

IN TOUCH

The Quarterly Newsletter of the North Bucks Branch
of
The Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers



Congratulations on being placed 2nd in the recent Guild Junior Striking Contest
Scott Ayers, Katie Saunders, Alex Titley, Gareth Grayson, John Stanworth, Jonathan Hills

Quarterly Meeting Newton Longville Saturday 7th September 1996

3:30	Ring
4:30	Service
5:00	Tea <i>(in the local School)</i>
5:45	Business Meeting " "
	Evening Ringing until 8:30

Names for tea to Alex Titley (01908-646632), by Wednesday 4th September

Remember to send your call change competition entry in to the Ringing Master by Friday 20th September

Your Branch Officers for 1996/7 are listed below, please keep "In Touch" with us.

Chairman

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Secretary

Helen Stanworth 01280-814172 11 Valley Road, Linden Village, Buckingham. MK18 7BW

Minute Secretary & Newsletter Editor

Jill Joyce 01908-667025 4 Woad Lane, Great Linford Village, Milton Keynes. MK14 5HE

Treasurer

David Bardwell 01908-676841 21 Forrabury Avenue, Bradwell Common, Milton Keynes. MK13 8NF

Ringing Master

Richard Stanworth 01280-814172 11 Valley Road, Linden Village, Buckingham. MK18 7BW

Assistant Ringing Master

Vacancy - see advert below !

Guild Representatives

Doug Hird 01908-614741 19 Priory Street, Newport Pagnell. MK16 9AF

Alan Marchbank 01908-611434 6 Broadway Avenue, Giffard Park, Milton Keynes. MK14 5QF

Archivist

Doug Hird 01908-614741 19 Priory Street, Newport Pagnell. MK16 9AF

Editorial

This edition of In Touch celebrates the achievements of some of the younger members of the branch, which gives us hope for the future - as long as there is sufficient support and encouragement from the adult members of both towers and branch.

There will be several requests for information from towers over the next few months as we update our historical records and determine the current state of ringing in the branch in preparation for the first Guild Millennium project. Please make sure that your tower responds to requests for information as promptly and as accurately as possible - a lot of effort in the future will be based on the information gathered now.

In this edition I have managed to remedy the omission of Alan Marchbank from the officers' photograph - he can be seen demonstrating the simulator in the article on the Linford Waterside Festival!

Thanks to all the people who have contributed items to this edition of In Touch - please keep the articles coming in!

Jill Joyce

The next edition of "In Touch" should be distributed at the beginning of November, please submit any articles or information, to the Editor, by the closing date :-

7th October

"In Touch" is published by the editor on behalf of the officers of the O.D.G. North Bucks Branch. Any view expressed in "In Touch" is that of the author and copyright resides with the individual authors.

Assistant Wanted

Unfortunately, due to pressure of work, Denby Murduck has had to resign as Assistant Ringing Master. We are therefore looking for a new assistant. No previous experience required. A chance to learn about running branch practices & meetings and assist with running the branch. Apply to any branch officer.

ODG NORTH BUCKS BRANCH

Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting and Striking Competition held at Milton Keynes Village on 1st June 1996.

Chairman's Welcome - Brian Newman welcomed members and visitors to the meeting, in particular John Wells, the Guild Master.

Striking Competition

The results of the competition, which had been reduced to 120 changes, were then given by David Adams and Richard Horne from the Luton District of the Bedfordshire Association.

David Adams gave some general comments on the marking system and the ringing. The results were very close, and it was noted that some bands rang a lot more rounds than others.

Team 1 (Buckingham A) Rang minor and improved from the practice. Ringing was shaky, then settled. The second half improved.

Team 2 (Shenley and Loughton) A careful piece of ringing with a smattering of faults. The leading was reasonable and the tenor was good. There was a trip half way, with a good recovery. A steady pace, which was not always sustained.

Team 3 (Woughton on the Green) There were problems with leading and a number of mistakes flowed from it. There was a reasonable tenor. There were faults in the rounds, but the ringing scored on evenness.

Team 4 (Bradwell) The practice was not good and there was a shaky start to the test. There was no real rhythm, but a fair degree of accuracy. The band was not really ringing together.

Team 5 (Buckingham B) The band was praised for completing the test piece. The test piece improved over the practice, but the band might have been better ringing call changes.

The results were then given :-

1st	Shenley and Loughton	21 faults
2nd	Buckingham A	24½ faults
3rd	Bradwell	28 faults
4th	Woughton on the Green	33 faults
5th	Buckingham B	74 faults

The trophy was then presented to the Shenley and Loughton band.

Tidy Towers Competition

John Wells presented a certificate to David Bardwell of the Bradwell band for coming third in the tidy towers competition. This was the first certificate won by the North Bucks branch in this competition. The band had been congratulated by the judges on the amount of work done in the tower.

The raffle was then drawn by David Adams and Richard Horne, it raised £26.

As the judges then had to leave, Richard Stanworth thanked them for judging the competition on behalf of the branch.

The official business meeting then took place.

Apologies for Absence were received from Bill Yates.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Emberton had been published in the February edition of "In Touch". It was proposed by David Joyce, seconded by Richard Stanworth and carried by the meeting, that these be taken as read.

Matters Arising

- i) Ringers were still required for the Tyringham fete. Those interested were asked to see Jill Joyce after the meeting.

Election of New Members

No nomination forms had been received. Membership certificates were presented to those recently elected members present.

It had been decided that it would be useful to the branch to maintain our own membership record. To build up the historical record members were asked to notify David Bardwell or Helen Stanworth of their election date and membership certificate number.

1. Secretary

The programme of events has been planned up to June next year, but has only been confirmed up to the end of this year so far.

Membership of the North Bucks Branch has now passed the 200 members mark, but may fall again at the end of the year with the possibility of people not rejoining the Guild. Based on membership we were the 5th largest branch at the end of 1995. A membership of over 200 could move us up to the 3rd largest Branch in the Guild. I hope this bodes well for the North Bucks Branch in the future!

