

In Touch

February 2006

Annual General Meeting at Bradwell

Saturday 4th March 2006

3.30 Ringing
4.30 Service
5.00 Tea
5.45 Business Meeting
Evening Ringing until 8.30

Names for tea are not required



St Lawrence, Bradwell

St. Lawrence Church is a II* listed building dating from the 13th Century. The building has seen many periods of expansion and restoration through the centuries and it remains a very active Church, part of the Ecumenical parish of Stantonbury.

The first reference to a Church in Bradwell comes from the early 12th century—the earliest Church consisted of the nave, chancel and south aisle.

By 1545 the Church had been acquired by Henry VIII and has been held by the Crown ever since. This change of ownership may have provided much needed finance, and subsequently considerable restoration was carried out. The roof of the nave was heightened and the six clerestory windows added.

At this time the tower was added, using materials salvaged from

Bradwell Priory, to house redundant bells from the Priory Church. One of the

four original bells was made by John Walgrave of Aldgate in the City of London between 1420 and 1440. The bell was named Augustine and we know this from the Latin inscription 'Vox Augustine sonet in aura Dei' ('May the voice of Augustine sound in the ear of God') which was cast on it. The bell can no longer be used because it has cracked, but it is still in the Church and can be seen hanging in the south aisle.

Original inscriptions on either side of the Chancel arch, which date back to the original Church are of interest. On one side the inscription reads; 'h. ECCLIA: DEDICATAE IN: HONARE: SCI: LAURECII: XI' Roughly translated this means 'This Church was dedicated in honour of St. Lawrence'.

Thanks to:
<http://www.mkweb.co.uk/religion>
for this information

Who's Who 2006

Branch Website: <http://www.northbucks.org.uk/>

Chairman

Mr Alan Marchbank, 6 Broadway Avenue, Giffard Park,
Milton Keynes. MK14 5OF
Tel. 01908-611434
Email. chairman@northbucks.org.uk

Secretary

Mrs Helen Stanworth, 11 Valley Road, Linden Village,
Buckingham. MK18 7BW
Tel. 01280-814172
Email. secretary@northbucks.org.uk

Treasurer / In Touch Editor

Mrs Sheila Watts, 18 Colsons Way, Olney, Buckinghamshire.
MK46 5EQ
Tel. 01234-713667 or 01908-653214
Email. treasurer@northbucks.org.uk /
intoucheditor@northbucks.org.uk

Ringling Master

Mr Richard Stanworth, 11 Valley Road, Linden Village,
Buckingham. MK18 7BW
Tel. 01280-814172
Email. ringingmaster1@northbucks.org.uk

Assistant Ringing Master

Mr Barry Eglesfield, 15 Chardacre, Two Mile Ash,
Milton Keynes. MK7 8JN
Tel. 01908-566050
Email. ringingmaster2@northbucks.org.uk

Training Officer

Ms Edith Robinson, 8 Wadhurst Lane, Kents Hill,
Milton Keynes. MK7 6JF
Tel. 01908-695118 or 07967635318
Email. training@northbucks.org.uk

Guild Representatives

Mr Alan Marchbank—see details for Chairman
Email. guildrep1@northbucks.org.uk

Brian Newman, 6 Martin Close, Neath Hill, Milton Keynes.
MK14 6JG
Tel. 01908-395160
Email. guildrep2@northbucks.org.uk

Archivist

Mr Doug Hird, 78 Lakes Lane, Newport Pagnell. MK16 8HR
Tel. 01908-614741
Email. archivist@northbucks.org.uk

Secretarial Snippets

Grants

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

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.

Videos

We now have three titles available:

Bellhandling—a tutor's companion (produced by the Central Council)

Look to and Learn (produced by the Kent County Association)

Teaching Demonstration (recording of Steve Coleman teaching)

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

Our Grateful Thanks...

....to all those who contributed towards this issue of *In Touch*.

The deadline for the next *In Touch* is:
Friday 5th May 2006

Sheila Watts & Sheila Ware
Editors

From the Chairman

The art of communication is the language of leadership

Communication is at the heart of everything we do. In our personal life and at work we can only make progress and get on with things by communicating. As bell ringers our roots are in the communication business – over the centuries bells have been rung to indicate if there was to be a sermon at the next service; tolling the age and sex of the deceased; warning of invasion. It is only in relatively recent times that the art and science of change ringing has prevailed as the main use of Church bells.

