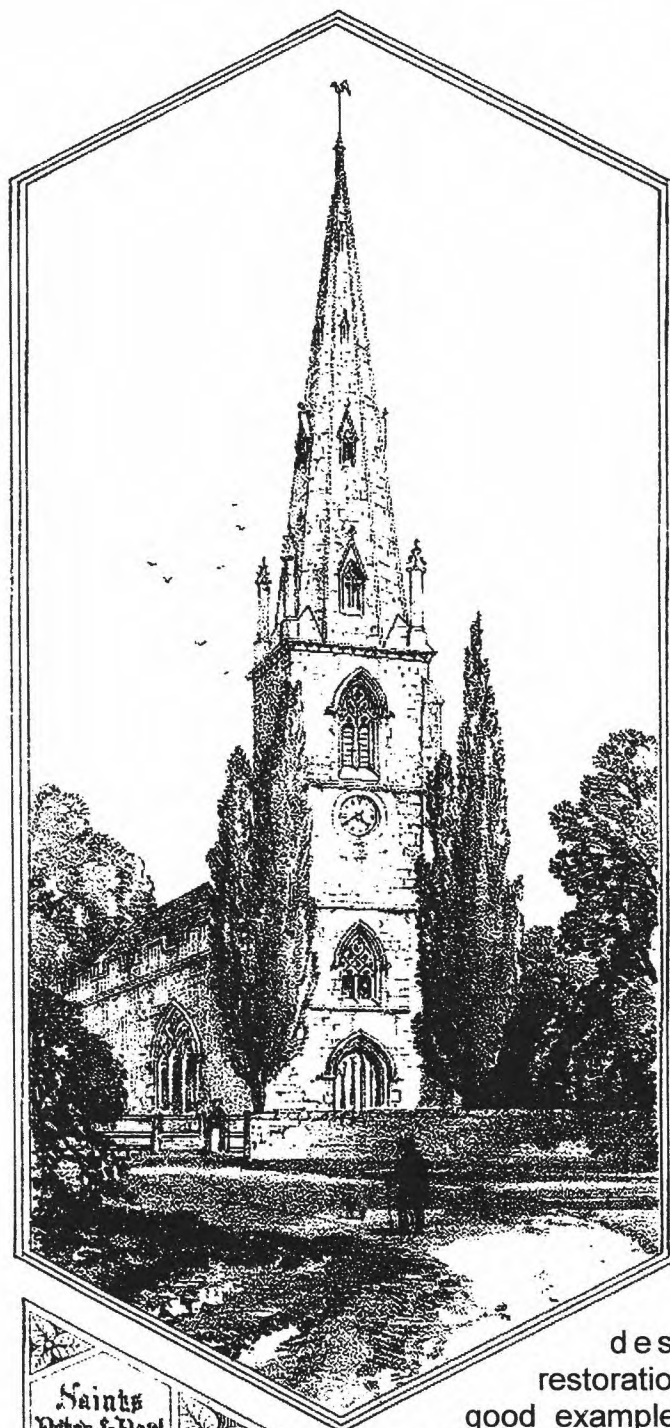




OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTH BUCKS BRANCH

In Touch

February 2000



Annual General Meeting SS Peter & Paul, Olney

Saturday 4th March 2000

3.30 Ringing
4.30 Service
5.00 Tea
5.45 Business Meeting
Following by evening ringing
until 8.30 or 9.00

Names for tea to
Charles Knight
(01234-713719) by:

**Wednesday
1st March 2000**

The Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul, Olney, replaced a Saxon Church which stood at the north end of the town near where the Castle Inn now stands. This Grade 1 listed building is reputed to have been built between

1325 to 1350 and,

despite considerable restoration in 1807, remains a very good example of the Decorated style.

The magnificent broach spire, which dominates the surrounding meadows, Emberton Park and the River Ouse, is 185 feet high and carries a peal of eight bells (tenor 24-3-14), the oldest of which is dated 1532 and is inscribed "God Save the Queen".

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In Touch is published by the Editor on behalf of the officers and members of the North Bucks Branch of the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers. Any view expressed in *In Touch* is that of the Author and copyright resides with the individual authors.

The Chairman's Soap Box

What will happen in 2000?

This year I am hoping for a change in emphasis for the branch. We have spent the last few years recruiting and teaching, or being recruited and taught. We need to think now about how to retain ringers. Those who have recently learned and our experienced ringers.

What do ringers need to keep them from leaving?

- They need to know that they are of value to the band/church/community
- Peer support
- Band loyalty
- Community support
- They need to enjoy doing it, though different aspects matter to different ringers
- Making progress
- Challenging
- Satisfying
- Social factors

The branch is in a position to help with a bit of central organisation. This year we are going to have, as well as the usual practices and meetings:

- An outing - a proper bus outing, probably to Leicestershire
- Half Term local outings for "The Youth" - by car
- A foundry visit - hopefully to see some casting
- A rope works visit - to find out why sallies don't just fall apart
- A trip to see some new bells being installed - Key Stage something! Pulleys etc.
- The Quarter Peal week in late February - as advertised by the Guild
- A Peal week towards the end of the year - there are plenty of good excuses in August
- Participation in the Guild Striking Competitions

The aim is to get out and about more, ring more methods, ring those we already know better and to meet ringers from other bands.

To find out more, *In Touch* will continue to provide top quality information, the branch e-group is now an electronic version of the branch committee, helping towers to stay in touch with each other and the branch, and the branch web site should be live before this year's AGM.

Doug Hird



**Next Issue Copy Date:
Easter Saturday, 22nd April 2000**

A big thank you to all those ringers/towers that sent me contributions for this 'Millennium' issue.

I suspect by the time you are reading this we will have discovered that life and ringing does indeed continue beyond 1st January 2000, and I look forward to hearing about it in time for the next issue of *In Touch*!

Your grateful Editor,
Sheila Watts

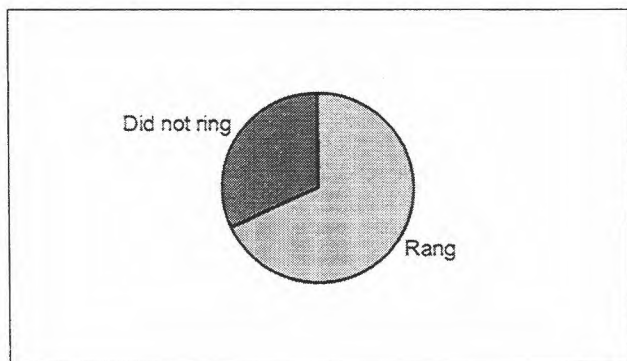


How did we get on?