I have collected and sent £127 from this Branch for the Sponsored Quarter Peal Week. There was also one donation that was sent directly. This contributed to the total of £2288 collected throughout the Guild. We were one of 8 branches which took part.

Just a reminder not to forget to sell your Bell Fund Draw Tickets. All monies and counterfoils should be returned to the branch secretary by 21st June (branch practice at Whaddon) or direct to the promoter by 30th June, making all cheques payable to "Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers".

2. Ringling Master

Practices have been well attended, particularly Hanslope in March. Was it because it was an 8-bell practice or because the special method was Double Norwich? Attendances at the other practices has also been up. The special methods have been well rung at the practices and continue to provide a focus for the more experienced ringers. Rounds, call changes, plain hunt, Plain Bob and Grandsire have also been rung. Don't be put off by the special methods. All standards of ringers are always welcome at the practices and will be encouraged to ring with a strong band whenever possible. If you or your band are struggling then come along and use the branch practices to your advantage. I am always pleased to welcome new faces and help you to progress.

After the AGM I received a trickle of requests for places on the mini ringing schools. The school planned for 11th May had to be postponed because of illness and has been rearranged for next Saturday, 8th June at Stowe and Maids Moreton. Helpers are needed for the two sessions planned for Plain Bob Minor. If you can conduct Bob Minor then please put your name down to help - the more helpers we have, the less arduous it is for those helping - you might even get a rest between ringing!

No other ringing schools have been arranged so far. If you would like to attend a school, then please give me your name or write to me and I will arrange a ringing school as required. These ringing schools are aimed at those wishing to progress to plain hunt, Plain Bob or Grandsire.

I have also had a request from Tingewick for help with moving on to learning Grandsire. They would like experienced ringers to come and give them a hand at their practice night on Mondays - if you can help please let me know, or contact Lois Houghton-Brown directly.

We entered a branch team in the Guild 8-bell striking competition at the beginning of May. This was held at Harwell in Oxfordshire and the test piece was Plain Bob Major. We didn't really get to grips with the bells and were placed 8th out of 8 teams entered, with 213 faults. Entries were down considerably compared with last year (13 in 1995), but at least we were able to enter a team.

Lastly there are two other striking competitions coming up, both in July. The first is the Guild 10-bell competition on the 13th at Banbury. I will be approaching various individuals to represent the Branch in due course. The second event is our annual 'friendly' competition against the Towcester branch of the Peterborough Guild, which will be held at Buckingham on the 27th. There are three sections to this competition - call changes on 8 bells, Stedman Triples and Plain Bob Minor. In total we need 22 ringers, so I need lots of volunteers. Anyone wishing to take part in this not too serious competition, with a social get together afterwards, please let me know.

3. Treasurer

Subscriptions had been received from all towers except three, a total of £778 (136 Adults and 28 Juniors). £320 had been paid to the Guild for 100 members.

The Ringling World account is in credit at approx. £28. It is aimed to keep the account between £50 and £20 in credit.

Thanks to all the towers that have given a donation to In Touch, we have currently received £110:50. Production costs (photocopying at the Open University, stationery and postage) are currently £119:05. Whereas it is recognised that In Touch will be an overall cost to the Branch any additional donations would always be welcome.

The branch raises money for the Guild Bell Fund by holding raffles at the quarterly meetings. These raised £70:50 in 1995 and £31:50 at the AGM this year.

100 Club

David Bardwell suggested that a 100 club to raise funds for the Bell Fund would raise more money and involve more people. There was some discussion at the meeting on the method of and responsibility for collection of funds and any legal requirements. It was then proposed by David Joyce, seconded by Simon Head that "The Branch considers a 100 Club, the branch officers being delegated to consider and set up the scheme. The minute requiring a raffle to be held at all quarterly meetings to be rescinded." This was agreed nem con.

4. Guild Representative

Doug Hird gave the report. The representatives had attended the Guild Committee meeting at Bletchley in March and of the items discussed those that impinged on the Branch most were :-

i) Millennium Project : The aim was to get all bells in the Diocese to ring for the Millennium. There were 46 ringable towers in the Branch, and a total of 200 bells. Towers with no band should be helped to build one up (e.g. Stoke Goldington/Weston Underwood and Clifton Reynes who had one ringer each).

It was aimed to get borderline towers (mostly threes) ringable, but wait for an approach from other towers for help.

ii) Rule Changes : A group from the Finance and General Purposes were going through suggested rule changes. The branch was particularly concerned to see that definitions of members took account of those towers on the borders of the Diocese.

John Wells clarified some of the points in the report. The Millennium Project was intended to make sure that Service Ringing was available at all towers. The Guild would be an enabler providing resources and publicity material. The Rule Changes had resulted in a positive response from many branches. The current rules were archaic with very little clarity, so a drafting group was in place of Geoff Holden (a retired Solicitor) and Tim Pett. The drafting group were translating decisions made by the meetings into the correct legal language. The changes will be proposed in chunks at AGMs over the next few years, in effect another Millennium project. Any contributions to the discussion of the rules will be welcome.

Forthcoming Events

A number of events had already been mentioned and all Branch events were listed on the back of In Touch.

1. Junior Striking Competition : The under 18 competition was to be held on 29th June and the branch would like to send representation. Anyone aged 18 or under on 1st January was eligible and it was hoped that we could get at least two bands. If under 18s were willing to take part the branch would arrange transport.
2. Luton Branch Practice : This was taking place at Great Brickhill on 22nd June and as they had originally asked for a joint meeting, it would be helpful if some members of the Branch could attend.
3. Guild Festival : On 13th July with ringing, service and 10 bell competition, and a Barn Dance in the evening. Any singers attending would be welcome in the choir.
4. Joint Meeting with Bedford District : The evening ringing on 3rd August will be at Kempston from 7pm.

