



In Touch

February 2001

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Annual General Meeting

Saturday 3rd March 2001 at Bletchley

The Bells of St Mary's

by Roger Everson

St Mary's Bletchley has a fine ring of eight bells. These originated from 1712, when the five bells that had hung in the tower since 1629 (when they were cast from four older bells) were taken down and delivered to Mr Abraham Rudhall of Gloucester, together with 18cwt of metal from Arlesey, Bedfordshire where the steeple had fallen down. Six bells were cast and an additional two trebles made from his own metal.

Various bells have been recast over the years and the weight reduced to 61cwt 3qrs 37lbs. In 1924 Messrs Taylors of Loughborough erected a new iron frame on steel girders. The old bell floor was removed and the clock floor used as the bell floor, the bells being hung some eight feet lower in the tower.

The first peal by all Bletchley ringers was in June 1911 for the Coronation!

Each bell bears an inscription and my own favourite is the 3:

"In the dawn of God's own day
Awake my morning bell obey"

For all those avid wedding ringers the 7 says it all:

"Gay feast and fete I herald wide
And crown with song the babe or bride"



St Mary, Bletchley 8, 15-2-6

A G M

- 3.00 Ringing at Whaddon (provisional)
- 4.00 Ringing at Bletchley
- 4.30 Service
- 5.00 Tea
- 5.45 Business Meeting
- Followed by evening ringing

Names for tea to: Paul & Peggy Faithfull

by Wednesday 28th February 2001

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The Chairman's Soap Box

On TV, the quiz show "The Weakest Link" regularly shows an interesting effect. When the "weakest link" has been voted off the team, its performance doesn't normally improve. It seems to me that this can work the same way in ringing.

Faced with a fairly strong band it is tempting to weed out the weaklings. After all, if you have twelve or so ringers and remove say two of the weakest, the average ability of the band must increase. So you get an improvement and a leaner fitter band.

The actual long-term result is often different. You have to consider the other contributions your "weaker" members make to a band. The effect on a young band can be very unpredictable as there are often friendships outside ringing that you are unaware of. So the original two can easily take say one more with them. Now, for a ring of eight you will have problems if one or two of the remaining ringers are away for some reason.

What about the remaining "stronger" band. They now have to ring more often on average. While this will result in accelerated progress it will work them harder. Some may give up just because it is too intense now and not as relaxed as it used to be. And again, if someone can't attend a practice, what can you ring? At least you had some options with a larger band.

The final, and I think biggest, problem is who actually is the "weakest link?" On TV, the team rarely agree and sometimes vote off the strongest. It is not unknown for a lucky survivor to go on to win.

So what to do? The stronger ringers need to be nurtured and encouraged but they can usually be trusted to look after themselves occasionally. Tower Captains can afford some practice time on the foot soldiers. Given a bit of attention they may surprise you. It is possible that they are under performing because of the Tower Captain.

If you think you are being treated as the weakest link remember that someone else probably disagrees.

Whatever you do, don't put it to a vote.

Doug Hird



Next Issue Copy Date: Saturday, 21st April 2001

I shall not be standing for re-election as Editor of *In Touch* at the Annual General Meeting, so this is my last issue. I have enjoyed learning more about the Branch and acquiring new skills with various computer software packages!

My grateful thanks to all ringers who have contributed towards the last eight issues—I have been amazed at the wide variety of contributions from all ages and on a wide range of topics. It has also been a pleasure to share my interest in unusual churches not necessarily in North Bucks.

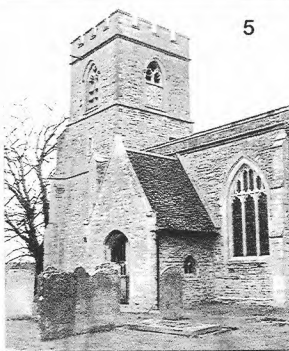
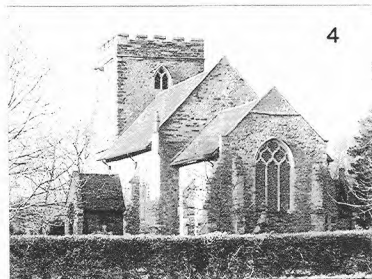
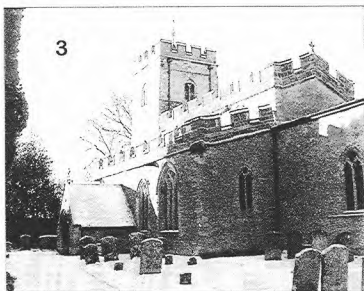
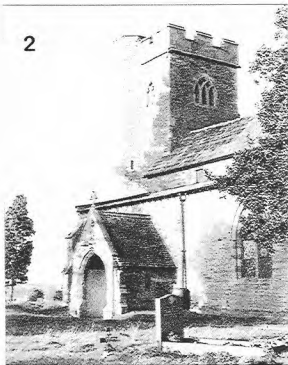
Apologies go to those I have nagged endlessly to adhere to deadlines! Thanks also to people who have commented with either criticism or praise—it's good to know that *In Touch* is being read.

My best wishes to the next Editor.

Sheila Watts, Editor

How well do you know your Branch Churches?

See if you can identify these Churches, which are all within the North Bucks Branch. You will not necessarily visit them for ringing practices!