The Chairman's Report

We did very well. In any activity aiming for total coverage it is understandable to concentrate on the omissions. The omissions in North Bucks were the ones, twos, a few rings of three, and the churches that are structurally unsafe. Very few ringable rings were left unring.

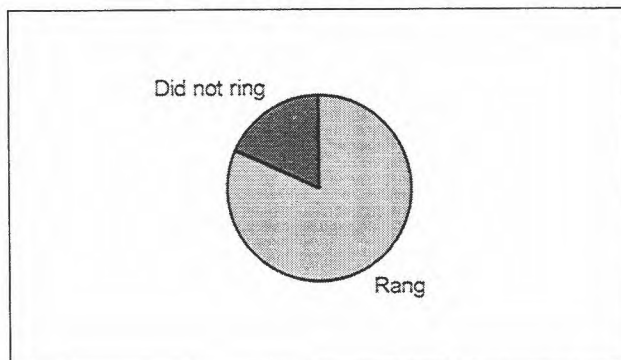
To look at the statistics, of the 75 churches with bells in North Bucks, 68% were rung, or chimed. Some by local bands and some by others.



Towers rung for the Millennium

Of the 329 bells in North Bucks, 82% were rung or chimed.

Bells rung for the Millennium



At the moment, these figures are the first estimate and it is quite possible that a number of the smaller rings were chimed by local people. So these figures could quite possibly improve.

On the whole, the event went very well. It was good to hear so many local bells rung at once, so many bands helping out their neighbours and to see so many villagers and townspeople showing an interest and support for the ringers.

Doug Hird



An interesting new uniform for branch tower captains first seen at the New Year—which tower is this?



New Year revellers at Buckingham



On 1st January 2000, a small band of ringers went to five towers of bells. The band consisted of Gareth, Catherine, Andrew Jeffries and myself. The five towers we went to were Willen, Moulsoe, Haversham and Olney, and of course our home tower of Newport Pagnell. We have a ground floor ring. We have a 22 cwt tenor and all the bells have a nice tone. We have a 90 ft tower so we have extremely long ropes, and so we have guides to help it become an easier ring.

We started at our home tower for the national ringing across the country at midday. At about 2.10 pm we arrived at Willen. Willen has three bells in a diagonal frame. There is only one slider, and no wheels, but there were headstocks. As they were a DIY re-hang the headstocks are too big for the

Oh for Something to Hold!

bells. The ropes are attached to the stays, so we could swing the bells in their frames and chime them, which was quite nice, but very difficult to get into rounds.

The next stop was Moulsoe. This was a very interesting tower as there were no ropes, so you could only swing chime the bells. Also they are dilapidated beyond repair. To ring them you could either climb beside the bells and chime the clapper against the side of the bell, or you could push them a little way round by their stays. They did not sound good, as they were just four oddly chosen bells from Taylors.

The fourth tower was Haversham. This tower had three fairly heavy set bells, but they were ringable, and they all had ropes! It was a messy ringing room and it took a while to clear out. It was a nice ground floor ring and we managed some plain hunt on three!!

The last tower was Olney, which is a very nice sounding ring of eight. These were again fairly heavy set, but they were quite nice to ring. They have a 25 cwt tenor, which gives a lovely sound.

Altogether it was a lovely day with many new experiences and enjoyable rings.

Rachel Stacy

Shenley at New Year

An attempt was made to ring a peal of Cambridge over midday which failed after 1½ hours but at least the bells were rang at midday. A short service was held in the church afterwards. The ringers were:

- 1 Anne McIntyre
- 2 David Taylor
- 3 Ray Watkins
- 4 John Brookman
- 5 Barry Smith
- 6 Barry Eglesfield

As spare ringers were available from our tower some went to ring at Woburn.

Lorraine Brookman	Becky Fawcett
Irene Gordon	Fiona Lewis
Ann Birch	

The ringers from Loughton rang at their tower and also at Beachampton.

The Shenley bells were also rung for midnight interrupting a large party held at our house. Anne had obtained a Citizen sponsored disposable camera and took several pictures over the new year period and one of the bells being rung taken in the ringing room was printed in the Citizen newspaper. As so many ringers were present those not ringing were able to go out on the top of the tower to see the display of fireworks all over Milton Keynes.

Altogether a very good new years was had!

John Brookman

The Tyingham Route

We were greeted by the sound of Sherington bells wafting over the fields as we left Newport for Tyingham. At Tyingham, we could hardly get out of the church for people and I gather that this scene was typical. A quick dash through Newport reminded us of the quality of this fine ring as we passed through on the way to Downs Barn. A lack of locals at Downs Barn meant that the Tyingham band, used to an anticlockwise 13 cwt ring of five, was given a crash course on ringing "fairy bells". After a short while we found an arrangement that produced some acceptable rounds. The next tower was a complete change for all of us. Cold Brayfield, while hung for ringing, are quite unringable. There is only one rope showing at floor level, so it was a bit of a surprise for the key holder that we found three bells to chime. They are better described as three bells than a ring of three.

Doug Hird



Celebrations at Shenley

At Hanslope, as was no doubt the case in most other towers in the branch, the Millennium was a busy time for the bellringers.

The Hanslope Experience

Hanslope because, as soon as we stood our bells, there was the loud bang as Eleanor opened the champagne which she had bought for us all, followed by smaller bangs from lots of party poppers.

On New Years Eve a Family

Service as held in the church at 3.00 pm. This was to be the final service of the year and it was decided that we should ring out the old Millennium with a half-muffled quarter peal prior to the service. Sadly, shortly after this quarter peal was arranged, a very popular member of our church died rather suddenly and so it was decided that this ringing should also be a thanksgiving for his life. The gentleman concerned, Peter Bicknell, was a keen supporter and ally of the bellringers and showed a great interest in everything that we did, he was very much the 'link' between the church and the bellringers. Earlier in 1999 one of our ringers suggested that it would be an appropriate way to commemorate the New Millennium by re-instating the chimes on our church clock which had been silent for the past 20 years. Peter was very enthusiastic about this project which he put to the PCC and the Parish Council who jointly agreed to fund it. The work was eventually completed in time for the New Millennium on Monday 13 December 1999 and the clock began to chime the hours later that day. It seemed a cruel irony that Peter had lost his fight for life the day before, on Sunday 12 December 1999, and therefore he never actually heard the clock strike.