Just after taking on the Chairman's role last March a few things were said to me by Branch members, very frankly and constructively, that made me think about how the Branch Officers could discharge their duties.

I saw we had two options:

1. We could carry on much as had been the way for a number of years operating the Branch through a system of regular Saturday meetings and Friday Branch practices and contributing to the workings of the Guild.

or

2. Take a step back and reflect upon what we are trying to achieve, and how relevant that traditional structure is in today's world. If by gaining a better understanding of what the membership wants we could change the structure and increase the part the Branch can play in sustaining and developing ringing in North Bucks.

As ever, there are risks associated with whatever choice is made.

Sticking with what we know is fine and comfortable, but I was aware that we have falling numbers attending meetings and practices. A number of the Officers hold two posts as we have not been inundated with enthusiasts wanting to take on these jobs.

Bringing about change is also risky. Knowing what to change, how and when, is only part of the issue. Communicating it to everyone and dealing with the basic human reaction to resist and resent change

add to the challenge. The idea of doing nothing did not appeal to any of the Officers.

We believe there is an important part for the Branch and Guild to play. However, we must have an appropriate structure within which to operate and that will only come from an appreciation that the world around us has changed and the old model may not be effective.

So where to begin?

We have decided that as a starting point we have to stop waiting for you, the members, to come to us your Officers. We must communicate with you more actively.

We have launched the **Connect** Initiative.

This means that each Officer has a small list of towers that they will personally be in touch with prior to each Quarterly meeting. They will be asking you what you want to discuss at the meeting, if you have new members for election and if there are matters arising from the minutes (published in *In Touch*) which you wish to follow up or engage with.

You can also expect to have a personal visit to your tower – on a pre-determined date, from this Officer who will join in with your practice and listen to your ringers and members opinions about the workings of the Branch and Guild. All views and comments are equally valid and will be received and welcomed as constructive contributions to the running of the Branch.

Also, as Doug explained at the last meeting and as was featured in *In Touch*, we believe there is a significant value to be derived from creating the post of Branch PR person. The role is not extensively or precisely defined but we are sure that if someone has the time and interest to make regular contact with the media around the Branch we can generate benefit to towers and the Exercise by increased positive publicity about what we do and why we do it. It really can only take off if someone will volunteer to do it and develop the job in the way that they can manage.

Any volunteers?

Alan Marchbank, Chairman

**Communication works
for those who work at it**

John Powell

CONNECT Briefing Initiative

Aims

Increase the level of contact with Branch members.
Develop a feeling of involvement with the Branch.
Improve the feeling of belonging to the Branch.
Encourage attendance at meetings and the promotion of membership of the Branch.

Methodology

Each tower with paid up members has been included in a schedule, which shows the name and telephone number of the Tower Contact. The schedule allocates Branch Officers to be a point of contact with towers for regular communications.

In the time between the distribution of *In Touch* and the Quarterly meeting, each Branch Officer will make contact with their allocated towers - either in person or by telephone (but not by e-mail) for a brief conversation covering (but not limited to) the following topics -

- Confirm the receipt and distribution of *In Touch* to the tower members
- Feedback from the content of *In Touch* - what did they like / not like. Have they got something to contribute to the next one?
- Are there matters arising from the minutes of the meeting published in *In Touch* that they would like brought to the next meeting?
- Will they be attending the next meeting - if not do they want apologies sent?
- Do they have new members for election?
- Do they need help or advice from the Branch, eg. Tower and bells related advice, education / training or grants for work or training courses, assistance with ringing for forthcoming special services etc.

Any major issues should be circulated to all Branch Officers before the meeting so that we are all aware of them. Minor issues can wait until the meeting. If any Branch Officer is unable to attend the meeting then any issues from their towers should be forwarded to the Secretary.

Expected Benefits

As the briefings increase the relationship between the towers and the Branch Officers, we should expect to understand what the membership wants from the Branch and how we can adapt our management of it to be more relevant to a greater proportion of the membership.