The Answers are on Page 12

St Edmund, Maids Moreton
Wednesday 4th October 2000
1260 Grandsire Doubles
1 Shirley Webb
2 Ann Fletcher
3 Andrew Spencer (C)
4 Peter Nicholson
5 Roger King
6 David Goodger

Rung half-muffled prior to a memorial service for Trooper Frederick Joseph Dancer, Royal Bucks Hussars, who died at Mafeking on November 2nd 1900 whilst serving in the Boer War

St Mary, Whaddon
Wednesday 25th October 2000
1260 Doubles (3m/5v)
1 B Phillips
2 Elaine Koster
3 R Jones (C)
4 M Woodcock
5 R Day
6 D Moore

For United Nations Day

St Edmund, Maids Moreton
Sunday 5th November 2000
1260 Grandsire Doubles
1 David Goodger
2 Helen Stanworth
3 Ann Fletcher
4 Peter Nicholson
5 Richard Stanworth (C)
6 Michael Tinsley

In memory of William Frank Townsend and George Edmans

All Saints, Loughton
Sunday 3rd December 2000
1260 Plain Bob Doubles
1 Roger Blackburn
2 Anne McIntyre
3 Becky Fawcett
4 Derek Stainsby
5 Bob Winstanley (C)
6 Jonathan Waters

For Christingle Service
1—First on a working bell

St Paul, Bedford
Sunday 3rd December 2000
1282 Cambridge Surprise Royal
1 Steve Crane
2 Natalie Green
3 Roger King
4 Richard Haseldine
5 Nick Gray
6 Doug Hird
7 Phil Haslam
8 Alan Marchbank
9 George Green
10 Jonathan Griggs (C)

For Service
1st Quarter of Royal: 1,2,5

Quarters



St James the Great, Hanslope
Sunday 31st December 2000
1260 Stedman Triples

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

Rung for morning Service, and as a welcome to Zoe Harmer born 26th August 2000, and Julia Louise Crane born 4th October 2000

St Edmund, Maids Moreton
Saturday 6th January 2001
1260 Grandsire Doubles

- 1 William Yates (C)
- 2 Ann Fletcher
- 3 Gerald Kingston
- 4 Roger King
- 5 Michael Tinsley
- 6 David Goodger

To celebrate the wedding of Paula Anne Timony and Scott David Ray

A First Peal

Congratulations to Anne McIntyre on ringing her first peal. Anne used to live in Cheshire before settling first in Shenley and now Loughton, and has just become a committee member of the Whiting Society, a ringing organisation based in Cheshire and Derbyshire.

While on an outing earlier in the year, she told another member that she was keen to ring a peal; he volunteered to call it. In due course he selected as the tower Pott Shrigley, in the heart of the Peak District. (This was something of a shock to Bob Winstanley, who had also agreed to take part, expecting a journey no longer than a quick burst up the M1 to Derby.) In fact all the band made it to Pott Shrigley on Saturday 18th November and a peal of 5040 Plain Bob Minor was rung for the Whiting Society.

Visitors at Stony Stratford

We were visited by two ladies a few weeks ago on our Monday practice evening. They are preparing a Clutch Club project website for their school, St Mary Magdalene, and their chosen subject is the two churches in Stony Stratford. They interviewed, photographed and recorded us ringing and will let us know when their website has been created.

Until then one can surf existing sites via: <http://clutch.open.ac.uk/>

David Scrutton

Bats in the Belfry



A few weeks ago at Hanslope, a touch of Bob Major had to be abandoned as a large bat suddenly appeared to express its displeasure by swooping among the sallies. All efforts to steer it towards open windows failed, so in the end the lights were switched off and we sat in the dark hoping it would prefer the night air outside. But no, in the end it wisely found its way back up to its roost somewhere in the ringing chamber ceiling and has not been seen since.

My ~~Tail~~ Tale

Bellringing from a canine perspective



This is me. I've been called a lot of things in my time, but actually my name is Scrappy. Apparently I am the Hanslope tower mascot. A position of considerable responsibility. Definitely not to be sniffed at.

Of course I played a major part in the recent success of Hanslope's striking team. I provided comfort and support in their hour of need. Not to mention my attempts at upsetting the opposition by wandering around looking forlorn and unloved. This is a highly successful tactic of mine. I perfected it as a puppy. I used it when I first met Him and Her. They were so impressed that they took me home to live with them.

Him the tall one and Her the one who is nearer to my own height first introduced me to bells in 1996. This is when my basket and belongings moved to a new house in the place called Hanslope. Hanslope is a great place to live because it has miles and miles of four-paw paths and lots of rabbits. Walks feature quite highly on my list of canine requirements. Second only to food. Food is always the most important thing.

Most mornings I walk past Hanslope church. If Him is running late I might hear the bell ring eight times. When this happens Him is in a real rush. Hanslope tower is very big. Getting up the steps is quite a challenge especially if you only have short legs like me. Occasionally Him and Her carry me up the steps

to the green room with the boxes and the long seats. This is a good wag as I am likely to meet pedigree chums Sheila and Uncle Roy. And then I will get Fuss and Attention. This is number three on my list of canine requirements.

Sometimes I spend the whole day visiting churches and listening to bells. This is called an Outing. Good Outings are in the summer and involve lots of Walks and Fuss and Attention. And the picnics can lead to Food especially if I sit up and beg. This is another little trick of mine. Not so good Outings involve being tied up outside the church on my own listening to clattering bell noises. Or even worse sitting inside on a cold stone floor. If I'm lucky someone will notice me shivering and take pity. If I'm very lucky the ringing may also improve. If the other pedigree chums Sheila and Sheila are on the Outing I'll usually oblige them by posing for a photo or two. At the end of an Outing Him and Her usually leave me in the dog-mobile to have a good Sleep. Sleep is number four on my list of canine requirements. Later on Him and Her will creep up on me to try and catch me sleeping but I usually smell them first. Don't tell Him and Her that. So all in all Outings are a good thing.

If you meet me on an Outing just remember this. Food, Fuss and Attention, Walks and a Sleep are all I ask. Give me one or two of these and you'll be my pedigree chum too.