Any Other Business

1. Drayton Parslow was part of the Stewkley group of parishes and we had been approached to see if there was any objection to its transfer to Central Bucks. The transfer has to be discussed by the branches, brought to the Guild Committee and ratified by the AGM. As part of this process it was proposed by Brian Newman, seconded by Helen Stanworth and passed nem con that "The North Bucks branch would support the transfer of Drayton Parslow to Central Bucks". This means that if we are formally approached, there will be no delay in forwarding the proposal to the Guild Committee.
2. A number of members had been elected, but had no membership certificate. Information was available from Doug Hird and the Membership Secretary on election dates. In his examination of the records Doug had noted that Helen and Richard Stanworth had been proposed in 1988 by a non member. It was also noted that Bill Yates was elected in 1936, probably on 6th June as this was the only date that members from Buckingham were elected. It was proposed that the Secretary writes and congratulates Bill on 60 years membership (if possible verifying the date from his certificate).
3. Barry Eglesfield said that he would like to ring a peal over midnight for the Millennium, thus ringing on different dates, different years, different centuries and different millennia - similar peals had been rung at the turn of the century. He asked if there was any interest in the branch.
4. As the transfer of Drayton Parslow had been discussed, there were also queries about Twyford, which were believed to be rung by Marsh Gibbon ringers (Central Bucks).
5. The Tower Leadership Seminar to be held at Kidlington on 28th September would be the last one.

Vote of Thanks : Brian Newman thanked the Milton Keynes Village ringers for the tea and Rev D Lunn for taking the service.

Striking Competition Winners



The winning Shenley and Loughton Band :
Raymond Watkin, Ann Birch, Derek Stainsby, Barry Smith, Anne Stainsby, Frank Daniels

Next Time Gold?

The Under 18s striking competition took place at Headington on Saturday 29th June. The competition is organised by Len Porter of the Oxford City branch and started out 10 years ago as a competition for young ringers of that branch. It has now expanded to include the whole Guild, with only one person from the Oxford City branch taking part this year!

Some years ago (?1992) a band from this branch entered the competition at Cowley and came third. As we have a number of keen ringers amongst the youngsters it was hoped that we could get more than one band in 1996. A practice was organised at Great Linford on the previous Sunday and seven young ringers turned up (although one had conveniently hurt her ankle and was unable to ring!). After some practice it was decided that the band would ring plain courses of Bob Doubles in the competition and transport was arranged by the Joyce taxi service.

On the day everyone turned up at the pick up points, and we found the church despite the map reading skills shown by the convoy leader. It was obviously the right place as the church yard was swarming with youngsters and the occasional adult.

There were 10 teams (the previous best had been 5) representing Sonning Deanery (2 bands), Hughenden, Wraysbury and Langley (3 bands), Ducklington (2 bands), Wycombe and Beaconsfield and North Bucks. Because of the numbers involved the test piece was reduced to a 120 only (no minutes of rounds) and once the judges had been found (including David Joyce who was obviously known to the ex Master) the competition got under way.

The judges did not give marks or comments, other than saying that some of the ringing was of a better standard than some adult competitions they had judged. The top three bands were then announced :-

- | | |
|-----|--------------------------|
| 1st | Sonning Deanery A |
| 2nd | North Bucks |
| 3rd | Wycombe and Beaconsfield |

Everyone taking part received a certificate and a small trophy was also presented to the top three teams.

So congratulations to the North Bucks band - perhaps next year we'll come first, following the trend set in the previous competition. Hopefully the other trend set by the last junior band to represent the branch - that none of them are currently ringing, will not be followed.

Jottings from the Ringing Master

Striking Competition Completed Just in Time

This year's branch 6 bell striking competition was held on Saturday 1st June at Milton Keynes Village. A pleasant sunny afternoon allowed those not ringing, or waiting to ring, to listen to the test pieces in the churchyard. The judges were seated across the road on the edge of the green, able to hear the bells clearly. With 6 bands entered, and only 90 minutes to complete the competition in, the length of the test piece was reduced to 20 rows of rounds followed by 120 changes. Only five teams actually competed, with one dropping out at the last minute (after they were drawn to ring first!). The order of ringing was as follows:

1. Buckingham A, who rang Cambridge Surprise Minor
2. Shenley and Loughton, who rang Plain Bob Doubles
3. Woughton on the Green, who rang Stedman Doubles
4. Bradwell, who rang Stedman Doubles
5. Buckingham B, who rang plain courses of Grandsire Doubles

Everyone was ready and waiting when it was their turn to ring, so we finished in good time and were able to have some general ringing before the service. Disaster! Less than 120 changes after finishing the competition the rope on the fourth broke and brought an abrupt end to the ringing. Was it inspired planning that shortened the competition ringing? The rope had lasted just long enough to complete the test pieces.

The service was unaccompanied so hymns were restricted to well known ones, still we made a joyful sound.

After tea our judges, David Adams and Richard Horne from the Luton District of the Bedfordshire Association, gave their verdict - as recorded in the minutes of this edition of In Touch!

Guild Competitions

8 Bell : Thanks to the members taking part - although we finished 8th, at least we entered a team. (The competition was won by a team from Reading, St Laurence & St Mary towers)

10 Bell : Unfortunately too many people found something better to do on Guild Festival Day and we were unable to raise a band. (Seven branches did enter and the winners this year was the band from the Reading Branch)

Under 18 : Congratulations to the team who entered and came 2nd. (see the article in this edition of In Touch)



The average age of the front half of the Buckingham B band in the 6 bell striking competition was 12. These included Catherine Stanworth who rang her first quarter in May aged 9. Catherine started learning to ring on her 7th birthday and was elected to the ODG in 1995. The younger Stanworth girls are now aged 7½ and 5½, so there is a chance that the average age of the whole competition band could be 12 at some point in the future!

