



OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS

North Bucks Branch Newsletter

February 2004



Centenary A.G.M. at Great Linford

The AGM will be held at St Andrew, Great Linford, on Saturday 6th March. The timetable will be as follows:

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

Names for Tea to Alan Marchbank
(01908-611434)
by **Wednesday 3rd March 2004**

Guild Ten Bell Striking Competition

This was held at Bicester on Saturday 22nd November. The test piece was 280 changes of Plain Bob Royal. This year the draw was held in advance which meant that we all knew when we would be ringing. North Bucks were drawn to go first and all members of the band arrived in good time. The ringing seemed to go quite well and was soon over. On descending the tower we were asked if we could provide a ringer for the Chiltern Branch as one of their band was ill. Barry agreed to ring with them. Our team dispersed then but David Joyce was there for the results and noted the judges comments:

North Bucks - unity of purpose, rhythm faults at the back, leading good. Time 10:00

Chiltern (and Barry) - fast & nervous. Time 9:30

EBSB (High Wycombe!) - measured beat, good 9 & 10, improved. Time 10:40

Reading - relaxed! almost too slow, obviously rang together a lot, steady beat. Time 12:00

Old North Berks - had difficulties, syncopated, slightly better speed. Time 10:30

The result:

1st	Reading	78.5%
2nd	East Berks and South Bucks	69.5%
3rd	North Bucks	62.5%
4th	Old North Berks	50.0%
5th	Chiltern	47.0%

So North Bucks were awarded a certificate! Quite an achievement when the Branch has no ten bell tower for practice.

Congratulations to the band who were:

- 1 Doug Hird
- 2 David Joyce
- 3 Jill Joyce
- 4 Catherine Stanworth
- 5 Michael Tinsley
- 6 John Stanworth
- 7 Richard Stanworth
- 8 Alan Marchbank
- 9 Jonathan Griggs
- 10 Barry Eglesfield (C)

Congratulations!



Who's Who 2003/2004

Chairman

Mr Barry Eglesfield, 15 Chardacre, Two Mile Ash,
Milton Keynes. MK8 8JN
Tel. 01908-566050

Secretary

Mrs Helen Stanworth, 11 Valley Road, Linden Village,
Buckingham. MK18 7BW
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Treasurer / Acting Newsletter Editor

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Ringling Master

Mr Richard Stanworth, 11 Valley Road, Linden Village,
Buckingham. MK18 7BW
Tel. 01280-814172, Email. richard@tsl-uk.com

Assistant Ringing Master

Mr Simon Head, 8 Isis Walk, Bletchley. MK3 7DA
Tel. 01908-368654

Training Officer

Post currently vacant

Guild Representatives

Mr Alan Marchbank, 6 Broadway Avenue, Giffard Park,
Milton Keynes. MK14 5QF
Tel. 01908-611434, Email. 113151.211@compuserve.com
Brian Newman, 6 Martin Close, Neath Hill, Milton Keynes.
MK14 6JG
Tel. 01908-395160, Email. bnewman@teleflex.com

Archivist

Mr Doug Hird, 78 Lakes Lane, Newport Pagnell. MK16 8HR
Tel. 01908-614741, Email. doughird@northbucks.org.uk /
brian.hird@abbeynational.co.uk

!! Tower Information !!

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

Grants

Applications for grants for assistance from individuals for training or from towers for work or for the provision of things that keep bells ringing shall be submitted to the Secretary. Details of applications received will be sent out to towers as soon as possible after receipt. All applications received and sent out at least one month before a meeting will be considered at the next general meeting of the Branch.

Training Grants

Grants will be given towards training courses as follows: 50% of the cost up to a maximum of £50. Applications for grants should be made in writing to the Secretary. It would help us if you apply before you attend the course if at all possible.

Guild Six Bell Striking Competition



Following the success of the North Bucks Branch band in the Six Bell Competition, several people have asked when the competition was first held. Nigel Harrison, Guild Secretary, came up with the answer:

The first Guild (inter-Branch) six bell striking competition took place in 1964 at Radley. The judges were Wilfred G Wilson and Richard F B Speed. This was won by Hughenden with East Ilsley, Eynsham and East Hagbourne joint runners up. It has been held every year after that. In 1969 the Winners Cup was presented by Edward J Peet.

Our Grateful Thanks...

..... to all those who contributed towards this issue of the Newsletter.