During the evening of 31 December 1999, some of the ringers had a 'safari supper'. For those who don't know, this is where you have each course of a meal in a different house and, as there were three couples involved, this seemed a good way to have a fun evening without making too much work for anyone. We started off at Roy and Sheila's, which is the house furthest away from the centre of the village, with some home-made soup [and a drop to drink!]. It was a five minute walk to Ian, Eleanor and Rebecca Thompson's house where we had roast pork and a bean casserole [and a drop to drink!]. Finally, just a couple of minutes walk around the corner to Jonathan and Natalie's house where we finished off our meal with some very scrummy puds and cheese [and a drop more to drink!]. It was certainly an evening with a difference and a chance to work off the food [and the drink] in between each course!

By the time we finished our coffee it was past 11.00 pm [and, in spite of what you may think, we were not under the influence of inahol!] so we started getting organised to go up the tower to ring in the New Millennium. We wanted to make it a special occasion and for it to be different from our usual New Year ringing. We had decided to ring by candlelight so we had all bought along lots of chunky candles. We set off for the church loaded up with bags and even a portable television as we were all keen to see the much publicised 'Fire on the Thames' [which in the event never took place] while we waited to ring. We set the candles up all around the Ringing Room and they gave a beautiful atmosphere and enough light so that we did not need to use the electric light at all. There were ten of us up the tower, including ringers and non-ringers, Nick Gray who had been with his own family during the evening joined us and we were also very honoured by a visit from the Branch Treasurer and Editor of In Touch! Midnight duly arrived and Roy struck the twelve chimes on the tenor in time with Big Ben on the television. The chimes finished and as we began to ring in the New Millennium we could see and hear loads of fireworks being let off from gardens all round the village. It was certainly different from any previous New Year's Eve at

After we had toasted the New Millennium with the champagne and eaten the special Millennium biscuits which Sheila and Sheila had bought up with them, we had one more ring before we left to go our separate ways [and also have a drop more to drink!].

The following day, Saturday 1 January 2000, most of us, plus some of our other ringers, were all back up the tower for the 'Ring in 2000' at 12 noon. We rang at the appointed hour and then we all went down to the church where the congregation were waiting for us before they began the short service. It was a good feeling to think the bells had been rung and that exactly the same words were being said at the same time in churches all over the country.

After the service we had invited anyone who wished to do so to come up the tower and see us ring and then join us for sherry to celebrate the New Millennium. We didn't really expect many people to take us up on our offer as it is such a long climb and given that most of the congregation were in the category of 'older' rather than 'younger'. However, we breed 'em tough in Hanslope, and so many visitors came up that they filled up all the seats around the edge of our Ringing Room. We rang a short touch of Stedman Triples and then we rang down before we all had a chat and a sherry. Many of those people who came up the tower said how interesting they had found it as they had never actually seen us ring before, and several people stopped us in the village over the next few days to thank us for inviting them up the tower. It was nice to be appreciated.

Some other members of Hanslope tower, namely Richard and Janet Haseldine and their family, also participated in 'Ring in 2000'. They rang at Grafton Regis, where they all regularly ring during the year. After the service the Duke of Grafton's son invited the family up for coffee to the Old Vicarage.

Obviously not all towers had a band to ring at 12 noon but they still wanted their bells to be rung for the New Millennium. We have a small group of ringers who regularly ring with Owen Warren at Stoke Goldington and Weston Underwood and later in the day we all went over there to ring at these two churches and make them a part of the celebration of 'Ring in 2000'.

SB

The Millennium Resolution

Let there be respect for the earth,
Peace for its people
Love in our lives, delight in the good
Forgiveness of past wrongs
And from now on a new start

Gay Gordons at Buckingham?

The Buckingham Ringers and families attended a Millennium Party held in the Parish Church. There was a Millennium Quiz with clues hidden around the church allowing everyone to mingle. There was also a Millennium Pictionary quiz where clues had to be drawn representing items associated with the new year and Millennium (such as Millennium bug, River of Fire).

Following supper there was Scottish Country Dancing in which just about all the Stanworth family were persuaded to take part.

There was a short service of preparation for the start of the Third Millennium. This included the lighting of our Millennium candles and the saying of the Millennium Resolution.

Following the Ringing to welcome the new year there was champagne and then fireworks were let off (along with lots more all over the town).

A second session of Scottish Country Dancing found the Branch Ringing Master dancing with the Vicar - appropriately it was the Gay Gordons!

My particular memory of the night - just after I had started ringing the twelve strokes of midnight on the tenor, all the windows in the belfry seemed to light up as fireworks were set off just about everywhere around the town.

Richard Stanworth



The Buckingham 'midnight' Band

Millennium Plaques



Details of all the towers where the bells were rung to welcome the new Millennium have been forwarded to the Guild Secretary. The Guild is providing a plaque for each of these towers which records that the bells were rung on the day.

In addition, for those towers which wish to purchase an additional plaque showing the names of the ringers involved, the Branch Secretary is co-ordinating the production of these. If your tower is interested and has not yet passed on details, please let Helen know as soon as possible. The cost is expected to be in the region of £35.00.

One that got away

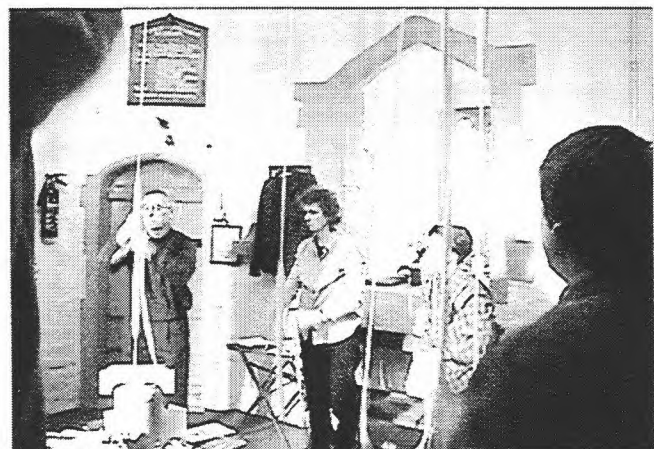
Jessica Webster, from Olney, was away over the festive season visiting friends in East Sussex. Determined not to miss out on the Millennium ringing, she went into the local church at Wadhurst, and obtained the telephone number of the tower captain off the notice board.

Spare ringers are obviously as rare in Sussex as they are here, because she found herself swept into Covering for a Quarter Peal of Grandsire Triples at noon on the 1st January.