PEALS & QUARTERS

PEALS

16 Wandsworth Place, Bradwell Common

Monday 1st April 1996

5040 Plain Bob Minor

1-2 Alan J Marchbank

3-4 Ronald J Snack

5-6 Godfrey L Foat (C)

On the eve of the 50th Birthday of Ron Snack

16 Wandsworth Place, Bradwell Common

Monday 22nd April 1996

5040 Plain Bob Minor

1-2 Alan J Marchbank

3-4 Ronald J Snack

5-6 Godfrey L Foat (C)

To celebrate the Golden wedding Anniversary of John & Audrey Marchbank

QUARTERS

Woughton on the Green, St Mary

Sunday 14th April 1996

1260 Plain Bob Minor

1 Christina Jones

2 Peter Tribble

3 Bob Winstanley

4 Nigel Titley

5 Brian Baldwin

6 Simon Head (1st as C)

To mark the 50th birthdays of Rev Michael Houston & Geoffrey Miller

Passenham, St Guthlac

Saturday 20th April 1996

1260 Grandsire Doubles

1 Ian Ranson

2 Barry Smith

3 Malcolm Hooton

4 Bob Winstanley

5 Monty Gilbert (C)

To celebrate the Queen's 70th Birthday

Thornborough, St Mary the Virgin

Saturday 27th April 1996

1260 Grandsire Doubles

1 Helen Stanworth

2 Ann Fletcher

3 William Yates

4 David Goodger

5 Andrew Spencer (C)

To celebrate the wedding of Mark and Sarah Goodger

Shenley, St Mary

Sunday 28th April 1996

1260 Doubles (5m/v)

1 Lorraine Brookman

2 John Brookman

3 Barry Smith

4 Monty Gilbert

5 Bob Winstanley (C)

6 Peter Tribble

Wedding compliment to Ann and Paul Birch

Cosgrove, SS Peter and Paul

Saturday 4th May 1996

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

1 Catherine Stanworth (1st Q, age 9)

2 Richard W Yates

3 Edward R Lambert

4 William A Yates

5 Richard S Stanworth (C)

6 Helen Stanworth

Hanslope, St James the Great

Sunday 2nd June 1996

1250 Cambridge Surprise Major

1 Roy Keeves

2 Natalie Green

3 Jonathan Griggs

4 Alan Cozens

5 Ian Thompson

6 Ruth Stokes

7 Nicholas Gray

8 Richard Haseldine (C)

Rung for Sunday Service and for the birth of Francesca Molyneux.

First Surprise Major 2,5

Stowe, Assumption of BVM

Saturday 16th June 1996

1260 Plain Bob Minor

1 Helen Stanworth

2 Ann Fletcher

3 Peter Nicholson

4 Gerald Kingston

5 David Goodger

6 William Yates (C)

Rung during the fund raising day for the Gervase Jackson- Stops memorial appeal. Also congratulations to Bill Yates on completing 60 years membership of the O.D.G.

Great Linford, St Andrew

Monday 17th June 1996

1440 Cambridge Surprise Minor

1 William A Yates

2 B Douglas Hird

3 Godfrey L Foat

4 David M Joyce

5 Ronald J Snack

6 Alan J Marchbank (C)

In celebration of the award of an MBE to Miss Marie Cross.

Shenley, St Mary

Sunday 30th June 1996

1260 Doubles (5 methods/principles)

1 Barry Smith

2 Derek Stainsby

3 Ann Birch

4 Monty Gilbert

5 Bob Winstanley (C)

6 Frank Daniels

For Gift Day Service, and to celebrate the first anniversary of commencement of Sunday Service Ringing at Shenley

Stowe, Assumption of BVM

Thursday 11th July 1996

1260 Doubles (Plain Bob & Grandsire)

1 John Stanworth

2 Peter Nicholson

3 William Yates

4 Andrew Spencer

5 Richard Stanworth (C)

6 Helen Stanworth

A wedding compliment to David Stanworth and Anne Vaughan, married on 13th July in Abergele, North Wales.

HANDBELL QUARTERS

16 Wandsworth Place, Bradwell Common

Monday 15th April 1996

1440 Kent TB and Plain Bob Minor

1-2 Alan J Marchbank

3-4 Ronald J Snack

5-6 Godfrey L Foat (C)

70th birthday tribute to HM the Queen

16 Wandsworth Place, Bradwell Common

Monday 1st July 1996

1260 Plain Bob Minor

1-2 Alan J Marchbank

3-4 Ronald J Snack

5-6 Godfrey L Foat (C)

On the 80th Anniversary of the start of the Battle of the Somme.

In celebration of the Ordination of John Russell of Newport Pagnell

Points from the Quarters . . .

Congratulations to -

Catherine Stanworth on ringing her first quarter and to Simon Head on ringing his first as conductor.

In addition to the peals and quarters listed, Messrs Stanworth, Haseldine and Yates took part in a "Richard" ten bell peal - Cambridge Royal - at Thatcham on 15th June. Also some members of the Lavendon band took part in a quarter on 13th April and most of the band rang at Newport Pagnell as well.





A number of quarters were rung in celebration of birthdays (50 seems to be the popular age! - congratulations to Ron Snack). Two quarters were rung to mark the 70th birthday of H.M. The Queen.

It was also a popular period for weddings of ringers and their families. In particular congratulations to Ann and Paul Birch of the Shenley band.

The band which rang the quarter to mark the award of an MBE to Marie Cross in the Queen's Birthday Honours was specially chosen to include past and present officers and elder statesmen of the branch.

Congratulations to Bill Yates on completing 60 years membership of the ODG.

The handbell peals were rung for the Society of Royal Cumberland Youths, which celebrates its 250th anniversary in 1997.

... News from the Towers

Bradwell : This period has been a bit quieter for Bradwell. It is good to see Jill back at ringing after her operation, although she is not up to ringing a quarter peal yet. For those of you who remember reading about the other injuries in the last In Touch, I can now report that Ted's broken finger has now mended and Rosa's back is slowly on the mend.

We have had a number of visitors in the last few months including the OU ringers and a band from Essex. Many commented on the nice bells and church interior.