The deadline for the next Newsletter is:
Friday 30th April 2004

Sheila Watts & Sheila Ware
Acting Editors

Centenary Celebration Day Saturday 12th June - Newton Longville



A day to celebrate the formation of the North Bucks Branch in 1904!

This is being combined with the Guild Festival, so we hope to attract members from all other Branches. A provisional timetable has been drawn up and is as follows:

- 10.00 Festival opens - tea, coffee, cakes, available. Possibly some sideshows.
- 10.15 Service ringing
- 11.00 Service in St Faith's Church - Family Communion
- 12.00 Festival barbecue/pig roast and fete at the Longueville Hall / Hammond Park
- 12.30 Ringing Up and Down Competition starts
- 14.30 Barbecue ends
- 15.00 Competition results
- 16.00 Towers open on route home

We still need help with running this day. Letters have been sent out asking members for help. If you haven't seen the letter yet then ask your tower correspondent. Please support the day in whatever way you can.

Activities – not all definite yet

Ringing Up & Down Contest on the back 6 at St Faith – open to one band from each Branch in the Guild
The Lichfield Diocesan Mobile Belfry – a ring of six bells with a tenor of just 76½ lbs!

Sideshows

Pig Roast or barbecue, refreshments, etc

Silver Band

Model Railway

Steam Trains

1904—2004

Centenary Dinner

It is hoped to hold a dinner in the autumn. If you know of a good venue let one of the Officers know about it.

Other Ideas

Commemorative Mugs & Commemorative T-shirts/sweatshirts

So what else happened in 1904?

(with thanks to Doug Hird—Archivist)

National

The King was Edward VII.

The Prime Minister was Arthur James Balfour (Conservative).

The population of North Bucks was 57,000 (it is now 207,000).

Knighted this year:

Sir James Dewar, the inventor of the Thermos Flask, and Sir Edward Elgar.

Born this year:

George Formby, Sir John Gielgud, Cary Grant.

Science and Technology:

The first train to break the 100 mph barrier was The Great Western Railway's City of Truro on the 9th of May.

The Napier Company built the world's first usable 6-cylinder car.

William Richard Morris begins to manufacture motorcycles at Cowley, near Oxford.

The Elan Valley Dams in Mid Wales were officially opened by The King.

1st main line electric train in UK (Liverpool to Southport).

The 2.48 am express from Marylebone Station became derailed at Aylesbury having failed to slow down in time to take a curve over a trailing junction. Another train, travelling in the opposite direction struck the wreckage. Massive destruction of rolling stock followed and four people were killed.

Church:

The building of Liverpool Anglican Cathedral was begun.

Education and The Arts:

Ealing Studios were started by Will Barker.

The University of Leeds was founded.

Barrie's Peter Pan is performed for the first time.

Cont'd p.4

So what else happened in 1904? (cont'd)

Sport:

The first TT was held on The Isle of Man as it wasn't possible to close public roads in England.
First recorded speedway race was held at Portman Road, Ipswich.

Exploration:

The Discovery arrived at Portsmouth from the Antarctic carrying Scott and dogs.

Media:

"The Daily Mirror," begins publishing.
1st daily wireless weather forecasts published.

International

The Boer War ended in 1902.

Born this year:

Glenn Miller, Cecil Day Lewis, Bing Crosby, Bill Brand, Count Basie, Theodor "Dr Seuss" Giesel, Fats Waller.

Science and Technology:

Ivan Pavlov wins the Nobel Prize in medicine for his work on conditioned reflexes.
King Camp Gillette, an American travelling salesman, patented his safety razor.
The first successful caterpillar track is made.

Charles E Menches invents the ice cream cone during the Louisiana Purchase Exposition.

The New York Subway system opened.

The wristwatch was invented by Louis Cartier.

Camille Jenatzy sets world car speed record at 65.79 mph.

First Buick sold to Dr. Herbert H. Hills of Flint, Michigan.

Education and The Arts:

The Heckelphone, an improved baritone oboe, pitched an octave below the oboe was invented.

Sport:

Football's world governing body, FIFA, was formed in Paris.

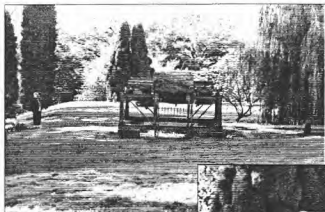
The Olympic Games and Worlds Fair was held at St Louis. The first Africans to compete at the games were marathon runners who were there for the Boer War Exhibit. Thomas Hicks, USA, won the marathon after the disqualification of Fred Lorz who had covered a large part of the 42 km in a car. He did at least get out just before the finish. Iced Tea was invented at the Fair.