Measures of Success

- Increased attendance at meetings
- Increased demand for help and advice into the towers
- Changes to the structure of meetings and practices
- Greater interest in the role of Branch Officers and an increased willingness to stand for election.

Tower	Branch Officer
Bradwell-----	Brian Newman
Buckingham-----	Barry Eglesfield
Clifton Reynes-----	Sheila Watts
Downs Barn-----	Alan Marchbank
Emberton-----	Sheila Watts
Fenny Stratford-----	Helen Stanworth
Great Brickhill-----	Alan Marchbank
Great Linford-----	Alan Marchbank
Hanslope-----	Sheila Watts
Lavendon-----	Doug Hird
Leckhamstead-----	Helen Stanworth
Lillingstone Lovell-----	Richard Stanworth
Loughton-----	Brian Newman
Maids Moreton-----	Barry Eglesfield
Milton Keynes Village-----	Edie Robinson
Newport Pagnell-----	Doug Hird
Newton Longville-----	Edie Robinson
Old Wolverton-----	Alan Marchbank
Olney-----	Doug Hird
Shalstone-----	Richard Stanworth
Shenley-----	Edie Robinson
Simpson-----	Brian Newman
Stoke Goldington-----	Sheila Watts
Stony Stratford-----	Barry Eglesfield
Stowe-----	Barry Eglesfield
Tingewick-----	Richard Stanworth
Tyringham-----	Doug Hird
Whaddon-----	Edie Robinson
Woughton on the Green --	Brian Newman

The Marchbank family in Cornwall



During the October half term break, we trundled off to Cornwall for a week to our favourite cottage on the Lizard peninsula.

In planning the week I thought that as all four of us were now ringing, perhaps we could fit in a tower or two, just to give John some greater experience you understand.....

Looking on the Truro Diocesan Guild web site was great and we had a reasonable plan and a lot of information about where and when we might go ringing. I thought it was reasonable to target eight bell towers.

We got to Penzance for their monthly practice on the Saturday evening at 6.00 pm, where there were many towers represented (from as far afield as Truro). We made good contacts which provided eight bell ringing every night of the week and three towers on the Sunday! Needless to say John's ringing improved enormously from such intense and diverse practice.

We were fortunate in that all the towers we went to were friendly and very welcoming, and all the bells were "user friendly". We rang lots of call changes, some doubles and triples and at Penzance some Surprise Major. But the lasting impression was that we met very few young ringers. In fact we got to Thursday night and the Redruth practice, before we met any ringers of Alex and John's ages. This struck me as odd and worrying and made me think about the youth population of our Branch...



Branch Membership Survey

At the Officer's meeting in November, Alan's observations from his half term holiday were discussed and this centred on how do we recruit more people. One of the conclusions we came to was that the Branch Officers know very little about the ringers in our towers. If we are to cater for ringers in the area and plan for the future then we need to know about the base position we are starting from, ie about the current ringers and the state of ringing in the Branch. We know how many members there are at each tower, and how many of them are juniors. We had no idea about ages of members or their ringing ability, apart from what we see at Branch events. In order to get some basic information about the ringers, we put together a membership survey and this was sent out to all towers in the Branch for which we had a tower contact address. The survey was put together in a bit of a hurry, so we may not have asked the right questions in order to gather the information we wanted.

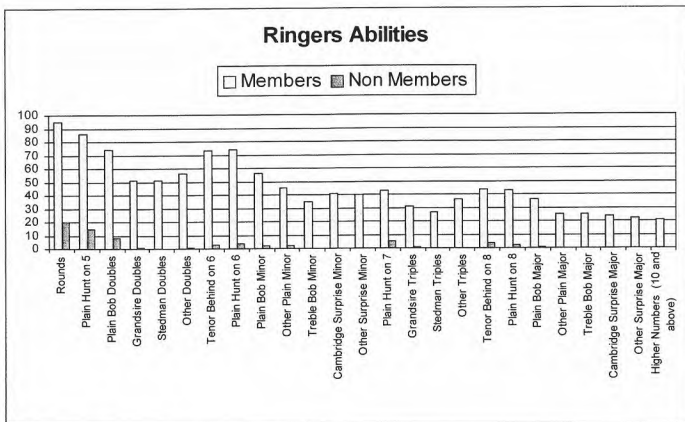
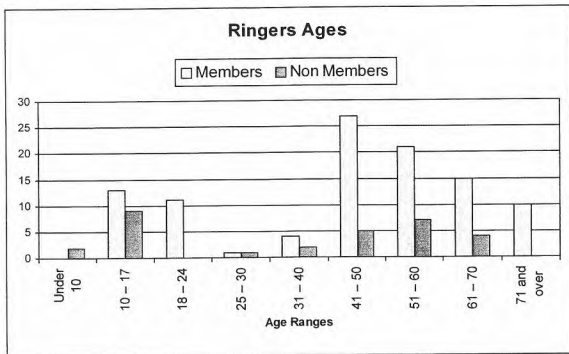
At each tower, all the ringers were asked to put ticks in boxes to indicate which age range they belong to and to show their ringing ability. This included non-members as well as members. In addition to collecting this information, we asked three questions:

- ☐ What should the Branch do more of?
- ☐ What should the Branch do less of?
- ☐ What youth activities would you like to see organised

In total, the survey was sent out to 45 towers, 29 with members and 16 without members. By the time the results were collated in mid-January we had received replies from 18 towers in all, 16 with members and two without members. That's a very good level of response - 40% of the towers. Thank you to all who have replied. If you haven't yet sent your survey in, then please do so as the information can be added in for a more comprehensive picture.

The Results

The results of the age ranges and ringing abilities are presented as graphs. The total number of ringers who have replied is 132, made up of 102 members and 30 non-members. There were some inconsistencies in the returns from some towers, as the number of members listed did not agree with the number from that tower who had paid subscriptions. The survey was always the lesser number, so perhaps some members didn't get to tick the boxes.



What should the Branch do more of?

- 🕒 Help bands, learners, captains organise learning sessions outside normal practice nights - but not a full blown ringing school. Emphasis very much on supporting bands as opposed to individuals
- 🕒 It would be helpful if one or two experienced ringers could occasionally and by arrangement visit

- 🕒 practice night to coach in a particular method or technique - eg. ringing up or down
- 🕒 Training Courses - Open Events and Specific Targets
- 🕒 Value every individual ringer - regardless of achievement
- 🕒 Be more welcoming to all ringers at practices
- 🕒 Practices on Saturdays and not Friday evening

- 🔔 Ringing Outings
- 🔔 Striking Competition - "Ladder" competition
- 🔔 We need to find more local people to take up ringing, any ideas welcome
- 🔔 Quiz Nights
- 🔔 Social events and Pub games

What should the Branch do less of?

- 🔔 Understand that there are many members who are quite happy practising and ringing in their own tower. This really needs to be seen as "just fine"
- 🔔 Less business meetings

What youth activities would you like to see organised?

- 🔔 Mini-outing (2-3 towers) for younger ringers - these proved popular in the past
- 🔔 Bouncy Castles
- 🔔 Youth Training Events
- 🔔 "Friendly" Sporting Events - Football, Cricket, Rounders etc.
- 🔔 Cycling/Ringing Tour
- 🔔 Striking Competition local to MK

What have we learned?

The graphs can be interpreted in a number of ways. There are two clear peaks in the age ranges of active ringers. This looks as if we are doing alright recruiting young ringers but there is a gap between 25 and 40. One interpretation is that people are busy establishing a career and starting a family, so that they do not have time for an activity such as ringing which involves a considerable degree of regular commitment. We are also likely to lose some of our young ringers when they go off to university but, all things being equal, some others should settle in the area. Are we doing enough to search them out and involve them in the local ringing scene? There is also an increasing number of 'newly retired' recruits which explains the long 'tail' to the second peak in the graph. There are also thirty ringers who are not members

The Ringing Ability graph shows that we have forty or so ringers who ring surprise minor, and more than thirty ringers who can ring some sort of triples or major. There are also at least twenty people who can ring on 10 bells or above. All these should allow us to be able to find enough help to support ringers who want to progress in method ringing on 6, 8 or 10 bells, and we should have no problem finding ringers for the various striking competitions! (But then perhaps striking competitions aren't their 'thing'.)