Those of you who attended the last quarterly meeting might remember that David Bardwell was presented with a certificate for Bradwell who came 3rd in the best kept tower competition. May saw our ringers' outing - see Ian Green's report. Some good news was received from overseas recently as Andy King and Sam Hayes-Bradley became the proud parents of a baby boy, Thomas Adam, on 16th April.

Michelle Copson

Calverton : Congratulations to the tower secretary, Shirley Waterhouse, and her husband Richard on the birth of a son, Daniel Robert on 26th April. A quarter was rung by the Ladies Guild at Emberton to celebrate.

Great Linford : The band had displays in the tower for the Linford Waterside Festival, which is documented elsewhere in this edition of In Touch.

Shenley : 9th June 1996 saw the completion of a year's Sunday Service ringing at Shenley. As this was the weekend of the church fete it was a celebratory weekend.

Tyringham : As requested ringing took place for the fete. In addition to the organised ringing Doug arranged a quarter peal attempt - and arrived at the same time as a Lavendon band, who had also been asked to ring. A number of ringers had taken the time and effort to turn up, but not all managed to ring.

Is it really difficult to call a quarter peal ?

When browsing through the quarters printed in the last few editions of In Touch, I realised just how few of the branch actually end up calling the quarters on tower bells - handbells seems to be very much down to Godfrey Foat. Based on those printed (you do send them all in to Jill don't you!), we averaged 1 a week shared between 19 conductors. All but 1 (well done Jill) were called by the men - is this because our ladies won't or because the men won't give them a chance? The busiest 6 conductors called 35 between them, with Bill Yates calling 10. Not only do we seem to be relying on our elder statesmen, but we have only noted one "first as conductor" - well done Simon.

Calling your first quarter may not be easy, but it can be done - particularly if you prepare for the big day well in advance. To start with you need to call touches on practice nights, Sunday, weddings and branch events as often as possible. It also helps if you practice on as wide a range of methods, ringers and bells as you can. Once you have a fair understanding of most of the common touches you should be able to follow what is being called during a quarter peal. There are a few conductors who

regard it as a secret, but most will describe their composition or "game plan" to you if you ask them beforehand. Please be careful to ring your bell properly whilst trying to follow the composition or you may very rapidly lose the support of the conductor.

After watching a few quarters you should be ready to make your first attempt at calling one - ideally this will be on familiar, easy going bells with a method and band that you are well used to. It also helps to have your favourite conductor ringing next to you just in case. I would advise you to tell the band in advance what you are planning to call, but do mention that you might decide to change things as you go along - the more people on your side the less pressure you should feel. Start by being a reliable "Bob Caller" and then develop into a "Real Conductor".

Try to call confidently and clearly but above all else make any corrections very clearly - if you almost forget a bob call it loudly and say "sorry that's a bit late" or if you call it too early say "sorry, bob now" to confirm where you really want the call to be. Finally if you call a bob and instantly realise that you shouldn't say "sorry, no bob this should be a plain lead" and you should survive.

If you don't succeed in your first attempts, try to work out what caused the failure and do your best to prevent it next time - if that means a stronger band or simpler method then so be it. You might also find that you will be thinking so hard about the calling that you fall off your own line more often than usual - you won't be the first to suffer from this !

Once you have called your first few quarters, I hope you will start to relax and enjoy yourself. As your confidence grows you should be able to cope with weaker bands, harder bells and more complicated callings. You may also become more confident at correcting method mistakes and striking errors. Please try to be specific in your comments - "come on listen to it" is not very helpful and could annoy those who are ringing well. Before you say something, think it through and make sure that it will help the ringing - learn by listening to other conductors (good and bad).

David Joyce

Ringling School on Bob Minor

It was the day of Saturday 8th June, the day of the Bob Minor course. My name had been put forward, along with Helen Stanworth and John Stanworth (actually the whole Stanworth family turned up, even the dog).

The Ringling School took place at Stowe and Maids Moreton, both completely new rings for me. The school began with an explanation of the plain course of Bob Minor, the students already had a rough idea of how to ring a plain course, now all that was needed was perfecting.

Each student was given a turn by themselves along with five other experienced helpers, while a helper/ guide, being Jill Joyce most of the time, stood by to assist and comment. About halfway through the Stowe ringing, Bill Yates kindly turned up to assist with ringing. This was after he had been to the pub and had a few pints.

By the end of our two hour session at Stowe we headed off to Maids Moreton to complete another 1½ on the lovely ring of six. At this point of the School we looked at Bobs and Singles. Unfortunately our timing wasn't quite to scratch and we didn't really get enough time to practice the bobs and singles.

I thought the School was extremely useful and very informative, I recommend it to any learner who wishes to progress, in anything!

Thank you to all the helpers who gave up their time for this course, and special thanks to David, Jill and Richard for the supply of refreshments and nibbles.

Gareth Grayson, Newport Pagnell



Studying Bobs and Singles!

End of Summer Outing

During a long weekend break, my family and I made our way up to Lincolnshire. It's definitely not our sort of country, it's too flat, but still you can see church spires for miles. As it happens, being me I made sure I went ringing, so I did. So I have now decided to arrange an outing to Lincolnshire. I'm afraid my details are poor, but the probable date is **Saturday 21st September**. Please keep this in mind and I will keep "In Touch".

Gareth Grayson, Newport Pagnell

Editor's Note : This is the date of the **Call Change Striking Competition**, so please make sure you're not needed by your band or another band (or even as a judge!) before agreeing to go on this outing.

Luton Branch Meeting at Great Brickhill

Despite pleas in the last edition of In Touch for people from our branch to come along to welcome our guests and ring with them, only 4 of us bothered - were you all busy, uninterested or just bad mannered? What you missed was a good turn out of their branch ringers, almost all of whom were there from start to finish, and some good striking of advanced methods on what are not the easiest of bells. David Adams is hoping that next year we can hold a proper joint meeting - if you have no intention of supporting this (as seems to be the case with the Bedford picnic meetings), then please let your branch officers know your feelings. It's rather embarrassing to agree and organise a joint event, then find that no-one will support them.