England regains cricket Ashes taking a 3-1 series lead vs Australia

Politics:

In 1904 the Japanese and Russians went to war over Manchuria and Korea.

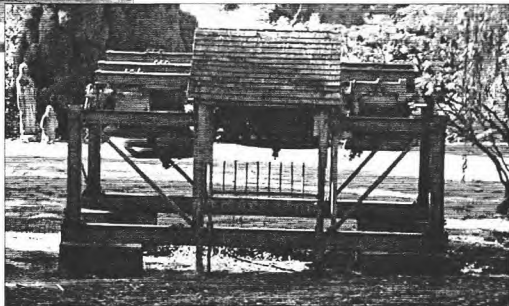
Britain and France sign the Entente Cordiale respecting each other's claims in Morocco and Egypt.



Sheila Blenkhorn and Roy Keeves gave us this delightful photograph of a ring of bells they found when on holiday.

They've promised a bottle of wine to the first person to let us know where it is.

Answers to the Acting Editors as soon as possible, please!



Where do you think this is?

Somewhere in Italy?

Or much closer to home?



Centenary Quarters

The idea of ringing a century of quarter peals has been put forward as one of the activities to celebrate the Branch Centenary.

We would like at least one quarter to be rung in each tower in the Branch with ringable bells, and that as many ringers as possible be involved. These can be an opportunity for ringers to make progress so lets get lots of 'firsts' in the quarters.

If you ring a Centenary Quarter then, in addition to publishing it in the usual places, please forward details to the Ringing Master. He will then collate them all together and also arrange for each quarter to be printed on a special Centenary certificate.

Peal Attempt at Calverton

by Richard Stanworth

On 24th January 1914 the first peal of Surprise Minor was rung for the Oxford Guild. They didn't take the easy option of ringing seven extents of the same method but rang seven different methods – and not all easy either.

Ninety years on to the day, seven members of the Branch met at Calverton to commemorate this achievement by attempting to ring a peal in the same seven methods.

However it was not to be. The Chester and Alnwick proved to be our downfall, and even a quarter attempt did not get very far. This was a pity as peals had been rung on the 50th and 80th anniversaries. We even had a veteran of the 1964 peal in our band. I guess that when Barry rang in the 50th anniversary peal, he was considered an "up and coming youngster". I hesitate to put a label on him now! We will have to practice the methods and have another go later in the year.



Kim Adams of St Andrews, Bedford, rang her first Quarter on the Sunday, and this appeared at practice on the following Thursday. Thanks to David Jones for passing it over the Branch border to us!

Plain Bob Doubles

When shall we six meet again
In thunder, lightening or in rain?
When the ringing is all done
When the quarter peal is Rung

Plain Bob Doubles

Coils and troubles

Three four down; and long fifth muddles
Rope that's like a funny snake
Now I've got a bob to make
Fourth's place first and then hunt down
Four blows behind, then turn around
Passed the treble in 2-3

It doesn't mean a thing to me.

Must be three-four up to do

Treble, treble, where are you?

Ah! There he is make seconds place

And lead again before the chase

Plain Bob Doubles

Coils and troubles

Three-four down; and long fifth muddles

At last I hear the conductors call

A great relief 'cos THAT IS ALL

Notes from the Branch Secretaries Meeting 3rd October 2003

Striking Competitions - It was agreed that methods should continue to be such as would encourage the most entries, and the following were selected for 2004: Plain Bob Major & Grandsire Caters.

Ringing day and 8 Bell Striking Competition - This is due to be held in the Chipping Norton Branch in 2004.

Subscriptions - No change from the current £5.50 (£3.50 to the Guild, and £2.00 to Branches).

Sponsored Ringing Week - This is due to take place from 22nd to 29th February 2004 (Forms distributed to towers before Christmas)

Youth Training day - It is hoped to run this just after Easter.