As if this was not enough, she was back in North Bucks by 4.30 pm for the Millennium ringing at Olney.



Stoke Goldington at 3 pm



The Hanslope 'midday' Band

The PowerGen Money—your choice

East Midlands Electricity changed its name to PowerGen on 12th July 1999. To celebrate this change, bellringers were invited to ring Quarter Peals, with PowerGen pledging money towards "the local bell restoration fund". In the North Bucks Branch £500 was 'earned' from a Quarter Peal at Great Linford.

At the last Quarterly meeting, there was discussion regarding how this cash should be used. It was agreed that:

- it should be for something specific—not a general fund
- it should be given to a project which will definitely go ahead; it should not go into a tower's fund where it might stay for several years before the project comes the fruition
- we should aim to make the grant before the end of the year 2000

If you have a project which fits the above criteria, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please write to the Secretary with full details by 22nd April, so that a list can be published in the next *In Touch*. The final decision will be made by the membership at the June Quarterly meeting. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sheila Watts, Treasurer



The Great Linford Millennium Peal band
See page 11 for peal details

The Archives

The main focus of activity this year has been in integrating the archives with a branch web site.

The aim is to make the database smaller without losing any information. So this means cutting out repetition of records, keeping master lists of names for everything else to refer to. So there is one list of tower names, another of ringers' names and another of method names. All of the photos have been converted into internet standard formats that are designed to be as small as possible. I have also limited the scope of the database to North Bucks towers only.

But, the end result is not easy to browse through. With towers, methods and ringers just referred to by a number, a bit more help is needed to get any meaning out. This is where the web site comes in. It contains all the bits of the archives put back together in a number of different ways. So you can search through all the peals for a particular tower, or quarters or look at all the old photos. The minutes are there along with details of individual bells.

If you want to see what is in the archive, the web site should be in place soon and a demo version will be on show at the AGM. It only takes a few seconds to show all the records we have containing a particular person's name.

Among new developments will be a way of viewing all the peals, or quarters rung in North Bucks by a particular ringer. I will have to read through the data protection act information before going much further with this. Maybe a password would help to limit access only to appropriate people. Some activity at Guild level would be appreciated also.

Doug Hird

WWW.NORTHBUCKS.CO.UK? A web site for the branch

At first this looked like quite an easy thing to set up. All the advertising says it should be. After all, children make web sites. Microsoft make some very nice software that helps with the design of quite advanced web sites. By combining current information with the historical stuff in the archives, we end up with a modestly complicated web site.

The problems start when you want to put it onto the world wide web. There are lots of companies who will provide the facilities you need, some costing more than others. Here we find the usual problem. The cheap ones don't support the more complicated web sites. They need more expensive software and hardware and that would put the price up. The less cheap ones have the technology but they are less cheap.

So I am shopping around to find the best deal and at the same time looking for alternatives. Nigel Titley has kindly offered to help out. Although this might need a considerable re-design of the web site, it is the best offer so far. There are also a number of local companies in this line of business that might help out a local organisation. I am waiting for some feedback from them.

The intention is to have something in place before the AGM. A demo version will be available at the AGM.

Doug Hird

BRAIN BENDERS

Answers to these puzzles
will be given in the
next issue of
In Touch

Lead, I said LEAD!
Now just concentrate or
I'll hit you with my
hairbrush.....

Who is
this?

This issue's 'Brain Bender
puzzles' are all about the
names of ringers. See if
you can solve them.

Christian Names

A most interesting fact about
the ringers at a particular
church is that their Christian
names all begin with the letter
"R". There are thirteen of
them, and each name ends with
a different letter of the
alphabet. Can you name them?

Anagrams

Throw rancid trash	
Thorny garages	
Coy jam dived	
Sit as the walk	
Away slim it ale	
Shown her talent	
Ranch Balkan jam	
Blew by nations	
Rough lad bids	
Dividend gold mat	

These are all
the names of
Branch
Members - can
you identify
them?

Answers in the
May edition

Devised by
Richard
Stanworth

BRAIN BENDERS ANSWERS

NOVEMBER ISSUE

Name the Method—the winner is Shirley Cozens

Son of Robert	Little Bob
Unexpected sign of spring	Primrose Surprise
The capital	London
Seat of learning	Cambridge
Oranges and lemons	St Clements
Did he start it all?	Stedman
Associated with Chaucer's life?	Reverse Canterbury Pleasure
When all fools ring	April Day
Home of oast houses and hops	Kent Treble Bob
The other seat of learning—much better for ringing?	Oxford
For those interested in genealogy	Grandsire
Everyone tries to be this	All Saints
A species of deer	Antelope
A simple person made a Saint	St Simon

PICTURES:

Helen Stanworth, Branch Secretary
Doug Hird, Branch Chairman

WHO IS THIS BRANCH MEMBER? (Nov. issue p.10)

David Phillipson, who lives in Olney and is the Branch Auditor. Congratulations (and £25 M&S vouchers) go to Shirley Cozens who gave the first correct entry to be 'pulled out of the hat'. Thanks go to David for thinking up the idea and donating the vouchers, and to all those who had a go at guessing. Other suggestions were Ron Snack and David Joyce. See page 15 for more details.

The Bishop's 'Grab'

On Wednesday 10 November 1999 at St James the Great, Hanslope a special service was held to dedicate the new glass inner doors on the south door of the church and also the new kitchen. This service was being taken by Michael, the Bishop of Ebbsfleet and we were asked if we could ring for a short time before the service. We duly arrived at the appointed time but were one ringer short. A quick phone call to the person concerned ascertained that he had forgotten all about the ringing, was having his dinner and wouldn't be able to make it in time to ring for the service. Thus it was that we were ringing the back six for the service when we heard footsteps on the stairs. A ringer we hoped, and it was obviously someone fairly fit as they were running up the tower steps. The door to the ringing room opened and in came the Bishop with his purple robes pulled up around his legs so as not to impede his rapid ascent of the tower. He explained

that, although he had once lived in the area, he had never rung at Hanslope before and asked if we would mind if he joined us for a ring. Naturally we welcomed him as we could now ring all eight bells and we rang a touch of Stedman Triples before the Bishop had to excuse himself and return to the church in time for the service.

Bishop Michael told us that he was the only Bishop in the Guild of Clerical Ringers. It turned out that before he was ordained he had lived in Old Wolverton and had rung at Stony Stratford.

Not only was Hanslope a 'grab' for the Bishop but it was also a 'grab' for the rest of band as none of us had ever rung with a Bishop before!