**Me and my
number one
requirement**

Scrappy



BRAIN BENDERS

A Bell Puzzler

by Shirley & Alan Cozens



1	Who wrote Tintinnabula?	
2	What's odd about the Bells of Malvern Priory?	
3	Where can you ring the war memorial?	
4	Pass and Stow got it wrong.	
5	What is the connection between citrus fruits and flying war machines?	
6	The Lutine Bell has just been rung. What's happened?	
7	Where is the circus ring?	
8	What is the connection between Stedman and Ludgate Hill?	
9	You are ringing at the "Cathedral of the Peaks". Where are you?	
10	If your bells had RSJ headstocks what bellfounder was involved?	
11	What is the weight and the note of the tenor at Fenchurch St Paul?	
12	There is a health and safety problem here.	
13	A tower competing with Pisa.	
14	Is it the Old Post Office Tower or is it the Nancy Hanks Center? Take your pick, where are you?	
15	A twisted ring of bells.	
16	The aprons are a-flying, a bell is a-ringing. What's happening?	
17	Where in the world did Gillett and Johnson collaborate with John Taylor's over a ring of bells?	
18	Where would you find a blind sway?	
19	It is said to be the longest draft of rope.	
20	What tower has connections with Todmorden?	

William (Bill) Townsend 1921 – 2000

Bill Townsend died late last year from heart trouble, which had caused him to give up ringing at Buckingham a few years ago, although he remained an honorary band member. When I was asked to write something of my friend and fellow ringer, I had to think back to my school days at the Old National C of E School in Buckingham which we both attended.

Bill was in the choir under a noted organist Mr Norman Young. Bill's father was also a chorister and bellringer, and Bill learnt to ring in 1934. I remember that he rang a bell when his father took me and three other recruits up into the bells to see them working. That was in May 1936. At that time Bill was also having organ lessons and he became organist at Finmere.

When the war broke out he joined the RAF, and became a mechanic. When demobbed he followed his trade at Marriot's Garage near the church at Buckingham. He was there for many years, and whilst there he took on many duties in the church, such as locking and unlocking night and morning. When he married a hairdresser, Miss Kathleen Reynolds, he obtained a cottage near the church where he lived for many years, until his retirement, when he moved to a bungalow in Akeley.

Bill learnt to ring Grandsire, Stedman and Plain Bob, but his attendance at service ringing was 100%. He was never a peal ringer but would always ring in a quarter if we were one short. I was very lucky in having him as a friend - he always maintained and serviced my motorbikes.

I was unable to attend his funeral at Maids Moreton owing to hospitalisation but all Buckingham and Maids Moreton ringers extend their sympathy to his wife Kath, son Chris and daughter Susan.

Bill Yates

Kay, Steve and Julia go West

In the last issue we were congratulating Kay & Steve Crane on the birth of Julia - in this issue we send our best wishes to them all as they move to the west of England. Steve, who used to be Branch Secretary, has a new job at Hewlett Packard in Bristol, and they will be living at Portishead on the mouth of the river Severn until permanent accommodation can be found. However, Steve is keen to point out that we might not notice too much difference as they will be frequenting in North Bucks visiting relatives!

From the Ringing Master

Joint Practice

The joint Surprise Major practice with the Luton District of the Bedfordshire Association will be held at Downs Barn on Saturday 17th March 2001 from 7.30—9.00 p.m. Please support this if you can ring surprise major methods. The venue is still subject to confirmation.

Ten Bell Practice

There will be a ten-bell practice at Kempston on Wednesday 28th March from 7.30—9.00 pm. The Kempston band have kindly agreed to allow us to join their practice night, but it will be run by us, so please support this if you can. Other plans for months with fifth Fridays in them are still to be arranged.

Over the Branch Border

(please check these events before setting out!)

March 10 24	6.30 7.30	Padbury Kempston	Central Bucks Bedford Barn Dance
April 7 21	3.30 6.30	Goldington Swanbourne	Bedford Quarterly Central Bucks
May 12 12 19	6.30 7.30	Granborough North Marston St Peter, Bedford	Central Bucks Central Bucks Beds Assoc AGM

Strikingly Simple

by Graham Cook

(found in the belfry at Aldbourne, Wiltshire)

Said the treble to the two
There is only one of you.
But if you're over-far from me
They will never hear the three.
Which will cause the four to jive
So she clashes with the five.
Such that six will get uneven
And start dodging with the seven.
Till the tenor starts to wonder
Is she aft or is she under?
Which will start my leading shunting,
Till it's getting out of bounds,
And I'll think that we're plain hunting
When we're really ringing rounds!!

What do Branch Officers do?

By Doug Hird

Chairman

Currently Doug Hird

- Run Branch meetings
 - * AGM and 3 Quarterly meetings
 - * 4 Branch Officers' Meetings
 - * Other meetings as needed
- Assist other officers where needed

As Chairman it is useful to know who everyone is, what activities are going on and what the issues are that concern ringers at the moment. It is also valuable to be able to judge the mood of a meeting, to decide how to manage difficult subjects and to manage the time available. Ringing ability is not essential but can tend to influence the balance of Branch activities.

Secretary

Currently Helen Stanworth

- Act as the primary point of contact for the Branch
- Organise Branch events
 - * 12 Branch Practices
 - * AGM and 3 Quarterly Meetings
 - * 4 Branch Officers' Meetings
 - * Other meetings as needed
 - * Organise judges for striking competitions
- Communicate Guild information to the Branch
 - * Notices of forthcoming events
 - * Annual Report
 - * Certificates etc.
 - * Other news from Guild meetings
- Communicate information to Guild:
 - * Tower contacts
 - * Membership
- Report on activities at Quarterly meetings

This is the biggest job in the Branch. As Secretary it is useful to be organised, to respond to things quickly and to keep in touch with what is going on. Again, ringing ability is not that relevant provided that enough has been learned to understand what is going on.

Treasurer

Currently Sheila Watts

- Manage the financial affairs of the Branch
 - * Collect subscriptions
 - * Pass on appropriate amounts to the Guild
 - * Collect other donations
 - * Pass on appropriate amounts to towers for Branch Practices
 - * Pass on grants to towers as decided upon at Branch meetings
 - * Pass on expenses to Branch Officers
 - * Maintain a correct record of balances and activities
- Report on activities at Quarterly meetings

As Treasurer it is important to be organised. Ringing ability is not of major importance but a knowledge of who is who can be useful.