The responses to the questions will need to be considered further. There are some quick wins for getting more involvement with Branch events:

- 🔔 Go to towers where help is needed rather than the ringers coming to another tower. Novice ringers are often reluctant to ring in unfamiliar towers. Combine the Branch practice with the tower practice night.
- 🔔 Be more welcoming. We try to do this but the Ringing Master doesn't know everybody. If you are new to Branch events, come along with someone who has been before and ask them to introduce you to the Ringing Master.
- 🔔 Hold less business meetings. The Guild rules only state that we must hold an AGM. Other meetings are for the Branch to decide on. Short business meetings could be held at other Branch events in order to elect new members and conduct any other business that needs approval of a Branch meeting. Notice could be given at one Branch event of any specific business to be discussed at the next event. As there is normally at least one Branch event each month, urgent business would be dealt with more swiftly.
- 🔔 Ringing Outings, social events, etc can be arranged. They need planning and support from members.
- 🔔 Youth events can be arranged - can the youths arrange these themselves or will 'seniors' need to help?

These are only some of the things that we could do. These suggestions will be discussed at the AGM in March. If you have any other ideas or contribution to make to the future direction of the Branch then please come along to the meeting at Bradwell. The Branch should be run for the benefit of its members. This can only happen if the Officers know what the Branch wants to do.

This first survey has answered some of our questions but it has also shown that there are others that need to be asked. We don't want to ask you too often, as you will then suffer from 'survey fatigue'. This has been a useful exercise and is likely to be repeated (with more carefully thought out questions) next year.

Richard Stanworth

News!

Towcester Branch AGM

Chris Bulleid is now Chairman

**John Stanworth is now
Ringing Master**

Steeple Aston Course

Vicky Stanworth

On the 29th October 2005 I attended the Steeple Aston one-day course. I was in group 3 which was the Grandsire Doubles group. My tutor for the day was Graham Clifton. We went to 3 towers, these towers were Great Tew, Tackley and Rousham. These towers were very nice to ring at but Tackley was very interesting to get into with a narrow stair way and a steep ladder. In this group there were 5 students who all did very well throughout the day. During the day I became more confident with ringing Grandsire Doubles inside and I also began to count my places more. The lunch was very enjoyable and not too far from the second tower of the day. Not only was I a student but I was a helper for most of the day because about 3 of the students had never rung a plain course of Grandsire Doubles. I would like to say a big thank you to Graham's daughter Vicky for such a wonderful dinner. I would also like to say a big thank you to all the helpers and Graham Clifton for helping me and the other students in the group and for making it such an enjoyable day. I would also like to say a massive thanks to Simon Cole, Joan Warren and Graham Clifton who were the course organisers. I can now ring Grandsire Doubles very well and on the 15th December 2005 rang a Quarter of it on the 3rd at Padbury (details in the Quarters column) and then enjoyed a nice evening in the New Inn.



Guild Ten Bell Striking Competition

Richard Stanworth

The 2005 Competition was held at St Laurence, Reading on Saturday 26th November. The test piece was a fairly complex touch of 288 Little Bob Royal with split tenors, not at all easy to call and not easy to ring, with unfamiliar music, although there were some interesting roll-ups off the front. The draw had been held in advance which meant that we all knew when we would be ringing. North Bucks were drawn to go fourth and all members of the band, except Barry, arrived in good time. As a result Chiltern Branch went in front of us – I just hope this wasn't the reason for their touch being mis-called. The result was almost the same as last year.

1st	Reading	83%
2nd	East Berks an South Bucks	79%
3rd	Vale of White Horse	64%
4th	North Bucks	61%
	Chiltern – did not finish	

I'm sure we rang as well as we could, given that we hadn't all managed to practice together. My thanks to the band, who were Barry Eglesfield, Doug Hird, David Joyce, Roy Keeves, Catherine Stanworth, John Stanworth, Richard Stanworth (Conductor), Michael Tinsley, Peter Tribble, and Chrissie Cable. In 2006 the method will be Grandsire Caters. Let's hope that we have a reasonably straightforward touch so that we can concentrate on the striking instead of any unfamiliar calling.