There is a sad postscript to this story as we later heard that sometime towards the end of December 1999 Bishop Michael had died very suddenly. We would like to offer our condolences to his family and friends, if any of them should read this article.

SB

Quote of the quarter

Overheard recently following a failed Quarter Peal attempt at Stoke Goldington.

"We were jinxed, of course, there was a woman in the band."

The Editor has just about recovered enough from this slight (yes, I was the target) to be generous and mention that the Quarter attempt was before Evensong, which was being sung by QUORUM, a small choir specialising in sacred music from the Renaissance and English Tudor periods. QUORUM acts as an occasional church choir singing at services (most typically Sung Eucharists and Choral Evensongs) in churches in the Milton Keynes/North Buckinghamshire area. The choir sings music appropriate to the occasion (feast day, patronal festival, etc) drawing from its wide repertoire of music ranging from the English composers (Byrd, Tallis, Gibbons, etc) to continental composers (Palestrina, Guerrero, Victoria, etc).

QUORUM welcomes new members who enjoy singing music from this period, and also welcomes invitations to sing at Churches in the area.

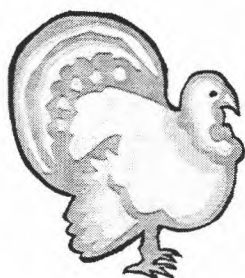
Enquires to: Eleanor Thompson 01908-510003

Sheila Watts

Diary Dates outside the Branch

February 5 13 26	Afternoon Evening	Bedford District Practice Central Bucks AGM Luton District Practice	Bedford St Peter de Merton Aylesbury Gravenhurst & Shillington
March 11 12	 6.30	Biggleswade District Practice Central Bucks Practice	Arlesey & Hitchin Cuddington
April 1 8 9 22	 6.30	Bedford District Meeting Biggleswade District Practice Central Bucks Practice Luton District	Oakley Potton & Sandy Soulbury Tilsworth & Leighton Buzzard
May 14 20 27	 6.30 Evening	Central Bucks Practice Bedford Association AGM Luton District Practice	Nether Winchendon Flitwick Bletchley
June 17		Central Bucks Striking Competition	East Claydon
July 15	 6.30	Central Bucks Practice	Waddesdon

Note: It is advisable to check these events before setting out!



The Turkey and Tinsel Tour

You would think that people would have other things to do on the last Saturday before Christmas. Not true! Around 25 ringers turned up on the 18th December to take part in their last bellringers' outing of the 20th Century—Roy and Sheila's Turkey and Tinsel Tour.

A half-day outing had been arranged, ringing at some Northamptonshire towers which many of us had not sampled:

Castle Ashby, Whiston, Little Houghton, Cogenhoe, and Yardley Hastings

Our thanks to the organisers, and here's looking forward to the next mini-tour at the end of February.

MBE for Loughton's Frank Daniels

Frank Daniels, from Loughton, was awarded an MBE in the New Year Honours for his services to the community.

Frank, a retired engineering manager for British Telecom, has served on Loughton Parish Council for 25 years and was chairman for 15 during the time Milton Keynes was being planned and developed.

But his involvement in the community does not stop there. For seven years he was a warden at All Saints Church, he was a founder member of Loughton Sports and Social Club, and Frank is still a trustee for the memorial hall.

Born in Shenley Brook End, Frank has lived in Loughton for 40 years and has thoroughly enjoyed living there and working on behalf of the community. "It's been a very good home" he said. "I've tried to do my best for the place and think I've done my fair share." Married to Stella, Frank admits the MBE award was a huge surprise. "I was absolutely amazed."

With thanks to The Citizen Newspaper

What The Citizen didn't mention, of course, is that Frank is a bellringer at Loughton, and was made an Honorary Member of the Oxford Guild some years ago. Quarter Peal details on page 11.



Quarters & Peals

St Lawrence, Bradwell
24th October 1999
1260 Plain Bob Doubles

- 1 Andy King
- 2 Chrissy Cable
- 3 Jill Joyce
- 4 David Joyce
- 5 Ian Green (1st as C)
- 6 Brian Newman

In celebration of the life of John
William Green, father of the Conductor

St John the Evangelist, Wicken
5th November 1999

1280 Rutland Surprise Major

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

1st Quarter of Rutland: 2,4,6 and 7

St Paul, Bedford

7th November 1999

1260 Plain Bob Royal

- 1 Christina Jones
- 2 Shelagh Melville
- 3 B Douglas Hird
- 4 Catherine Stacy
- 5 Peter Tribble
- 6 Gareth Grayson
- 7 Godfrey Foat
- 8 Roy Keeves
- 9 Jonathan Griggs
- 10 Alan Marchbank (C)

For Service

1st Quarter of Royal: 4

Holy Sepulchre, Northampton

3rd December 1999

1260 Spliced Stedman and Grandsire
Triples

- 1 Jonathan Griggs (C)
- 2 Natalie Green
- 3 George Green
- 4 Phil Haslam
- 5 Roy Keeves
- 6 Nick Gray
- 7 Ian Thompson
- 8 Alan Cozens

St James the Great, Hanslope

5th December 1999

1260 Stedman Triples

- 1 Natalie Green
- 2 Carole Harmer
- 3 Nick Gray
- 4 Roy Keeves
- 5 Steve Crane
- 6 Ian Thompson
- 7 Jonathan Griggs (C)
- 8 Richard Haseldine

For Service and to celebrate the birth of
Corey James Leslie Moore, born 3rd
December 1999, nephew of Carole
Harmer

1st Quarter of Stedman: 5

All Saints, Loughton

28th December 1999

1260 Minor

(540 St Clements, 720 Plain Bob)

- 1 John Brookman
- 2 Anne Stainsby
- 3 Becky Fawcett
- 4 Derek Stainsby
- 5 Ted Fawcett
- 6 Bob Winstanley (C)

A Ruby Wedding Compliment to Anne
and Derek Stainsby

St James the Great, Hanslope

31st December 1999

1284 Stedman Triples

- 1 Natalie Green
- 2 Carole Harmer
- 3 Alan Cozens
- 4 Roy Keeves
- 5 Nicholas Gray
- 6 Ian Thompson
- 7 Richard Haseldine (C)
- 8 Jonathan Griggs

Rung half muffled to ring out the old
Millennium, and also as a thanksgiving
for the life of Peter D W Bicknell
1930-1999

All Saints, Loughton

9th January 2000

1260 Plain Bob Minor

- 1 Carole Harmer
- 2 Derek Stainsby
- 3 Stephen Crane
- 4 Roy Keeves
- 5 Alan Cozens
- 6 Bob Winstanley (C)

To celebrate the award of an MBE to
Frank Daniels of Loughton and to mark
10 years of ringing for 3

Peals

St James the Great, Hanslope

13th November 1999

5056 Yorkshire Surprise Major

3 hrs 2 mins

- 1 Roy Keeves
- 2 Carole Harmer
- 3 George Green
- 4 Nick Gray
- 5 Ian Thompson
- 6 Alan Cozens
- 7 Richard Haseldine (C)
- 8 Jonathan Griggs

First Peal: 5

First Yorkshire: 2

Rung by the home band for
Remembrance Sunday. Also to
celebrate the 21st birthday of
Nicola Mitchell (11th November
1999), and to congratulate Alan
Cozens on 50 years of ringing.