Ringing Master

Currently Richard Stanworth

- Run Branch ringing events
 - * Run Branch Practices
 - * Organise judges for Guild Striking Competitions
- Set methods for Branch ringing events
- Advise on preferred towers for Branch practices
- Report on activities at Quarterly meetings

Ringing ability is valuable as Ringing Master. Also a knowledge of the abilities of other Branch members. A knowledge of the condition of rings of bells in the Branch is also useful. Experience of being a Tower Captain or Ringing Master is very useful.

Deputy Ringing Master

Currently Gareth Grayson

- Deputise in the absence of the Ringing Master

This post offers an opportunity for someone to learn how to be a Ringing Master. It is useful, however, to be able to work with the Ringing Master. Again, some ringing experience is useful.

Guild Reps

Currently Alan Marchbank and David Middleton

Through attendance at Guild General Committee Meetings and AGM:

- Communicate Guild information to the Branch
 - * Notices of forthcoming events
 - * Annual Report
 - * Certificates etc.
 - * Other news from Guild meetings
- Communicate Branch concerns to the Guild
- Report on activities at Quarterly meetings

Ability to travel considerable distances and an interest in the internal workings of the Guild are useful in this post. Ability to communicate and grasp new subjects also help. Some ringing experience can help with this post as a good deal of fairly specialist subject matter comes up at Guild meetings.

Newsletter Editor

Currently Sheila Watts

- Compile and produce a quarterly newsletter from material provided by Branch members

Communication skills are most needed in this post. The difficulty of gathering input from Branch members must not be underestimated but the satisfaction of producing something of quality usually makes it all worthwhile. Provided that the input from members is up to standard, ringing ability is less important than presentation skills.

Archivist

Currently Doug Hird

- Research, compile and maintain an archive of historical information about the bells and ringers of North Bucks
- Make that information available to Branch members
- Report on activities at Quarterly meetings

An ability to search through large amounts of dusty information is useful here, so a bit of spare time would be useful. Ringing experience is also valuable as it helps to know which words to search for. It also helps to know which towers are in the Branch; there are over 70 of them with bells. Some organisational and IT skills are also used.

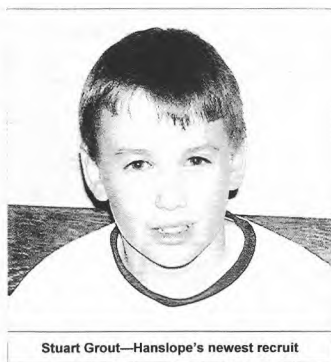
Born to Ring

I am Stuart Grout; I have lived in Hanslope in North Bucks, since I was born 13 years ago.

For as long as I can remember, I have been very interested in church bells. I loved the sound of them and the tune they make. I was three years old when I first heard Hanslope church bells I thought they made a very lovely noise, I loved them so much I wanted to go and watch them one day. So one day my Dad and I went up to the tower to watch the people ringing the bells. It was then that I decided that when I was old enough I would like to be able to ring them too.

Years later, when I was 12, I asked Roy Keeves, the Hanslope tower captain, whether I was allowed to ring the church bells and he said yes, and I was so delighted I could hardly believe it. I thought it was a dream.

One Monday night in February last year, my Dad and I walked up to the church and met Roy, he took us up the tower, then we started a lifetime's fascinating hobby. First I learnt how to ring the backstroke, then the hand stroke then I learnt how to do both strokes together and in the weeks following, rounds and how to follow



Stuart Grout—Hanslope's newest recruit

another bell. Then we were ready to go up on Thursdays and make some noise instead of my bell being tied. It took me a couple of months to get to this stage. When I began to ring on Thursdays I learnt how to ring rounds and called changes. Now I am ringing my first method: Plain Hunt. I am able to raise and lower my bell, together with the other ringers.

My first ever accident was in about November when I broke a stay. It was very upsetting and shocking, but all the others said to be a good ringer, you have to break a stay.

Last month my Dad and I were made members of the band and I have paid my subs for the year. I am looking forward to going to visit some other towers.

I would like to be able to be in my first peal when I am about fourteen, like my Great Grandfather did at Aldermaston church,

and I am thirteen now. I think bellringing is a really good hobby for me and my bellringing career will never end.

Footnote:

Stuart was diagnosed as a child as having Asperger's syndrome, a form of autism. Part of the Asperger's condition is an obsessive interest in more or less anything. In his time Stuart has been obsessive about a wide range of things from trains to washing machines. One of his obsessions, and the only one that he now displays, is his love of church bells. But thanks to the ringers at Hanslope, and their patience and caring attitude, this obsession has now been turned into a genuine hobby. I am very proud of the fact that Stuart has achieved so much in quite a short space of time. He's certainly doing better than me.

(Dad, Andy Grout)

THE RINGING ROADSHOW 2001

Sponsored by *The Ringing World* and the
Central Council at
Keele University, Staffordshire
Easy access from A50 and M6 (J14)

The Ringing World will be there, as will many members of the Central Council – come and talk to them – they're all human!
Many of the Council's committees will have stands with displays of a wide range of ringing-related activities

Other attractions include many stalls displaying and selling a whole galaxy of goodies such as books ancient and modern • computer software • bell jewellery knitwear • ropes & muffles • handbells and handbell music and much much more

The leading founders and installation people will be there
Several mini-rings to try out will be there and a number of towers open for grabbers will be there

Who else should be there ? YOU

BOOK THE DATE NOW
SATURDAY 31 MARCH 2001
10.30AM – 5PM
ADMISSION IS FREE!



The intention of the Data Protection Act is to protect individuals from harm resulting from a misuse of information held on them. So it puts controls on who should be allowed access and use of the information, what can be done with

All of the above information is actually published information and has always been in the public domain. Therefore, we have few issues with the act of capturing and storing this information.

The principles that require the Branch to take some action are 1, 4 and 6.