General Committee Meeting 26 November 2005 - Purley on Thames

Guild Rep: Brian Newman

- Insurance—a claim settled at £8000.
- Child Protection—Parishes have copy of new guidance book, including this subject.
- Restoration Fund—£1240 raised to November 2005. Grants paid to Childrey and Whitchurch.
- Towers & Belfries Committee—short of members and looking for help.
- Guild Communication—Working group set up. Guild Steward David Joyce a member.
- 125th Anniversary of ODG—request to members to support. Agreed £1000 Guild funds to promote event.
- Budget Proposals—projected closing balance of £8768, in line with wish to maintain a reserve of 50%.
- Guild Library—growing and nearly too large for librarian's home. Reduction of number of copies of items and sale of duplicates.
- Subscriptions—agreed to continue at present level.
- Peal Fees—agreed 35p per rope to continue; meets cost of publication.
- Diary of Events—published in *Odd Bob* and our own *In Touch*.
- Guild Report—deadline 30 January 2006 for submissions.

Pearlys

St Andrew, Great Linford
Saturday 14th January 2006 2h52 (16)
5040 Plain Bob

- 1 Alan J Marchbank
- 2 Alexandra J Marchbank
- 3 Scott P Ayers
- 4 John Stanworth
- 5 James Maltby
- 6 Edith M Robinson (C)

For the 125th Anniversary of the Oxford Diocesan Guild
In the 250th year of the casting of these bells by
Joseph Eayre of St Neots
First Plain Bob Minor 2, 4 and 5
First on bells called by a woman
First time tenor turned in by a woman

Quarters

St Andrew, Biggleswade
Saturday 12th November 2005
1280 Cambridge Surprise Major
1 Marion Robinson
2 Philip Bailey
3 Roderick Johnstone
4 Janet C Garnet
5 John Stanworth
6 B Douglas Hird
7 Edith M Robinson
8 Alan J Marchbank (C)
For Remembrance Sunday

St Andrew, Great Linford
Monday 28th November 2005
1260 Maltby Doubles
1 B Douglas Hird
2 Edith M Robinson
3 James Maltby (C)
4 Simon Head
5 Paul Seaman
6 John Stanworth
To celebrate the 16th birthday of the Conductor

St Andrew, Great Linford
Sunday 4th December 2005
1320 Carlisle Surprise Minor
1 John Stanworth (circled tower to Quarters)
2 James Maltby (first in M)
3 Alan J Marchbank
4 Edith M Robinson
5 Paul Seaman (C)
6 B Doug Hird

St Andrew, Great Linford
Monday 5th December 2005
1296 Cambridge Surprise Minor
1 Tine Marchbank
2 Alexandra J Marchbank
3 James Maltby
4 Paul Seaman (C)
5 Simon Head
6 Edith M Robinson

SS Peter & Paul, Newport Pagnell
Wednesday 7th December 2005
1440 York Surprise Minor
1 Scott P Ayers
2 Edith M Robinson
3 John Stanworth
4 James Maltby
5 Simon Head
6 B Douglas Hird (C)

St Andrew, Great Linford
Saturday 10th December 2005
1260 Doubles (4 methods)
1 Alexandra J Marchbank
2 Alan J Marchbank (C)
3 James Maltby
4 Simon Head
5 Graham Hayward
6 Ros Tyrrell
For the Christingle Service

Cross & Stable, Downs Barn
Sunday 11th December 2005
1320 Plain Bob Doubles
1 Ros Tyrrell
2 Scott P Ayers
3 James Maltby
4 Alan J Marchbank
5 Alexandra J Marchbank (C)
First as Conductor

St Peter, Stoke Goldington
Wednesday 14th December 2005
1320 Norwich Surprise Minor
1 Alexandra J Marchbank
2 Alan J Marchbank
3 Simon Head
4 James Maltby
5 John Stanworth
6 Edith M Robinson (C)

St Mary the Virgin, Padbury
Thursday 15th December 2005
1260 Grandsire Doubles
1 Catherine Stanworth
2 Helen Stanworth
3 Vicky Stanworth
4 John Stanworth
5 Richard Stanworth (C)
6 Michael Tinsley
First inside—3

More Quarters

St Andrew, Great Linford
Monday 19th December 2005
1296 Cambridge Surprise Minor
1 Edith M Robinson
2 James Maltby
3 Alexandra J Marchbank
4 John Stanworth
5 Paul Seaman
6 Simon Head (C)