One good thing about going along was to discover a new method - Bob Churchill described the blue line to us and believes it may be called Bala (not Bala Bob which is similar). If you are bored with Stedman Doubles and fancy some fun, then try this method! The treble will plain hunt to 6ths and back whilst the other 5 bells all ring Stedman slow work in 1-3 and the mirror image in 4-6. It is probably easiest to see this by drawing in the blue line for the 3rd, as this starts with most of the front work. You should also notice that the bells that you work with on the front are the same when you work at the back - this makes the ropesight easier than you might expect for such a strange blue line. I deliberately haven't tried to work out the calls for this as it is unusually a 4ths place lead end - perhaps a fun bob would change the hunt bell?

David Joyce

News & Views from the ODG AGM

Election of Officers: The following changes were made to the Guild Officers for 1996/7 :-

Master: John Wells replaced Pat Newton

Secretary: Barry Cowper (formerly Chiltern Branch Secretary) replaced John Wells

Assistant Treasurer: Terry Wagstaff (Central Bucks Chairman) filled this new post

Peal Secretary: Graham Firman replaced Elizabeth Struckett

Steward: Sally Austin replaced Bob Datson

General Committee Members: Mike Till replaced David Lane

Guild Rules: There was some discussion of the proposed changes as a result of the General Committee Report, but the drafting of new rules was left to the Finance and General Purposes committee.

Millennium Project: A project for the Millennium was agreed, with the aim of getting sufficient ringers trained to enable all ringable towers to be rung for a special service at noon on 1st January 2000. From Guild figures our branch has 46 towers, the largest number (by 11) in the Guild and nearly four times as many as the Vale of the White Horse. Based on Guild membership 17 towers have no band.

This project is being controlled by a working group comprising :-

Guild Master: John Wells

Secretary: Barry Cowper

Public Relations Officer: Bobbie May

Education Sub committee reps: Pat Newton, Alan Griffin

Towers & Belfries reps: Richard Stevens, Bernard Stone

Elected Members (from AGM): Tony Crabtree, Stirling McGuire, Len Palfrey

The working group will work with branches via a Project Liaison Team of three people elected by the branch. More details of the project are included in the July 1996 edition of Odd Bob.

Tower Leadership Course on 28th September at Kidlington is the last one to be held - so don't miss the opportunity.

Bookstall: Bill Butler wishes to give up his bookstall and has offered it to the Guild at a cost of £1500. There was some discussion about this, particularly how the bookstall had been valued. It was agreed that the Guild should have a bookstall, but not necessarily Bill's - the amounts involved would allow massive reductions on cost price from most suppliers. The education committee would look into this.

Sponsored Ringing: Eight branches took part raising £2288.40. Details of the most successful branches are given in the July Odd Bob, the North Bucks branch raised £152.

Best Kept Tower Competition: The results of this competition are in the July 1996 Odd Bob - Bradwell, who came 3rd were highly commended by the judges.

Election of Vice President: At the end of the meeting Pat Newton was proposed as a Vice President of the Guild and this was carried by the meeting. She was presented with an engraved decanter and glasses as a thank you for her years as Master.

Double Stedman
123456
213546
231564
325146
235416
253461
523641
532614
352164
531246
513264
153624
135642
315462
351426
534162
354612
345621
435261
453216
543126
451362
415326
145236
154263
514623
541632
456123
546213
564231
654321
645312
465132
641523
614532
164352
146325
416235
461253
642135
462315
426351
246531
264513
624153
261435
216453
126543
162534
612354
621345
263154
623514
632541
362451
326415
236145
321654
312645
132465
123456

Bradwell Plays Hooky!



Just to prove we did ring!

Well you can't really go all of the way to Hook Norton just to ring can you? In the case of the Bradwell Tower Outing this year David Joyce organised the first stop to be in a brewery not a church. We had an excellent tour of the establishment, spiced with history, brewing tradition and humour ("we call what comes down from the water tank 'liquor' because nobody uses the word 'water' in here!").

This was followed by a sample of the output, which just proves it is possible to organise a you-know-what in a brewery. All of us drank, even though we had just been told of the method used to clear the beer once fermentation is complete - involving fish bladders! Of course, lunch was at a brewery pub, with further sampling (just to be sure) and much eating too, since the portions were generous.

Oh yes, I almost forgot! We did some ringing as well. The best tower of the day was probably in Hook Norton itself; a moderate weight 8 (by Bradwell standards) which were very tuneful. The other towers, all in the locality, varied from the amusing - large beam across the ringing chamber, two halves of the band can't see one another - to the scary - huge draft, very heavy, "lets see graphically how good your rope-handling is"! The heavy tower also had the fastest fallies I've ever seen, it makes you appreciate what you have in your home tower. Overall, it was a very enjoyable day out, and having some non-ringing activities as well as some very varied towers made it all the more so. For towers who want to try a minor variation, just for a change, rope in a few ringers, splice in a surprise brewery trip once you've hunted for a suitable place of course and dodge in out of the rain for a superlative day out. It worked for us!

Ian Green

The towers visited were : Hook Norton, Tadmarton, Bodicote, Middleton Cheney, Lois Weedon and Wappenham.

Guild Millennium Project - The Next Step

We have been asked by the Guild to set up a Project Liaison Team (they suggest three people), to co-ordinate work in the Branch and liaise with the Guild Working Group. This will need to be sorted out at the Newton Longville meeting as the first task is a request for information to be submitted by the end of October.

The information required includes basic figures on Sunday Service ringers (whether or not they are Guild members) and learners being taught. As there are several joint bands and ringers who ring in towers in bordering districts and branches, compiling the information will require some thought - where would you ring if all the towers you ring at were being rung at the same time?

It is also hoped to identify people willing to teach new recruits or to assist in public relations.