1 We must provide reasons for processing data. This includes the simple acts of collecting and holding the data. For the North Bucks Branch, these can be outlined as:

the information and the ways in which its accuracy is maintained.

The Data Protection Registrar, not surprisingly, keeps a register of organisations that capture, keep and use personal data on individuals. Recent correspondence in *The Ringing World* has indicated that it is not absolutely necessary for ringing societies, as non-profit making organisations, to register. The logic being that the organisation itself will not aim to make financial profit from the information it holds. However, this does not exempt such organisations from complying with the Data Protection Act.

The North Bucks Branch is now on the register. The entry was made before the *Ringing World* article appeared. The entry only costs £35 per year so we can reconsider our position at the end of 2001. The form that is used to capture what information we hold and how it is used covers almost every eventuality so now everything we do has been pigeon-holed. It is unlikely that we will get into trouble for doing something we haven't declared.

There are eight basic principles of the Act:

- 1 Personal data must be processed fairly and lawfully.
- 2 Personal data must be obtained and used for specified and lawful purposes.
- 3 Personal data must be adequate, relevant and not excessive.
- 4 Personal data must be accurate and where necessary, kept up to date.
- 5 Personal data must not be kept for longer than necessary.
- 6 Personal data must be processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects.
- 7 Personal data must be kept secure.
- 8 Personal data must be properly protected when transferred overseas.

Personal data is any data that relate to a living individual. So, provided that the Branch adheres to these principles, we should have no problems. What information do we hold?

Members	Non-members—e.g. Tower Correspondents
Name Tower A record of the years they have been a member Have they paid subscriptions this year?	Name Tower Address Phone Number
For members that are also tower correspondents: Address Phone Number	
Ringers of peals, quarters and others mentioned in the Branch archives could be both members and non-members. For these we have a record of name, bell rung and what the performance was.	

So for the majority of members we hold very little information and for a few individuals we hold address and phone numbers.

Membership details	For the day to day running of the Branch
	For the Guild to know who is covered by insurance
	For the Guild to be able to check the validity of peals rung for the ODG
	For the administration of Branch subscriptions by both Branch and Guild
	For the medium term budgeting of the Branch funds
Tower Correspondent details	To be published in the Guild Annual Report for the benefit of all ringers
Details of peals, quarters, etc.	For historical analysis

4 The accuracy of information is of great importance to the individual when used by commercial organisations. The Branch is not in a position to do the individual any great harm but confusion and upset can be caused by an incorrect entry. So the Branch needs to take steps to ensure that the information we hold is accurate and up to date.

6 The rights of the individual are also important. The Branch needs to keep its records in sufficiently good order that any information we hold on a particular person can be produced in a timely manner. Following on from this, any corrections that are offered by the individual need to be acted upon.

So how can we deliver these?

Firstly, if anyone wants to know what information the Branch holds on them, they can ask a Branch officer (preferably the Secretary) we will then get everything together and report back to the individual. As mentioned above, all of the information is already in the public domain. What may be of interest to individuals is that which is held in some indexed format such as the Branch archives.

Maintaining accuracy is a more difficult task. It is desirable that information is correct but difficult to achieve. It is important that the Data Protection Act is not allowed to prevent the normal operation of the Branch. So, for example, the election of members or the payment of subs must not be disrupted. Members are already provided with the opportunity to correct their details on an annual basis when the subscription reminders go out. Members also have opportunities to express any concerns about how information is used at any Branch meeting or via *In Touch*.

As further developments occur they will be reflected in the Data Protection Act section of the Branch web site.

Doug Hird
Chairman

BRAIN BENDERS ANSWERS

FROM PAGE 6

A Bell Puzzler By Shirley & Alan Cozens

1	Ernest Morris
2	A ring of 9 bells
3	At St James the Great, Hanslope
4	They cast the Liberty Bell (USA) which has cracked
5	St Clement Danes, London (Oranges and Lemons and RAF Church)
6	A ship has been lost
7	Liverpool Cathedral, all ringers stand on a raised circle. (It would hurt if you fell off.)
8	St Paul's Cathedral, London. Best place to listen to Sunday service Stedman Cinques.
9	St John the Baptist, Tideswell, Derbyshire
10	Bowell of Ipswich
11	41 cwt in C. The Nine Taylors Church.
12	St Mary, East Bergholt, Suffolk. (Rung without ropes in ground floor cage, one of their ringers got hurt, ringing banned by HASAW at present.)
13	St Laurence, Surfleet, Lincolnshire. (Leaning tower—believe you me, it leans.)
14	Washington, USA. (10 bells, tenor 26-1-13 in D)
15	St Mary and All Saints, Chesterfield, Derbyshire. 10, tenor 25-1-5 in D. Famous twisted spire.
16	Shrove Tuesday pancake race at Olney
17	Christ Church, Calgary, Canada, 8, 8-2-0. One of the last ring of bells cast by Gilletts. When they arrived in Canada Gilletts had ceased trading in bells so Taylors hung them. Best of both worlds, a pretty ring of bells.
18	St George, Brailles, 6, 29-0-19, Warwicks. Bells hung high in tower which sways alarmingly, especially when pulling up in peal.
19	Abbey Church of SS Bartholomew, Guthlac & Mary, Croyland, Lincs. Reputed to be 105 ft. (I believe this.)
20	St Laurence, Towcester—back 8 from Christ Church, Todmorden.

FROM PAGE 3

Do you know your Branch Churches?

- 1 Gayhurst
- 2 Moulsoe
- 3 Lathbury
- 4 Walton
- 5 Broughton

FROM THE NOVEMBER ISSUE

ANAGRAMS—the Answers

Dig freely barrels
Her noble ash link
Carried his handle
Jars and clonk
A hedonism
Briar myths
Man loch to loom
Yes revoke
The hurl bug
Win banal bird

Barry R Eglesfield
Sheila Blenkhorn
Richard Haseldine
Ronald J Snack
Simon Head
Barry Smith
Malcolm Hooton
Roy Keeves
Hugh Butler
Brian Baldwin

The "Who am I?" picture: Ron Snack





The Editor—Sheila Watts

The last of the Stanworth Anagrams!