Quarters

St James the Great, Hanslope
Sunday 7th December 2003
1280 Christmas Delight Major (47 mins)

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

For Service
First in method for all

All Saints, Loughton
Tuesday 16th December 2003
1260 Doubles
(660 Plain Bob & 600 Grandsire)

- 1 Anne McIntyre
- 2 Derek Stainsby
- 3 Anne Stainsby
- 4 Terry Page
- 5 Bob Winstanley (C)
- 6 Ted Fawcett

Rung half-muffled on the evening of the funeral of a
baby boy found in Lodge Lake

*(You may have seen this news item—the police had
been unable to trace either parent, and the PCC of All
Saints offered to provide a proper funeral, which was
very well attended.)*

St Laurence, Weston Underwood
Wednesday 31st December 2003
1296 Cambridge Surprise Minor (42 mins)

- 1 Phil Haslam
- 2 Roy Keeves
- 3 Nick Gray
- 4 Tony Gray
- 5 Ian Thompson
- 6 B Doug Hird (C)

First of Cambridge Minor—4

All Saints, Emberton
Sunday 4th January 2004
1260 Doubles (43 mins)
(780 Grandsire & 480 Plain Bob)

- 1 Matthew Soman
- 2 Roy Keeves
- 3 Sheila Watts
- 4 Tony Gray
- 5 B Doug Hird (C)
- 6 Phil Haslam

Rung to celebrate the Centenary of the North Bucks
Branch of the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church
Bellringers

First Quarter—1 (second from left below)



St Laurence, Bradwell
Sunday 25 January 2004
1260 Grandsire Doubles (43 mins)

- 1 Jenny Brookman
- 2 Christine Cable
- 3 Jill Joyce
- 4 Ian Green
- 5 David Joyce (C)
- 6 Brian Newman

Belated 21st birthday compliment to 2nd

St James the Great, Hanslope
Sunday 1st February 2004
1260 Plain Bob Triples (47 mins)

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

First Quarter in an inside bell—3
Rung for Service and to celebrate the Centenary of
the North Bucks Branch of the Oxford Diocesan Guild

Bell Ringing Software at The 2003 Ringing World Show

by Steve Crane



Ask fellow ringers on a practice night whether computers play a useful role in bell ringing and you'll hear very mixed opinions. Whatever your particular view, for some ringers computers do fulfill a useful function, be it record keeping, composing or simply providing extra practice. One reason why I visited The 2003 Ringing World Show was to get a feel for just how useful and effective the latest software really is.

My task was made that much easier by Mike Chester, Chairman of The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers Information and Communications Technology Committee, who gave a seminar, the first of the day, on Computer Software. In fact, here I'm recounting much of what Mike had to tell us, for he summarised the current contribution so well.

Interestingly, ringing software has been around for quite some time, dating back to the BBC Micros of the early 80s. Nowadays most software is written for the PC, but the Acorn RISC computer (a successor of the BBC Micro) and the latest PDAs (Personal Digital Assistants) have limited following. On the whole, ringing software isn't very demanding on the technology, so 20 year old computers stashed away in the loft still have their uses, but clearly the latest programs benefit from the features only present on modern computers, like graphics, sounds and vast storage. Most PC software will run on an unmodified system.

Simulators are the exception, where some form of sensor is attached to the PC to detect the movement of the bell.

I've listed below the main programs available for the PC by category. Some can be downloaded from the Internet for free while others require payment, typically £20-50. With prices like this no programmer is going to be able to retire early, yet from the questions raised during the talk the issue of payment is a sensitive one. Some attending argued that the price needs to come down considerably - even be free - and the programs take on a more professional feel before use will extend beyond the computer enthusiast. This was to some extent supported by the observation that on the whole programs are still not taking advantage of the facilities available on the latest computers to improve the way they interact with the user, the suggestion being to make greater use of graphics and 'voice prompts'.

The Internet is proving to be a great resource for bell ringers. The latest programs offer on-line updates and access to resources like method libraries. If you're interested in finding out more about the software available a good starting place is the CCC ICT's software catalogue <http://ds.dial.pipex.com/fred.bone/CC-CCC/Software-Catalogue.shtml> Look also at www.cccbr.org.uk and www.ringing.info

Bell ringing software available for the PC

Multi-function Programs

- 🔔 Beltower
- 🔔 Abel
- 🔔 Ringing Master

Ringing Practice

- 🔔 Called Change Ringer
- 🔔 Learn a Method
- 🔔 Learn the Line
- 🔔 Method Writer

Peal Composition/Proving

- 🔔 BYROC 2
- 🔔 Eril
- 🔔 Excalibur
- 🔔 Feste
- 🔔 Lavache
- 🔔 MicroSIRIL
- 🔔 SIRIL2
- 🔔 SPAFT
- 🔔 Touchstone