St Andrew, Great Linford
Monday 19th December 2005
1260 Plain Bob Minor
1 John Stanworth
2 Alexandra J Marchbank
3 James Maltby
4 B Douglas Hird
5 Scott P Ayers
6 Alan J Marchbank (C)
For the Carol Service

Assumption of the BVM, Woughton-on-the-Green
Monday 19th December 2005
1320 Durham Surprise Minor
1 Alexandra J Marchbank
2 Edith M Robinson
3 John Stanworth
4 James Maltby
5 Paul Seaman (C)
6 Simon Head
25th Quarter together—2 & 4

St Andrew, Great Linford
Friday 23rd December 2005
1260 Grandsire Doubles
1 Vicky Stanworth
2 Catherine Stanworth
3 John Stanworth
4 Simon Head
5 B Doug Hird (C)
6 James Maltby (circled tower)
Half muffled in remembrance of the life of
Mr Whitmore whose funeral took place in the Church
earlier today

Cross & Stable, Downs Barn
Wednesday 28th December 2005
1260 Plain Bob Doubles
1 Christine Marchbank
2 Alexandra J Marchbank
3 B Douglas Hird
4 James Maltby
5 Alan J Marchbank (C)
6 John Marchbank
50th in year—5, 25th together this year—2 & 5
1st Quarter—6
Birthday compliment to James Marchbank, 20 today

St James the Great, Hanslope
Thursday 29th December 2005
1260 Stedman Triples (47 mins)
1 Alan Cozens
2 Jonathan Griggs
3 Kevin Haseldine
4 Ian Thompson
5 Nicholas Gray
6 Roy Keeves
7 Richard Haseldine (C)
8 Anthony Gray
In memory of John T Haseldine
Father of Richard and grandfather of Kevin

6 Broadway Avenue, Giffard Park, Milton Keynes
Thursday 29th December 2005
1272 Plain Bob Minimus
1-2 Alexandra J Marchbank
3-4 Alan J Marchbank (C)
1st in Hand 1-2, 1st Q on the bells since restoration

St Faith, Newton Longville
Friday 30th December 2005
1280 Cambridge Surprise Major
1 Alexandra J Marchbank
2 Catherine Stanworth
3 Marion Robinson
4 Paul Seaman (C)
5 James Maltby
6 Edith M Robinson
7 John Stanworth
8 Alan J Marchbank
1st Treble Bob Major—1
50th Quarter in 2005 & 1st Surprise Major inside—5
120th Quarter in 2005—6

Cross & Stable, Downs Barn
Saturday 15th January 2006
1260 Doubles (Plain Bob, St Simons, St Martins,
St Oswald)
1 Alexandra J Marchbank
2 James Maltby
3 John Stanworth
4 Alan J Marchbank
5 Simon Head (C)
For the 125th Anniversary of the Oxford DG

Cross & Stable, Downs Barn
Tuesday 17th January 2006
1260 Grandsire Triples
1 Helen Stanworth
2 Catherine Stanworth
3 B Douglas Hird
4 Barry Eglesfield
5 Michael Tinsley
6 John Stanworth
7 Richard Stanworth (C)
8 Alan J Marchbank
On the 125th Anniversary of the formation of the
ODG on 17th January 1881. Originally arranged as a
band of Officers of the North Bucks Branch but, due
to incapacity and work commitments, only five of the
eight officers were able to take part.

Young Persons Quarter Peal Day (with some help!)

6 quarters attempted, 4 successful with 3 firsts and the theme for the day was for us all to bring a "Mascot"! Without including Edie's Mum, the average age was 21. All of the mascots helped out during the first quarter at Downs Barn. Scott's mascot spent the entire Quarter tied to his rope!