St Andrew, Great Linford

31 December 1999-1 January 2000

5400 Doubles (45 extents—

37 Plain Bob, 8 Grandsire)

3 hrs 4 mins

- 1 Christine E Marchbank
- 2 Catherine Stacy
- 3 Nicky King
- 4 Gareth Grayson
- 5 Alan Marchbank (C)
- 6 Brian Newman

For the Millennium

Longest peal for everyone except
conductor

First peal for 6

First of doubles for 2, 3, 4

Longest length on the bells

Commenced at 8.58 pm on

31 December 1999, and completed
at 0.02 am on 1 January 2000

SS Peter & Paul, Newport Pagnell

9th January 2000

1260 Grandsire & Reverse

Canterbury

- 1 Rachel Stacy (1st attempt)
- 2 Catherine Stacy
- 3 Gareth Grayson
- 4 Peter Tribble
- 5 Doug Hird (C)
- 6 Gerald Stratton

Rung for Evensong

Fancy another touch?

Instead of a 'novelty' method for this edition of *In Touch*, I have gathered together a few interesting little touches of common methods that are not normally found in the ringers diary. So if you fancy calling something that is just that little bit different, have a look at these. Remember however that these touches may not be true, so don't include them in a striking competition, but for a practice night they may be a just the ticket.

100 Bob Doubles

Call Plain, Bob, Plain, Plain, Bob Repeat

This is the same as calling the 5th to run out with a bob, and a bob in long fifths, twice.

107 Bob Minor

Call the tenor Wrong, Out, In twice

This is an interesting touch as it comes back into rounds at the handstroke leadend not at backstroke as normal.

168 Bob Minor

W	4	B	H
-	2		S
		S	S
-			S

167 Cambridge Minor

Call the Tenor Wrong, Home, 4ths

Touch comes round at the handstroke lead end of the next lead end.

194 Cambridge Minor

Call the Tenor Wrong with a bob and then Wrong with a single

Touch comes round at the backstroke snap after the lead end.

Jonathan Griggs



Beginners Striking Competition

It is planned to hold the beginners competition at Maids Moreton on Friday 28th April, starting at 7.30 p.m. prompt.

Everyone is welcome. Come along and join in. You do not have to be in a band to enter. Come along and we will make up bands on the night. Complete bands are also welcome, so long as they conform to the rules below.

1. Each band will consist of six ringers and may have no more than three experienced ringers.
2. Teams will be approved by the Ringing Master, whose decision on team membership will be final.
3. The competition will consist of each team ringing rounds for three minutes.
4. Up to two minutes practice per team will be allowed.
5. The start of the test piece will be notified to the judges by ringing two whole pulls on the treble.
6. A judge will be appointed for the competition. The judge's decision is final.

Richard Stanworth

Ruby Wedding!

Anne and Derek Stainsby of Loughton recently celebrated their Ruby Wedding Anniversary.

They were treated to a Surprise Party, held at The MacIntyre Centre at Great Holm. Ringers from all over the country attended—from Bristol, London and Nottingham.

Derek and Anne were married forty years ago in Bedford; Anne tells us that handbells rang Grandsire at the Wedding.



The Ringing Master writes...

Branch Practices

Once a quarter our branch practices focus on rounds and call changes, especially for our new recruits who may feel intimidated by everyone ringing changes. Please come along and join in as the more experience you can get of ringing on different bells, the quicker you will improve and gain in confidence.

We will always welcome you to branch practices; they are for the benefit of **ALL** members, whatever level you ring at. Don't forget to bring your instructor to help out. We can only make a success of practices if we also have experienced ringers to help and provide a strong framework around the less experienced ringers

Remind your instructor to bring his/her Ringer's Diary - They may get called upon to ring a method in the diary at short notice just to keep them on their toes!

Branch practices will always be tailored to be beneficial to the ringers present, whatever their ability.

Look in the calendar at the back of the newsletter for the dates of the practices, but in particular the next focus on call changes is at **Old Wolverton on 17th March**.

We will always ring plain hunt, Plain Bob and Grandsire at any branch practice for those who request it, so don't be put off if you can't ring the special method. This is merely a focus for those who wish to try something different.

Special Methods

Antelope Doubles is one of the special methods at Tyringham in May, along with Union Bob Doubles. A Blue Line for Antelope appears in this edition of *In Touch* on page 14. You

can find Union Bob in the Ringers Diary - just be careful about the bobs. The work is very similar to a single in Stedman Doubles.

Training

If you would like help at your tower over the next year then please let the Ringing Master know and he will see what can be done. Please remember however that we all have commitments to our own towers and can only help you out when we have the time available, so don't expect an instant response to your request for help.

Please note that at any tower where we come to help we will expect to run the ringing and attempt to structure the session to give most benefit to those present.

Anyone who is able to help out at other towers on their practice night, please let me know as there are one or two towers in need of help to progress with change ringing.

If you would like help with ironing out bell handling problems then the Ringing Master is also willing to give advice or arrange a handling workshop if required.

Tower Captains - if you have ringers who would benefit from further training which you cannot give them in your own tower, then nominate them for a branch training session when we can give them some intensive tuition and practice.

Striking Competitions

The Guild 8-bell competition will be held on Monday 1st May in the Central Bucks Branch. I will be looking for a band very shortly. The method this year is Little Bob Major.

The 10-bell competition is not until September. If you wish to be considered then please make every effort to attend the 10-bell practices being organised during the year. The first of these 10-bell practices will be held on 31st March, provided a venue can be found.

Branch e-group www.egroups.com

Doug Hird

Did Father Christmas bring a new pc for the children? Good, now introduce them to the vacuum cleaner while you get logged on to the branch e-group.