Tower Information

- 🔔 WinDove

Bell Simulation

- 🔔 Speed - Clappers
- 🔔 Wavanal

Line Generation

- 🔔 Method Workshop
- 🔔 Method Master
- 🔔 Trinculo

Record Keeping

- 🔔 WinRK
- 🔔 Pealbook
- 🔔 TowerBase

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS NORTH BUCKS BRANCH

Minutes of Quarterly Meeting held at Bradwell on 6th December 2003

Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to Bradwell, and, before beginning the business, proposed a hearty vote of thanks to the band that won the Guild six bell competition, and to the band that did so well in the ten-bell competition. He asked members to join him in giving them a round of applause in appreciation of a wonderful effort.

In Memoriam

No members had died since the last meeting but the Chairman reported the passing of Derek Savage, organist at Stony Stratford for many years, who was known to a number of ringers in the area.

Apologies for Absence

Received from Gillian and Charlie Macdonald, Tricia Gifford, Simon Head, and Ros Tyrell.

Minutes of previous Meeting

The minutes of the Quarterly meeting held at Tingewick in September had been published in the November edition of the Branch Newsletter. It was agreed by the meeting that the Chairman sign the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

Officers Reports

Ringling Master Richard Stanworth added his congratulations to the Hanslope band on winning the Guild six-bell competition and to the Branch band that came third in the ten-bell competition. The latter was particularly pleasing as the band had been unable to practice together. The success reflects the increasing number of members who are getting out and about and regularly ringing on higher numbers.

Treasurer The Branch funds are currently £1242. There are still two towers with subs unpaid – Great Brickhill and Newton Longville. These subs need to be paid before the end of the year or their membership will lapse. Membership currently stands at 181, with 25 of these being juniors. Thank you for contributing towards the Guild Bell Fund today. £15.45 has been raised.

Guild Reps Brian Newman reported on the committee meeting held at Shrivensham on 22nd November. This is an interesting tower and

worth a visit as the bells have recently been augmented from eight to ten. Brian summarised the items from the meeting of interest to the Branch:

Health and Safety – Ringing had been stopped at a tower in the south of the Guild because the vertical ladder used for access was deemed unsafe. This has now been resolved. Churches are not exempt from Health and Safety rules and towers with vertical ladders or difficult access will need to consider improving the access.

Insurance – Cards have been produced with details of the Guild insurance. These have been distributed to towers via the Branch secretary.

Library – The valuation is now complete and the library has been valued at £40,000.

Tower Maintenance – Two gold awards have been made. Inspections are ongoing; if you want to have an inspection then contact the Towers and Belfries Committee.

Restoration Fund – Two grants have been made and two grants are pending.

Subscriptions – Recommended that they stay at the current rate.

Donation to Bell Fund – This will be considered at the next committee meeting and a recommendation put forward to the Guild AGM. If anyone has an opinion on the donation, then please let one of the reps know.

Child Protection – There are changes in the pipeline. It is the responsibility of PCCs to carry out the necessary checks.

Guild Festivals – Alan had reported on our plans for 2004. The Festival in 2005 will be in the Vale of White Horse Branch and in 2006 it will be at Oxford Cathedral with lunch in Christchurch College.

Mobile Telephones – The Central Council has now issued a code of practice relating to masts installed on Churches.

CC Education Committee – A new handbook is due out soon.

Complaints – The Guild PRO has asked to be kept informed of any complaints about ringing activities.

Guild Badges – A new supply will be available shortly via the Branch secretary, cost £1.35.

Certificates – Updated versions of the first quarter and peal certificates are to be produced.

Odd Bob – A recommendation has been made

that the number of issues be reduced to two per year.

After the committee meeting the reps spoke to Graham Clifton regarding Branch matters. He is getting together information on the jousting game that he offered to get details of at the Branch meeting in September. He also referred to the offer to hold a maintenance course in the Branch. If we take up the offer then two towers will be needed, one tower poorly maintained and one tower well maintained, in order to make comparisons. This will be discussed at the next officers meeting.

Alan raised a safety issue that occurred at the ringing before the meeting. A ringer suffered rope burns when trying to set the bell after ringing up. The bell went over and it was discovered that the clock man had removed the slider. There are two issues: If anyone who is not a ringer has been working in the tower, then the bells should be inspected before ringing, in order to ensure that they are safe to ring; and as, in law, a Church is a place of work, each Church should keep an accident book and any accident in the tower should be recorded in it. Alan stressed that those who look after bells have a duty of care to ensure that the bell installation they are responsible for is safe to use.

