age is ringing and setting the 4th. unaided and next week wants to ring in rounds. Ella needs every ounce of her weight to ring the bell but actually finds the 4th. easier to ring than the three lighter ones; it must say something about the state of the installation. A special well done to Ella from all the band.

Congratulations to the whole band: Philip Davies, Mat Sheaf, Liz Sheaf, Ella Sheaf, Helen Dilley, Graham Dilley, Ruth Plackett, Coral Bex and Charles Knight for starting the whole process off. I must also thank Alan and Tine Marchbank plus family and also Doug Hird for their continuing support to the Olney band.

I do not know what we will be ringing in twelve months time, but hope it will be something on 10 bells.

David Phillipson

Minutes of Autumn Meeting

held at Buckingham on 8th September 2007

Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to Buckingham and his first full meeting as Chairman.

Apologies for Absence

Received from Brian Newman.

Minutes of Previous Meetings

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting, held at Downs Barn in March, and Business Meetings held at North Crawley in May, and at Emberton in June, had been published in *In Touch*. It was proposed by Sheila Watts and seconded by Simon Head that the Chairman sign these minutes as true records of the meetings. This was agreed on a show of hands.

Matters Arising from the Minutes

David Joyce thanked the Branch on behalf of Dean Meakins for the grant towards the cost of the Radley Course. It had helped him not only to progress but had also boosted his confidence in his own ability.

Election of New Members

Nominations had been received proposing three new members.

Tower

Buckingham Tony Buttle & Petra Ballantyne
Proposed by Andrew Spencer
Seconded by Ann Fletcher

Maids Moreton Terry O'Reilly
Proposed by Peter Tampsett
Seconded by Shirley Webb

All were elected without dissent.

Officers Reports

Chairman The Summer Social event did not happen quite as was originally intended but did turn into something better than we thought that it would. Ringing with light refreshments on a pleasant summer afternoon was well attended and generally enjoyed. This is a format which we will try again next year as it is easy to arrange.

Treasurer The Branch Account balance at the Building Society stands at £850. Thank you to those towers who have paid their 2007 Guild Subscriptions. There are still two towers outstanding—Great Brickhill and Newton Longville. Thank you for your contributions to

the Guild Bell Fund, £13 has been raised today. One item out of interest I will comment on. Last year *In Touch* was running at about £90 an issue to produce. The last two issues have cost £50 and £39 respectively to produce.

Training Officer There have been no courses run since the AGM. Two courses were advertised – Calling Bob Doubles and Calling Call Changes – but these haven't taken place because of either not finding suitable dates yet or no participants coming forward. These need re-advertising in the next *In Touch* and we also need feed back from towers as to what training is wanted. The Chairman suggested that the members present, who can probably influence ringers who would benefit from training, encourage people to contact Chrissy and request training sessions.

Newsletter

The cost aspect of the new arrangements for *In Touch* had been reported in the Treasurer's Report. The Chairman commented that we were certainly on budget with it. Sheila asked if there was any feedback on the new arrangements for distribution, i.e. one printed copy per tower, with a public version (personal details removed) available for download from the Branch website.

Andrew Spencer commented that one copy per tower is fine. When there were three or four copies sent out, several would be left untouched on the table.

One area of concern was access to the diary of events. With only one copy per tower members did not always have access to their own copy of the diary. There was also a problem downloading *In Touch* from the website if you don't have a broadband connection.

A number of suggestions were discussed: include extra back pages with the diary of events, but this would add to the complexity of distribution, and could add to the postal costs; make sure extra copies of *In Touch* are available at Branch events, although copies of the calendar are always available from the Secretary; provide a one page calendar of events that can be downloaded from the website as this would be smaller than *In Touch*. An email could be sent out before each event as a reminder of the time and place. This was really in the realm of the next item.

Communications

The Chairman introduced this item by recapping on some of his comments in the recent edition of *In Touch*. By and large we know very little about our members unless they also happen to be a tower correspondent. Communication with members relies on the tower correspondents. Use of the modern medium of email communication would reduce delays in the distribution of information to members. We

already have the e-group for communication amongst ourselves but this is not very widely used. Currently it is up to members to apply to join the group. We now propose to change the basis on which the group works and to invite every member for whom we have an email address to join the group. The benefit of joining is that you will receive more information about what is going on in the Branch and Guild and also receive email reminders about forthcoming events. However we mustn't forget members that don't have email. Hopefully with the majority of members having email, the number of printed copies of messages that need to be sent out will be quite small. It was suggested that another tower member could print messages for those without email. This will only work if a designated person agrees to this, otherwise it will get overlooked. We also need to collect email addresses along with other personal details. The officers have been working on preparing a membership information form which would be given to a member once elected. Jon Chamberlain commented that the Guild was also preparing a membership form for use across the Guild. Alan Marchbank clarified the proposal that the e-group would be for members only and that information for the public domain would be published on the Branch website. It follows that if a person's membership lapses then they would be removed from the e-group after a reminder had been sent. Hopefully this would prompt them to pay their subscription. It was suggested that key Guild officers, such as our Guild Steward, the Master and Guild Secretary be invited to join the group so that they could keep in touch with Branch events. Some concern was expressed that the Guild officers might be inundated with messages if all 15 Branches did the same thing. It was agreed that once the e-group had been set up under these new arrangements, then notices would only be posted to the e-group and not sent individually to tower correspondents. There was then some discussion on limiting the size of messages. It may be possible to set up the group so that no-one can add attachments to messages, or only certain individuals can add attachments. This would avoid messages with unnecessary attachments being posted. It was generally agreed that in setting up these arrangements the officers will need to move carefully and make sure that we don't alienate members by overloading their email systems. Alan Marchbank concluded that there was resounding support for the use of the e-group for communication and formally proposed that the officers go ahead with setting this up. This was seconded by Sheila Blenkhorn with the additional comment that it should be in place from the beginning of 2008. This met with general agreement to proceed. It was also agreed that the officers seek assistance, if needed, from other members with relevant experience of e-groups. There was some concern about communicating with members under 18. Jon Chamberlain stated that this had been raised at Guild level and there did not seem to be a problem, but that it might need parental consent on the membership form.