Take with lass
This steak law
Take last wish
Stale with ask
What eats silk
With ale tasks
Sake with salt

(All Anagrams of Sheila K Watts)

The Editor

Other ringers have let me use early photographs of them, so I felt it was only fair that mine should be used in my last edition of *In Touch*!

This is me aged 8 or 9 getting a bit of early rope practice. Just over the road in front of me is the fine ring of 8 at the village of Shere in Surrey where I grew up. My father and brothers were all bellringers here, but it was not thought appropriate for a girl to ring—I was relegated to the choir!

On moving to North Bucks in the 1970s, I was taught to ring at Clifton Reynes by Ruth Stokes. This is still one of my favourite towers. I joined the Branch in 1976, and remember being impressed by the tea at my first meeting at Stony Stratford.

I soon learned about the other delights of ringing. The yearly Newport Pagnell coach outing was a great highlight, as were the canal holidays, and the annual ringing weeks with friends from North Bucks and beyond.

In due course I joined other towers—Olney, Newport Pagnell (tower secretary), Hanslope, Stoke Goldington, and Emberton (tower captain). I would currently regard Emberton as my home tower, with Hanslope close behind. Branch posts have included Chairman, Guild Rep, Treasurer and Editor of *In Touch*.

Here's a few miscellaneous statistics:

Peals: 1 (and that's probably enough)

Quarters: 150

Towers visited so far: 1024

Favourite bells: Hughenden, Bucks or Pickering, North Yorks

Most impressive grab: Liverpool Cathedral

Most frightening grabs: Merton College, Oxford and Pershore Abbey

Most distant grab: Auckland, New Zealand

The Ringers

A Poem by Leonard Clark



Half way up the winding stair, the ringing room,
last gleams of a long summer evening
filtering soft silver through cobwebbed slats
in the tower windows, falling on the shoulders
of coatless ringers,
concentrated in a league of silence,
one moted ray picking out the record,
gothic lettering faded, of eight
who rang a peal of Grandsire Triples,
a lamplit November evening, over seventy years ago,
sixtieth birthday of a new king.
5040 changes, 2 hours 54 minutes.

All dead now, dust in the overgrown churchyard,
graves hidden by nettles and bramble.

I see them now, those bearded ringers of yesterday,
braces tight over Welsh flannel shirts,
standing in calm circle, working out the changes,
hand and back stroke alternating,
sallies methodically ringing;
only the bells talking their way through the quick rounds,

the lamps flickering in the chill tower;
then, the honouring over, the peal done,
back to their homes through starlit streets,
or celebrating quietly in "The George" or "Crown".

All gone now, only a few bowed elders remain
to remember the names and faces of the old ringers.

But the bells live on,
Sunday to Sunday, festivals and practice nights,
the same mingled sounds over the dreaming town;
and a newer generation gathers,
a sprinkling of bald heads, the art well learned,

Long-haired boys, and girls in jeans,
hardly out of their apprenticeship, not ready yet
for Grandsire, Stedman and Bob Majors,
but of the same glad company as those ghosts
who rang the changes here at the century's turn,
when snow-flecked waggons lumbered into dark inn yards,
the cocked-hat crier told of relief of Mafeking,
the river clean, and white with sailing ships,
the nave packed out for Evensong.

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS
NORTH BUCKS BRANCH

Minutes of Quarterly Meeting held at Fenny Stratford on 2nd December 2000

Chairman's Welcome

Doug Hird welcomed everyone to Fenny Stratford for the Quarterly meeting.

In Memoriam

William Townsend of Buckingham, probably elected in 1936; and George Edmans of Great Horwood, elected when Great Horwood was part of the North Bucks Branch. The Chairman asked for the meeting to observe a few moments silence to remember them.

Apologies for Absence

Received from David Middleton and Helen Stanworth.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

These were published in the November edition of *In Touch*. It was agreed that they be taken as read and it was also agreed that the Chairman sign the minutes as a correct record of the meeting.

Matters Arising

Millennium Plaques – All the plaques with ringers' names on have now been distributed. Brian Newman reported that the Bradwell plaque had to be modified due to a spelling error. Richard Stanworth stated that they had all been checked against the details provided. Unfortunately there had been some errors in the information passed to the Secretary.

Data Protection Act - Doug Hird reported that the Branch was now entered in the Data Protection Register, at a cost of £35. This was already in hand before the article appeared in the *Ringling World* suggesting that we did not need to register as we are a non-profit making organisation.

Powergen Money – There was some discussion concerning the allocation of this money to Simpson, as the work on the bells has been delayed because of additional work being carried out on the church. Sheila Watts reported that she has written to Brian Baldwin in order to seek reassurance that the money will be spent on the bells and asking for some idea of when the work might start. It was felt that the delay had been beyond the control of the ringers and that, provided the work is likely to take place during 2001, then the grant should still go to Simpson. The Chairman suggested that we keep a close watch on the progress of the work and only revisit this matter if the project looked unlikely to go ahead.

Election of New Members

A discussion followed on the requirement introduced on the new membership form for nominees to sign the form. This had not been discussed at a Branch meeting and a number of members were against this requirement being introduced. The officers had added this to the form as part of the requirement under the Data Protection Act for information to be validated and kept up to date. After discussion it was agreed that the validation of data held by the Branch should be carried out separately from the nomination of new members. The nomination form collects data about new members and is a reasonable mechanism for doing this. There is no need to change the form and require a signature on it. The nomination form should retain the Data Protection statement but should not require the nominee's signature. The validation of membership data should be a separate function that can be combined with the collection of subscriptions. The only change is the request that each member check the membership data if possible and confirmation of its validity returned to the Treasurer. The Chairman thought that we were now in a position to publish an article in *In Touch* to set out where we stand with the Data Protection Act. David Joyce suggested that a draft of this be passed to Brian Gatward as he has dealings with the Data Protection Registrar. Whilst he may suggest some minor changes, it is also possible that the article may be of use to the Guild.