Forthcoming Events

An up to date calendar had been circulated to all present. The January practice was still planned for Newport Pagnell as Downs Barn is unavailable. Concern was expressed at the suitability of Newport for the practice, as there had been access problems when we went there in September, and the practice had been poorly attended. This was likely to discourage attendance there in January. Alternative venues were discussed but no formal proposal was made. Attempts will be made to try and encourage a good turnout.

Branch Centenary and Guild Festival

Alan spoke about some of the arrangements. The Officers have agreed that the Centenary Year be deemed to start on 1st January 2004. This is therefore the last meeting of our 99th year. The Centenary AGM will be at Great Linford and a long length peal (10 extents) will be attempted on the morning of the meeting. Other ringing planned is 100 quarters in the Centenary year.

The main celebration day will be Saturday 12th June. The service is in planning, along with an Inter-Branch Ringing Up and Down Competition.

This has generated interest from some parts of the Guild. We will also be having the Lichfield Diocesan mini ring – a trailer mounted ring of six. An offer has been received to underwrite the cost of bringing the ring from its base to Newton Longville. Other activities include sideshows etc as outlined in the letter sent to all towers. It will be a family day – for families and ringers, running from about 10 until 4, thus allowing people from the south of the Guild to get home at a reasonable time. The Longueville Hall has been booked for the day at a favourable rate. This will provide cover and facilities, as well as grounds to hold the event.

The front page of the Ringing World has been booked for that week and Doug will be writing an article for that.

Hugh Butler said that he was probably one of the few members with a link to the 50th anniversary. He was not present but he had a letter that his parents had written to him about the day. It was thought that Owen Warren and Malcolm Hooton might have recollections of the day and it would be worth approaching them. One idea would be to have a small display recalling the 50th anniversary.

Help is needed with the celebration day. The secretary reported that an offer of help had been received from Milton Keynes Village. It was felt that others were not offering because they did not know what was required. It was suggested that a list of tasks be prepared and this should be sent out. David Joyce commented that the Guild Festival at Great Missenden had been well organised and that they had broken down the organisation into a list of tasks which had then been assigned to various people and groups.

It was agreed that this couldn't wait until the next Branch meeting. The Officers will draw up a list of tasks at their next meeting and then send that out in order to solicit more offers of help.

Any Other Business

The Ringing Master drew attention to the Youth Awards scheme organised by the Guild Education Committee. If any towers have youngsters who are interested, then they need to apply fairly quickly.

Richard Stanworth then thanked the Bradwell ringers for hosting the meeting and providing the tea, the Rev Andy Calton for taking the service, and Michael Tinsley for playing the organ. Members showed their appreciation on the usual way.

The Chairman then wished members Seasons Greetings and declared the meeting closed.

North Bucks Branch—Calendar 2004

FEBRUARY	20	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Single Oxford Bob Minor	Padbury
MARCH	6	3.30	Annual General Meeting	Great Linford
	19	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Hanslope Surprise Major	Hanslope
APRIL	16	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Belfast Surprise Minor	Calverton
	23*	7.30	Beginners' Striking Competition	Wavendon
MAY	21	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Stedman Doubles	Beachampton
JUNE	11		Branch Centenary	Ringling World
	12		Branch Centenary Celebrations & Guild Festival	Newton Longville
	18	7.30	Six-Bell Striking Competition	Weston Underwood
JULY	10*	6.00	Inter-Branch Striking Competition	Wicken
	16	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: London Surprise Minor	Simpson
AUGUST	20	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Superlative Surprise Minor	Emberton
SEPTEMBER	4*	3.30	Quarterly Meeting	TBA
	17	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Reverse Canterbury	Tyringham

Items marked * were unconfirmed as at 30 January 2004
Events in *italics* are Guild events, etc.

Snippets from the Towers

Loughton

Bob Winstanley tells us he is now fully ringable again after a very successful hip replacement.

Bradwell

At the AGM in January, Christine Cable was elected Vice-Captain. Other Officers remain unchanged.

Haversham

There is much joy here as work has commenced on a new toilet and storage area at the base of the bell tower. This is good news for the Haversham ringers, two declared, and others known to have this hidden talent, as it will mean a new ringing chamber free from Church clutter. This is the first change in over a hundred years and in a few months we will be able to ring our three bells all together to the delight of the village. *(from Roger Everson)*