It is quite a neat idea. A standard web site is created for all the different egroups. To this we've added a bit of local information and stuff about forthcoming events. We also have a (currently very short) list of ringers who are available during weekdays for those weddings and funerals etc. that are difficult to arrange bands for. But you have to be a member of the group to get in and see the site or to send emails to the group members. Everyone else sees a limited amount of information about the branch and

can't send emails to members of the group. Non-members see just enough to let them decide if we are interesting enough to join.

To join, this is what you do:

Either visit the front page at www.egroups.com/nbb_odg/info.html

Or send an email to nicola_king@hotmail.com and she'll do the rest.

The e-group also sends out reminder e-mails to make sure you don't forget branch events. So you stay in touch without actually going to the e-group web site.

The intention is to have at least one member per tower in the e-group. This way we can communicate quickly and effectively. We all know how difficult it is to get ringers on the phone. Everyone is always out ringing! This way, messages are waiting for your

return on the e-mail and general information gets added to the e-group web site as appropriate.

The really good bit about the e-group is that it is free. It also gives a whole lot of features that I don't have time to put into the branch web site.

Witney Parish Church

Saturday 20 May 2000
7.30 pm

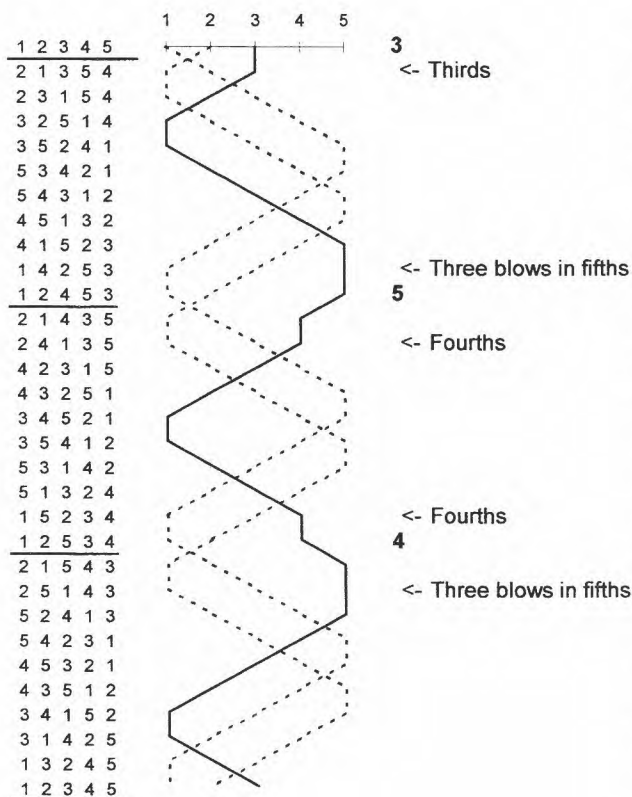
Reading Male Voice Choir

with the

Barfield Handbell Ringers

Tickets £5.00, concessions £3.00
Tel. 0118-988-4172

Antelope Doubles – special method for the May branch practice at Tyringham



Antelope is a double hunt method like Grandsire. In the plain course the second plain hunts as well as the treble, so there are only three working bells.

Callings

Standard Grandsire callings for 120 changes work for Antelope :

BPBPSP repeated and rotations

PBPBPS repeated and rotations

Fourth is observation bell in this calling -

Fifth cannot be observation bell in Antelope

S BSP repeated twice and rotations

Work at a Bob

Bells at the front ring a Grandsire Bob -

Bell in seconds place when a bob is called

makes thirds and goes into the hunt

Bell leading when a bob is called is unaffected and makes normal thirds

Hunt bell makes three blows in fifths, then dodges 4-5 down

Bell in fourths place when a bob is called makes fourths, then dodges 4-5 up with the bell coming out of the hunt

Work at a Single

Bells at the front ring a Grandsire Single

Bell in seconds place when a single is called

makes long thirds

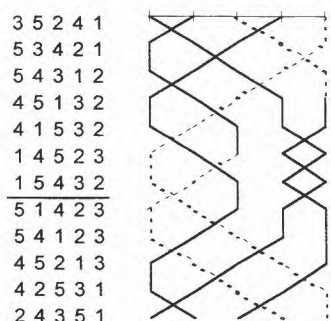
Bell leading when a single is called makes seconds and goes into the hunt

Hunt bell makes three blows in fifths, then dodges 4-5 down

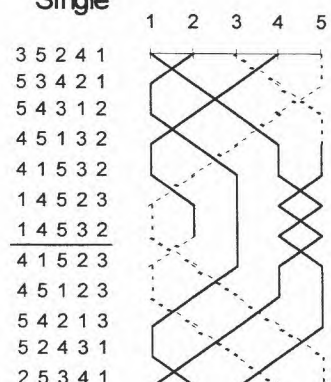
Bell in fourths place when a single is called makes fourths, then dodges 4-5 up with the bell coming out of the hunt

N.B. The 4-5 dodge is the opposite way round to a dodge in Grandsire (dodge at backstroke)

Bob



Single



THE BELLS OF ST PETER'S CHURCH STOKE GOLDINGTON

by Owen Warren

Originally a ring of four cast by Robert Atton of Buckingham and hung in a substantial "gallows end" oak frame, part of which is preserved in the ringing chamber and dated 1625. All four bells have the legend GOD SAVE KYNG CHARLS 1625 cast on their waists, with the Atton foundry marks round the shoulder bands. The bells were hung from canons.

In 1707 a treble was added—this was cast by Henry Penn of Peterborough and is the only bell in Bucks cast by this founder. The inscription reads HENRY PENN MADE ME 1707 together with the names of the churchwardens of the day and the imprints of three coins. The bell was hung in a frame above the others, the remains of which can be seen above the doorway into the bell chamber, also the stonework has been gouged away to clear the clapper or stay.

c.1914 Alfred Bowell of Ipswich did a large amount of re-hanging in the Newport Deanery, and St Peter's was one of the rings he operated on. The canons were "removed" (by the use of a sledge hammer I suspect). The treble and second were placed in the old tenor pit - one "A" frame for two bells and the excess width taken up by a length of timber bolted to the inside of the frame. The front four bells were hung from wooden headstocks and the tenor was hung from an R.S.J. fabricated headstock—see Weston Underwood bells. The "go" of the ring as a whole was quite good until later years when death watch beetle and rot took its toll.