Following on from the discussion, nominations were received proposing three members -

Tower	Name	Proposed by	Seconded by
Great Linford	James Maltby (Junior)	Alan Marchbank	Christine Marchbank
Hanslope	Andy Grout	Sheila Blenkhorn	Roy Keeves
	Stuart Grout (Junior)	Sheila Blenkhorn	Roy Keeves

All these were elected without dissent. None of them were present at the meeting but the Chairman said that he hoped to welcome them to the Branch at a forthcoming event.

Officers' Reports

Secretary - Nothing to report.

Ringling Master - Nothing to report here - he will have something to say about Forthcoming Events.

Treasurer - The Branch Account balance at the Building Society stands at £1,473.54. £500 of this is the 'Powergen money'. All subscriptions have been paid and the membership for 2000 is 240. Thank you for participating in the raffle today - £14 has been raised for the Guild Bell Fund. Alan Marchbank asked if there are any plans for spending our surplus. The Treasurer did say at the meeting when the grant was given to Simpson that if any of the unsuccessful applicants wished to apply to the Branch then grants for work on bells could be made from Branch funds. It was suggested that this be stated again in *In Touch* and applications for grants be invited. It would be a good idea if applicants could write something for *In Touch* in support of their application, so that members had notice of the planned work before discussing it at a meeting. The Chairman said that as requests for applications and the supporting articles needed to appear in *In Touch*, it might be two meetings before we could discuss any grants.

Guild Rep - Alan Marchbank gave a report on the November Guild General Committee Meeting. The Branch was well represented at the meeting with our two Branch Reps, as well as a Guild Steward (David Joyce) and a general committee member (Brian Newman) from the Branch. Main topics of discussion were:

- The Ringing World - The Guild had sponsored a page in the *Ringing World* but the general feeling was that the quality of the publication had deteriorated, with articles and quarter peals submitted not appearing. A motion was passed instructing the Guild Secretary to write to the *Ringing World* and complain on behalf of the membership about the quality of the publication.
- Subscriptions - remain at £5.50 with £2.00 retained by the Branch.
- Millennium Project - now concluded, apart from documenting it. This will record the Guild's Millennium activities.
- Guild Insurance - just over one pound of the subscription goes towards this. There have been some improvements in benefits by going to an alternative insurer. The Guild is going back to The Ecclesiastical Insurance Company, who have provided the insurance for the last eight years, to see if they can match the benefits, before changing insurer.
- Guild Status - David Joyce raised this issue on behalf of Bob Winstanley, as to whether the Guild could benefit from registering as a charity in order to be able to reclaim the tax paid on subscriptions. At first glance this could potentially benefit the Guild by as much as £1500 per annum, but might only be a few hundred pounds, once subscriptions from non-taxpayers and those paid by tower funds have been discounted. In addition, the increased cost of the administration required to administer this and comply with being a charity could cancel out any benefit. This has been looked at in the past. The outcome was that the Finance and General Purposes Committee were instructed to take another look at the feasibility of registering as a charity.
- Child Protection Act and the Guild's Policy on Child Protection - The Guild has worked very closely with the Diocese and is guided by the document issued by the Diocese 'Better Safe than Sorry'. In simple terms the guidelines at the back of the new Ringing's Diary are recommended to us all. Every Parish is required to document their own policy and get that approved by the Diocese. They have to issue it, act upon it, and audit and monitor it. People supervising or caring for children at Church events, including bellringing activities have to be registered, which entails completing a form. All parishes have to have at least £5 million Public Liability insurance, and to cover officers' legal fees for representation if any complaint is made against them. As a result of this, because the Guild does not yet have a policy in place, and they do not know that parishes who might send people on the Youth Training Day would be so covered and provided for, the Youth Training Day is held in abeyance and is not being organised. Potentially the Diocese is saying that where it knows that a parish has an inadequacy in meeting the requirements of the Child Protection Act, they will not use the resources of that parish in a Diocesan activity. One might imagine that it is a similar principle that has to apply to the Guild for people who fall within the remit of the Child Protection Act. We need to consider what our policy is in this matter.

Additional points from the Guild meeting regarding the Child Protection discussion were added by David Joyce and Brian Newman:

- The Guild were quick to announce that the Youth Day was off, but equally quick to announce that the Radley school and Easthampstead course were still going ahead. Under 18's attending these events would be expected to bring their parents with them.
- The Ecclesiastical Insurance Company has a Parish Guard policy that provides the necessary cover. Members may wish to check with their parishes if they have this cover.
- Brian Gatward is preparing an article for *Odd Bob* about the Child Protection Act.
- If a parish does not follow the Diocesan guidelines then an insurance company might not meet any claim made by them.
- No guidance was offered as to whether people under 18 should be banned from Branch events until the effects of the CPA are clarified.
- The guidelines suggest that no tower officer should be under 18 as they are not a 'responsible adult', but Brian Gatward is going to look at it.
- Brian Gatward appears to be better prepared on the CPA than the Diocese and appears to be advising their youth adviser.

Other points which were raised:

- Tower captains who supervise under 18's should seek to register with their parish, even if the parish hasn't yet asked them to register. They should go and ask for a form to fill in.

- The Branch should seek to keep in touch with the Guild and Diocesan discussions that are going on and as soon as something comes out we make it available to the membership as soon as we can. We should be pro-active in this even if it means we are working ahead of the parishes.
- Should we take out our own insurance cover – this may not be advisable as it may lead to confusion over whose systems the insurance company would want to check – they may want to check all the towers in the branch!
- Each vicar has a responsibility for his parish to ensure that the provisions of the CPA are put into place, including within the belfry, and also to have the necessary insurance cover.
- We should find out what every church should be doing as a minimum and make sure that every tower is being provided with that level of advice and process. If they are not doing the minimum then Guild members may be at risk.
- It may help to collate the current situation within the parishes in the Branch and pass this information to the Guild. This may help to start making parishes aware of the need to act.