Forthcoming Events

A Calendar of events had been circulated to all present. This is correct as of today and not as stated on the calendar. Richard Stanworth provided some additional information: the Branch Practice at Wavendon is still unconfirmed. The Joint practice with the Towcester Branch at Towcester starts at 7.00. Please support this as the date was changed from the previous week at our request. The Christmas Celebration venue has changed again and it is now proposed that it will take place at Bradwell, with ringing and the carol service at St Lawrence, and the fish and chip supper at the Memorial Hall. The hall is available but the costs would be £93 for the evening session, from 6.00 to 12.00, with the bar from 7.00 to 11.00, or an hourly rate of £10 per hour. If the bar is not booked then no alcohol is allowed on the premises. Following a short discussion it was agreed that we need to give the go ahead for a booking. Sheila Ware proposed that the Memorial Hall be booked for four hours from 6.00 to 10.00 at the best rate possible. This was seconded by Alan Marchbank and agreed.

Terry Page asked about the value of special methods at practices, noticing that recently a number of esoteric methods had been rung, and whether they put off those not able to ring them. It was pointed out that the special method is not rung to the exclusion of the usual basic methods such as plain hunt, Grandsire, or Plain Bob. There was also some concern expressed about ringing other complex methods as well as the special method at a practice when there were ringers who wanted to try the special method. The Ringing Master commented that he ran the practice based on the abilities of the ringers present, which might include other complex methods if he thought this appropriate. It was also commented that the special method was rung at some towers prior to the Branch Practice, so it could have value there as well as the Branch Practice. It was noted that Carter's Doubles was proposed as a special method next year. It was agreed that this be published in *In Touch* in advance so that there would be no dispute over which version would be rung. It was also suggested that the calendar available at Branch Practices include the information about basic methods being rung as well as the special method.

Any Other Business

Olney – Alan Marchbank reported that, following the re-forming of a band at Olney, there had been much discussion to bring together the idea that there should be an appeal launched to do work on Olney bells. This being the 200th year of John Newton of Olney fame, and the abolition of slavery, it seems like a good time to launch an appeal. After a lot of debate the PCC have voted 11-1 in favour of launching an appeal to re-hang Olney bells in a 10 bell frame and seek augmentation. Alan is involved and David Phillipson is working very hard on this. There is a real chance of getting a 10 in the Branch and, on behalf of the Olney

ringers, he seeks the support of the Branch for the project. The cost will be about £125,000 all in. They will be asking the Guild for money, and everybody else. It would be nice for the Branch to think what it could do for this appeal. Last time there was a new ring of bells in the Branch, the Branch put a bell in. This isn't a precedent. It has to be what the members believe that they can do, if they want to support this project. The Olney ringers are very pleased that they have persuaded the PCC, and there are other members who have done an awful lot in the background to make people who never venture up the tower understand what is upstairs. Alan hopes that, perhaps a year from now, the bells will be out of the tower and the frame is being adjusted with a chain saw! The project will take a few months to get off the ground. In addition, work will have to be done to move the clock pendulum in order to allow the ropes to fall in a reasonable circle. It was commented that the Vicar is learning to ring and is a driving force behind this project, so much so that the whole of Olney is delighted to hear the bells being rung. Alan also said that, because this has now got the go ahead he will go and assist with ringing at Olney on Sunday rather than ring at his own tower as it is important that the PCC hear the bells rung for Service and don't get the perception that they will not ring now that approval has been given for the project to go ahead. He appealed for anyone who is available to ring from 9.30 until

10.00 to come and help him at Olney.
Steeple Aston Course – Chrissy Cable appealed for anyone who can help with the course at the beginning of November, either for a half day or the full day.

Six-Bell Competition – The Chairman presented certificates to the winners - Hanslope, second - Great Linford B, and third - Woughton on the Green.

Membership Certificates – A number of membership certificates were distributed to new members.

Vote of Thanks

Alan Marchbank proposed a vote of thanks on behalf of all present to Andrew Spencer, Ann Fletcher and all their helpers from Buckingham, Maids Moreton and Stowe for arranging everything today and preparing the wonderful tea. He also thanked the Revd Philip Derbyshire who led the Service, ably assisted by Rev Claire Woods, and the organist, Rob Tucker. Appreciation was shown in the usual way.

The Chairman thanked the members for their forbearance with his rambling conduct of the meeting and Alan Marchbank for focusing the discussion from time to time. There being no other business, the Chairman then declared the meeting closed. Further ringing then followed.

North Bucks Branch—Calendar 2007/2008

NOVEMBER	24		<i>Ten Bell Striking Competition</i>	<i>Aston Clinton</i>
	24		<i>Autumn General Committee Meeting</i>	<i>Marsworth</i>
DECEMBER	15	4.30	Christmas Celebration	Bradwell
JANUARY	18	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Carter Doubles	Fenny Stratford
FEBRUARY	15	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Violet Treble Bob Minor	Great Linford
MARCH	1*	3.00	Annual General Meeting	Olney

Items marked * were unconfirmed as at 7 November 2007
 Events in *italics* are Guild events, etc.