A large proportion of the July 1996 edition of Odd Bob is devoted to this project, which clearly shows the enthusiasm for the project at Guild level and the support they expect from each branch.

A Stimulating, Simulating Experience

A wedding, a Flower Festival and the Great Linford Waterside Festival all in one weekend.

The Waterside Festival has been held at Great Linford for the past eight years and seems to improve each time, the atmosphere this year was wonderful. Along the bank of the Grand Union Canal, on the lawns in front of Linford Manor and in the Courtyard were ranged stalls and tents, there was dancing and music making to watch and crafts to take part in, school sports to cheer and lots of people. St Andrew's Church was involved with this festivity and had a programme of events and a Flower Festival on both days. With a wedding on the Saturday all this kept the ringers very busy.

We used the Branch Display Boards to exhibit general information about ringing and Linford bells (remember the rehang?) in particular. Alan had set up the simulator and ringers were able to have a go. One of our ringers, who was convinced they couldn't hear their bell and didn't ring by rhythm, rang very well to rounds and benefited greatly from the experience.

The detector for the simulator is attached to the second, but by choosing the number of bells you wish to ring with, which bell you want to be and the method, you can use the simulator to be just about any bell you wish in whatever method you fancy without disturbing the neighbours. The only sound is generated by the computer (the clapper is tied). The computer provides the tones of all the bells except for the one you have chosen and by ringing the second you provide the missing tone (if you're lucky, in the right place).

We also used the simulator to ring plain hunt by itself to help explain how methods are constructed.

On the Sunday, once we'd rung for service, we were able to open the trap doors in the two floors between us and the bells so visitors could see either the third or the tenor being rung (we couldn't do this on the Saturday because of the wedding). It's quite a sight to see, all that bell metal swinging about above your head, and with the trap doors open you can see the rope connecting the bell and the ringer. It all makes sense now!

There was much interest, some local memories and a good many questions, but I haven't seen the people who expressed an interest to learn - yet. However, we have certainly made people aware of what bells and ringing are all about.

I expect we shall be back next year but please don't leave it until then to have a go on a simulator, just ask and we can arrange a practice for you.



Tine Marchbank

No time for a Plain Course of Stedman ?

If there isn't time for a 120 of Stedman Doubles you can still ring a touch and have a bit of fun along the way. When the treble arrives in 5th place with the 5 (at a backstroke) call a Single, do "cats ears" and go back in quick. As you come back out quick, do it again (with the 2), then again (with the 3) and finally (with the 4). The touch will come round as the treble leads, is just 48 changes long and involves everyone. If you are a novice conductor, you may prefer to ring the treble and be involved in every call - once your confidence improves it could be excellent practice to call it from any of the other bells.

David Joyce

O.D.G. North Bucks Branch - Call Change Striking Competition

RULES

- 1/ Entries must be made to the Ringing Master by the closing date.
- 2/ Ringers should ring regularly at a tower within the branch, but do not need to be branch members.
- 3/ No ringer may ring for more than one entry.
- 4/ Up to 2 of the team may be from 'outside' of the local band.
- 5/ At least 3 of the team **must not** have rung more than 1 quarter peal on an 'inside' bell.
- 6/ The team is allowed (if they wish) to have a helper present in the ringing room to call the changes, count the rows, or correct mistakes.
- 7/ Up to 2 minutes practice ringing shall be allowed before the test piece, followed by a bell being rung to alert the judges.
- 8/ The first 20 rows of the test piece will not be marked, to allow for 'settling down'.
- 9/ The next 100 rows will be marked, but all rows beyond these will not. It is not necessary to return the bells to rounds before setting.
- 10/ At least 6 call changes must be made **during** the 100 marked rows.
- 11/ Where possible, 2 judges from within the branch shall be appointed. They will be asked to offer constructive comment and advice on the ringing by each band, as well as presenting their markings.

NOTES

Rule 4 allows 'outsiders' either to let other learners join an established team, or for helpers to go and assist a neighbouring band of learners to enter.

In rule 5, an 'inside' bell does not include hunting a treble or covering to a method.

Usually, one of the branch officers will act as tower steward and timekeeper.

It is not reasonable to adjust the rope lengths whilst guests of the host tower - if you consider it may be necessary, you should bring boxes or tail end extenders for your ringers who may need them.

You are advised to plan a way of checking that sufficient rows are rung and changes called - rule 6 allows you to bring in an extra person to help with this. The tower steward is **not** available to assist with this, you must arrange your own helper (usually your own Captain, Conductor or similar local expert).

It would help the smooth running of the event if teams avoided ringing too many extra rows after the marking period has ended. If you are still ringing after 5 minutes (approx. 150 rows), you will be instructed to stand by the tower steward.

Please remember that although the competition is intended to encourage attention to good striking, it should never be taken so seriously that the enjoyment of your ringing is lost. Listen to, learn from and encourage your fellow ringers.

If you have any queries, please contact the ringing master.

The 1996 Contest

The 1996 competition will be held at Maids Moreton on Saturday 21st September 1996, with the draw at 3:30 - there should be time for a little **mixed** practice from 3:00 to allow some of your ringers to get to know the bells in advance.

Entries for the competition must be made to the Ringing Master (01280-816772) by Friday 20th September. If your team need to be drawn slightly later, due to ringing for weddings, please let us know what time you will arrive by.

As there is no service, tea or business meeting the judges' comments and results will be given shortly after the last team has rung.

Other Events Within and Without the Branch

This section is intended to bring you information about some other ringing events, that are not organised by our own Branch or Guild. This information is not kept as complete or up-to-date as our own Branch diary, so please keep an eye on Odd Bob and The Ringing World. If you wish to check before attending, or want to know further details, please contact the following people :-

Olney - A Monday evening 8 bell practice is run by Roy Keeves (01908-510105) from 7:30 to 9:00 each month. There is a core of regular attendees, but new faces are always made welcome. Methods rung range from Rounds to Surprise Major, with a special method sometimes being chosen in advance.

Central Bucks Branch - Mark Sellin (01296-392175).