Forthcoming Events

All events have been as published in *In Touch*. However January 27th is the AGM of the Luton District, so we will be unable to hold the joint Surprise Practice with them on that date. They have suggested an alternative date of 17th March, which is the day after our Branch practice. The Ringing Master asked if members thought that two events on consecutive days was a good idea. The feeling of the meeting was that, as the Branch practice in March is a Focus on Rounds and Call Changes, then it caters for a different clientele than the Surprise Practice, and the joint practice should go ahead on 17th March. Bletchley was originally booked for this joint practice because it is fairly close to the Luton end of the Branch. However as we will have been there for the AGM only two weeks before this date, the Ringing Master felt we should try and go somewhere else. It was agreed that Downs Barn should be approached, but a Saturday evening may be difficult because of other bookings. The Chairman agreed to find out and let the Secretary know. David Joyce suggested that if we were having difficulty getting a tower then perhaps we could swap the venues of the two joint practices and hold the earlier one in the Luton District, and we hold the practice in July.

Any Other Business

David Joyce suggested that, as we had not seen the Guild Master at one of our Branch meetings for some time it might be a good idea to write to him and invite him to attend the AGM. It was agreed that the Secretary be asked to write and invite him to the meeting.

Old Wolverton Grant – Alan Marchbank reported on the status of the grant application made to the Guild Bell Fund for the work on these bells. The Tower and Bells Committee inspected the bells and advised the Trustees of the fund that the grant should not be released because, although improvements have been made to the installation, the bells are not in a good state of repair and are potentially unsafe. As it is now over three years since the application was made, and the grant has not been claimed, Old Wolverton have been advised that the grant has time expired. If they require a grant for the work that has been done then they must re-apply. Alan does not know the current state of the bells, if the defects identified have been corrected, or if further defects that have been rumoured to exist have been corrected. He asked that any information concerning these bells be passed to him or Brian Gatward. It was reported that Mike Nimmo had resigned as tower captain and that Hayward Mills have been back and done some rectification work. Part of the problem has been that it was not clear what work was ordered. The specification of work, the work defined in the Faculty, the work against which the grant was made, and the actual work done do not agree. The Chairman undertook to make inquiries as to the current state of the bells.

David Joyce suggested that ringers might like to purchase the Millennium 19p stamp that is issued on Tuesday 5th December for sending their Christmas cards as it has pictures of bells on it.

Vote of Thanks

The Chairman then thanked the Rev Ian Thomas for taking the service, Miss Susan Kent for playing the organ and the Fenny Stratford ringers for allowing us to ring and for their hospitality. Members showed their appreciation in the usual manner.

There being no other business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 6.49 p.m. The draw for the raffle and further ringing followed.

Bellhandling Video

The Branch has a copy of the video produced by the Central Council entitled 'Bellhandling - a tutor's companion'. This is aimed at those teaching bellhandling but may also be helpful to those learning to ring.

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

Secretary's Snippets

Please remember to let the Secretary know of any changes at your tower - we have a duty under the data protection principles defined in the Data Protection Act to ensure the information we hold is accurate and up to date. Please help us to comply with this. Please also let her know about any changes to practice nights and Sunday ringing.

Tower Contacts

Has there been change of officers/ correspondent at your tower?

North Bucks Branch—Calendar 2001

FEBRUARY	16	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Surfleet Surprise Minor	North Crawley
MARCH	3	3.00 4.00	Ringin Branch AGM	Whaddon Bletchley
	10		<i>Spring General Committee Meeting</i>	<i>Chiltem Branch</i>
	*16	7.30	Branch Practice Focus on Rounds & Call Changes	Thornborough
	*17	7.30	Joint Surprise Practice with Luton Branch	Downs Barn
	28	7.30	10-Bell Practice	Kempston
	31		<i>Ringin Roadshow</i>	<i>Keele University, Staffs</i>
APRIL	14		<i>Handbell Day</i>	<i>Reading</i>
	20	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: London Surprise Minor	Bradwell
	27	7.30	Beginners Striking Competition	Emberton
MAY	7		<i>Eight Bell Striking Competition</i>	<i>Newbury Branch</i>
	7		<i>Annual Ringing Day</i>	<i>Newbury Branch</i>
	*18	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Kent Treble Bob Minor	Stowe
	19		<i>Annual General Meeting</i>	<i>Oxford City Branch</i>
JUNE	*2	3.30	Striking Competition & Quarterly Meeting	Great Linford
	15	7.30	Branch Practice Focus on Rounds & Call Changes	Wavendon

Items marked * were unconfirmed as at 20 January 2001
 Italicised events are Guild events, etc.

A Grant from Branch Funds?

Do you need some cash for maintenance work in your belfry, or some other project in the tower? Help could be at hand. Discussion took place at the last Quarterly meeting at Fenny Stratford about the apparent healthy state of Branch funds, and it was agreed to ask for applications for grants.

All you need do is cost your project, then write with details to the Branch Treasurer (address on page 2). Your application will appear in *In Touch*, prior to being discussed at the next Quarterly meeting. You would, of course, be asked to attend that meeting so you could answer any questions.

Sheila Watts, Treasurer

‘PowerGen’ Grant to Simpson

*Simpson Church has sent this letter to the Branch
 following receipt of the £500 ‘PowerGen money’*

Dear Mrs Watts,

Grant to Simpson Church for Bell Restoration

Thank you very much for your letter of 31 December enclosing a cheque for £500 towards restoration of the bells at St Thomas Church in Simpson.

It is over three years since we last heard the bells rung at Simpson, so once the current roof repairs are complete in the Spring we hope to be able to undertake the necessary works to enable them to be rung again safely. It is good to have the support of your organisation for this purpose.

Yours sincerely,
 Ian Rixon
 Church Treasurer