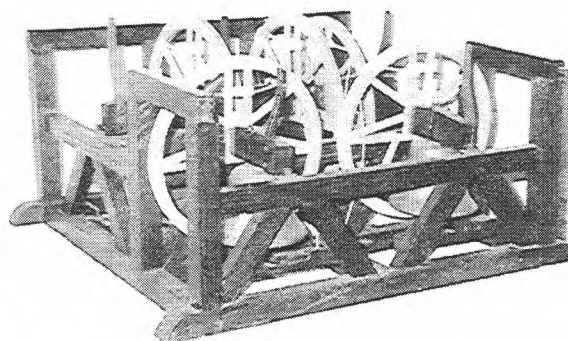
c.1930 the Tenor bell cracked from the lip through the sound bow and was unringable. This was caused by the installation of a "clapper", an old style water pump handle, for the purpose of knelling. This struck the extreme lip of the bell with disastrous effect. A faculty could not be obtained for the re-casting of the bell as a new electric welding process was in

the news at the time called "BARIMAR" and this was to be tried. It is true that the bell sounded somewhat better, but wasn't good, neither was the weld as part of the crack was still visible on the inside of the sound-bow.

By the start of the 1950s it was decided to embark on a restoration scheme—recast the tenor, retune the other bells, add a treble and re-hang in a steel and cast iron frame. Total cost around £800!!

This work was carried out by Mears and Stainbank of Whitechapel. The new bell has the text LET BROTHERLY LOVE CONTINUE, which was on the village banner at the

Tenor	13-1-22	F	Recast
	12-1-0	G	Heavily lip tuned
	8-2-0	A	
	7-2-0	B ^b	
	6-0-0	C	
	5-2-2	D	Cast 1952



A model of the bells prior to restoration in 1952
made by Owen Warren and Ernie Shouler
Scale is approximately $\frac{1}{12}$ th

Who is this Branch member?

The Answer—(see page 10 of
last issue)

The facts:

- My name is David Phillipson and congratulations to Shirley Cozens for being the first of only two correct entries out of the hat. I understand that Ron Snack received more votes than I did but I cannot see the resemblance!
- When I checked my records I found with horror that I have actually been ringing for 35 years. I learnt to ring in 1965 when I was 13 at St Giles Lincoln and I was taught by Jack L. Millhouse.
- I have been a member of the

following bands: St Giles Lincoln, Lincoln Cathedral, All Saints Stamford, St. Michael Uffington, Derby Cathedral, All Saints Leighton Buzzard, Newport Pagnell and Emberton.

- I was Ringing Master at St Giles Lincoln, St. Michael Uffington, All Saints Leighton Buzzard and Emberton.
- I have been a resident member of The Lincoln Guild, The Derbyshire Association, The Bedfordshire Association and the Oxford Guild.
- I was Branch Ringing Master for the Luton District of the Bedfordshire Association and also an Association General Committee member. I have served as Branch Ringing Master and Chairman of the North Bucks Branch of the ODG, and am currently Branch Auditor!

- Although I have rung both Bristol and Spliced Surprise Maximus my most memorable and challenging peal was probably the long length rung on the six at Ampthill, it was rung as a sponsored peal for the augmentation to eight. We rang 10,080 Surprise Minor in 14 different methods. My last peal was the first on the augmented twelve at Leighton Buzzard.
- I have rung in the National Twelve Bell Striking Competition on three occasions, twice for the Derbyshire Association at Southwark Cathedral and St Phillips Birmingham and once for The Cumberland Youths.
- I currently ring at Emberton and occasionally at St.Pauls Bedford for Sunday Service.

**Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers
NORTH BUCKS BRANCH**

**Minutes of Quarterly Meeting
held at Woughton on the Green on 4th December 1999**

Chairman's Welcome

Doug Hird welcomed everyone to Woughton for the Quarterly meeting.

Apologies for Absence

Received from Bob Winstanley, Alan Marchbank, Jean Mattinsley, David Scrutton, Christine Cable, Barry Smith.

Minutes of previous Meeting

These were published in the November edition of In Touch. Hugh Butler proposed and Derek Stainsby seconded that the Chairman sign the minutes as a correct record of the meeting. This was agreed on a show of hands.

Matters Arising

These were dealt with later in the meeting.

Election of New Members

Nominations had been received proposing four members -

Tower	Name	Proposed by	Seconded by
Woughton	Anna Sexton	Brian Baldwin	Peter Tribble
	Barbara McSherry		
Great Brickhill	Janet Shephard	Hugh Butler	Paul Faithfull
Buckingham	Rebecca Stanworth(Junior)	Doug Hird	Richard Stanworth

All these were elected without dissent. The Chairman asked those present to stand and he welcomed them to the Guild on behalf of the branch

Officers reports

Ringling Master - Although a report had already appeared in In Touch, Richard wished to congratulate Hanslope on representing the branch at the Guild Six bell striking competition. This was the first time that the branch had managed to enter for several years and they had acquitted themselves well, just missing out on getting into the final.

Treasurer - The total in the account is £1436. This includes £500 PowerGen money, so there is about £900 of our own money. There are still some unpaid subscriptions which Sheila would like as soon as possible so that the accounts can be finalised. In particular the new members from Tingewick and Great Linford had yet to pay. Please remember that subscriptions for new members are due at the time of election - as stated on the nomination form. The only exception is those elected at the December meeting as membership for those elected today does not start until 1st January next year. The raffle today raised £17.50 - thank you to all who contributed.

Guild Rep - David Middleton gave a report on the General Committee Meeting which he had attended in November. There were a number of issues raised at the meeting.

Following on from concerns regarding the Guild insurance, the cover for accidents in the tower has been doubled by reducing cover elsewhere. Members will no longer be covered whilst travelling to or from the tower.

The Restoration Fund is now looking healthier, with extra money having been raised. More fund raising ideas are being investigated for this fund. The rates of grants from this fund for augmentations are expected to be - for upto 6 bells 15%, for upto 8 bells 7½%, giving between £400 to £1000 to each tower.

For the Guild Festival there is going to be a special lunch at Christ Church College at £15 per head. There are some new books out - particularly one on organising a tour.

The Millennium Project - Plaques will be presented to towers with three or more bells. Exact details of dedications are needed for these plaques. In addition plaques can be purchased which have the names of the ringers on them. These are expected to cost around £35. A Faculty will not be required for these plaques. The Millennium Fun Day will be on June 10th and the Millennium Ale will be brewed by Hook Norton in June. It is to be called 'Ringers Delight 2000' with the slogan on the label 'Ring in the New with Strikingly Good Ale'.