Towcester Branch - Bill Yates (01280-814937).

Wellingborough Branch - John Holmes (01933-405169).

Luton District - David Adams (01582-868534).

Bicester Branch - Simon Cole (01869-247525).

Northampton Branch - Mrs Dorothy Stopps (01604-890638).

Bedford District - Eddie Lambert (01234-363513).

Date	Time	Event details	Location
Sat 27th July	3:30	Luton District Quarterly Meeting	Tilsworth
Sat 27th July	eve	Luton District Quarterly Meeting	Stanbridge
Wed 7th August	7:30	Bicester Branch Practice	Middleton Stoney
Sat 10th August	6:30*	Central Bucks Branch Practice	Hillesdon
Sat 17th August	6:30	Luton District Evening Meeting	Cranfield & Wootton
Mon 19th August	7:30	Eight bell Practice	Olney
Sat 24th August	7:00	Towcester Branch Practice (to 7:45)	Helmdon
Sat 24th August	8:00	Towcester Branch Practice (to 9:00)	Whitfield
Thu 5th September	7:30	Bicester Branch Practice	Wootton Underwood
Mon 23rd September	7:30	Eight bell Practice	Olney
Sat 28th September	6:30	Luton District Evening Meeting	Toddington
Sat 28th September	4:00	Towcester Branch Striking Contest	Greens Norton
Fri 4th October	7:30	Bicester Branch Practice	Ludgershall
Sat 26th October	3:30	Luton District Quarterly Meeting	Silsoe
Sat 26th October	eve	Luton District Quarterly Meeting	Flitton
Mon 28th October	7:30	Eight bell Practice	Olney
Sat 2nd November	2:00	Towcester Branch Training Day	Roads/ Stoke
Mon 4th November	7:30	Bicester Branch Practice	Bicester
Sat 9th November	6:30	Central Bucks Branch Practice (to 8:30)	Aston Abbotts
Sat 23rd November	6:30	Luton District Evening Meeting	Westoning
Mon 25th November	7:30	Eight bell Practice	Olney
Tue 3rd December	7:30	Bicester Branch Practice	Islip
Sat 7th December	7:00	Luton District / Herts C.A. Surprise Practice	Tring
Sat 14th December	6:30	Central Bucks Branch Practice (to 8:30)	Cuddington
Sat 14th December	6:30	Luton District Evening Meeting	Houghton Regis
Sat 28th December	7:00	Towcester Branch Practice	Easton Neston
Sat 25th January	3:30	Luton District Quarterly Meeting	Barton-le-Clay
Sat 25th January	eve	Luton District Quarterly Meeting	Luton
Sat 25th January	3:00	Towcester Branch AGM	Potterspury
Sat 22nd February	6:30	Luton District Evening Meeting	Studham
Sat 22nd March	6:30	Luton District Evening Meeting	Leighton Buzzard
Sat 26th April	3:30	Luton District Quarterly Meeting	Tilsworth
Sat 26th April	eve	Luton District Quarterly Meeting	Totternhoe
Sat 24th May	6:30	Luton District Evening Meeting	Kensworth & Whipsnade

Remember that a comprehensive list of meetings is published regularly in the Guild "Odd Bob" and some are advertised in the Ringing World as well. The information about our neighbours can only be published here in "In Touch" if someone lets us know - if you have any details (or corrections), please contact the editor.

If you visit our neighbours' events, please let them know about our branch and encourage them to visit us.

Don't forget all of the local tower practices in our branch each week. If you visit any of these events, why not take along another member of your local band? However, it would be courteous to check with the organiser before taking an entire band along!

ODG North Bucks Branch Diary

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Event details</u>	<u>Location</u>
Sat 3rd August	4:00	Joint Picnic Meeting with the Bedford Branch afternoon ringing, picnic at Willen Lake.	North Crawley
	7:00	evening ringing	Kempston
Fri 16th August	7:30	Branch Practice	BRADWELL
		Special method = Double Oxford Minor	<i>Note change of venue</i>
Sat 7th September	3:30	Quarterly Meeting	Newton Longville
Fri 13th September (to Sun 15th)		Guild Ringing School	Easthampstead
Sat 21st September	3:30	Call Change Striking Competition	Maids Moreton
Sat 28th September		Tower Leadership Course	Kidlington
Fri 4th October	7:30	Guild Meeting for All Branch Secretaries	Radley
Sat 5th October		Guild 6 Bell Striking Competition	Reading Branch
Fri 18th October	7:30	Branch Practice Special method = London S Minor	Loughton
Fri 15th November	7:30	Branch Practice Special method = Yorkshire S Major	Stony Stratford
Sat 23rd November	2:30	* Guild Autumn Committee Meeting	Witney & Woodstock Branch
Sat 7th December	3:30	Quarterly Meeting	Fenny Stratford
Fri 20th December	7:30	* Branch Practice Special method = Little Bob Minor	Simpson
Fri 17th January	7:30	Branch Practice Special method = Kent & Oxford TB Minor	Calverton
Fri 21st February	7:30	* Branch Practice Special method = Surfleet S Minor	Old Wolverton
Sat 1st March	3:30	* Annual General Meeting	Newport Pagnell
Fri 21st March	7:30	* Branch Practice Special method = Stedman Doubles	Sherington
Fri 18th April	7:30	Branch Practice	Kempston
		Special method = Grandsire Caters & Yorkshire S Royal	

Any event marked with * was awaiting confirmation when this list was prepared, if a more recent list is unavailable then please check with the Secretary for the current situation before attending.

Rounds, Call Changes, Plain Hunt, Plain Bob & Grandsire will always be available at Branch Practices. The special methods are intended to be a focus for the more advanced method ringing.

The Branch Mini Ringing Schools are specially tailored for a very small number of pupils to get intensive, high quality, training in one basic method. Please write to the Ringing Master if you wish to be considered as a pupil for a future school or are interested in different types of school.

Last revised 18/07/96