Cross & Stable, Downs Barn
Monday 22nd August 2005

- 1260 Plain Bob Minor
1 James Maltby and Daffy
2 Alexandra J Marchbank and Krispy
3 Catherine Stacy and Rentant
4 Scott P Ayers and Eric
5 John Stanworth and Asterix
6 Edith M Robinson and Zippy (C)

All Saints, Milton Keynes Village
Monday 22nd August 2005

- 1296 Cambridge Surprise Minor
1 Alexandra J Marchbank
2 Marion Robinson
3 Catherine Stacy
4 James Maltby
5 Edith M Robinson
6 John Stanworth (C)
First Surprise as Conductor

Assumption of the BVM, Woughton-on-the-Green
Monday 22nd August 2005

- 1260 Plain Bob Minor
1 Catherine Stacy
2 Scott P Ayers
3 Alexandra J Marchbank
4 John Stanworth
5 Edith M Robinson
6 James Maltby (C)
First Minor as Conductor

St Thomas, Simpson
Monday 22nd August 2005

- 1260 Grandsire Doubles
1 James Maltby
2 Marion Robinson
3 Edith Robinson
4 Catherine Stacy
5 John Stanworth (C)
6 Alexandra J Marchbank
First as Cover

The Gunpowder Plot Four in a Day

Quarters rung on the 5th November 2005 for the 400th Anniversary of the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot.

St Andrew, Great Linford

- 1320 London & Wells Surprise Minor
1 Scott P Ayers
2 Alan J Marchbank
3 Edith M Robinson
4 James Maltby
5 John Stanworth
6 Paul Seaman (C)

St Mary, Clifton Reynes

- 1440 Beverley & Surfleet Surprise Minor
1 Scott P Ayers
2 Paul Seaman
3 James Maltby
4 John Stanworth
5 Edith M Robinson
6 Alan J Marchbank (C)

All Saints, Emberton

- 1260 Plain Bob Minor
1 Alexandra J Marchbank
2 James Maltby
3 Alan J Marchbank
4 Catherine Stacy
5 John Stanworth
6 Edith M Robinson (C)
For All Saints Day—the Patronal Festival

St Peter, Stoke Goldington

- 1260 Grandsire & Plain Bob Doubles
1 Catherine Stacy
2 Alexandra J Marchbank
3 Edith M Robinson
4 James Maltby
5 Alan J Marchbank (C)
6 John Stanworth
Birthday compliment to the Revd. A Murdoch



**James Maltby
First Quarter Peal Day
Friday 23rd December 2005**

All Quarters attempted were successful—here's to the next day James!

Holy Trinity, Old Wolverton
1320 Bourne Surprise Minor
1 Alexandra J Marchbank
2 John Stanworth
3 James Maltby
4 Simon Head
5 Paul Seaman (C)
6 Edith M Robinson
First blows in Bourne—2 & 3
25th Quarter together—1 & 6

All Saints, Calverton
1320 Carlisle Surprise Minor
1 Alexandra J Marchbank
2 James Maltby
3 John Stanworth (1st in M)
4 Edith M Robinson
5 Paul Seaman (C)
6 Simon Head

All Saints, Loughton
1320 Cambridge Surprise Minor
1 Edith M Robinson
2 Paul Seaman
3 Simon Head
4 John Stanworth
5 Alexandra J Marchbank
6 James Maltby (C)
First Surprise Minor as Conductor

St Mary, Shenley
1260 Plain Bob Minor (consisting of just singles!)
1 Edith M Robinson
2 Alexandra J Marchbank
3 James Maltby
4 Paul Seaman (C)
5 Scott P Ayers
6 Simon Head

St Martin, Fenny Stratford
1320 Ipswich Surprise Minor
1 Scott P Ayers
2 Alexandra J Marchbank
3 James Maltby
4 Paul Seaman (C)
5 Simon Head
6 Edith M Robinson
First blows 2, to prove that she can ring Ipswich better than her Dad!

Three in an Afternoon

Assumption of the BVM, Stowe
Tuesday 27th December 2005
1260 Plain Bob Minor
1 Alexandra J Marchbank
2 Simon Head
3 Marion Robinson
4 James Maltby
5 Edith M Robinson (C)
6 John Stanworth

St Edmund, Maids Moreton
Tuesday 27th December 2005
1320 Cambridge Surprise Major
1 James Maltby
2 Alexandra J Marchbank
3 Marion Robinson
4 Simon Head
5 Edith M Robinson
6 John Stanworth (C)

St Mary the Virgin, Padbury
Tuesday 27th December 2005
1260 Grandsire Doubles
1 Alexandra J Marchbank
2 James Maltby
3 Marion Robinson
4 Simon Head
5 John Stanworth (C)
6 Edith M Robinson
25th Quarter together—4 & 6

Beyond our Borders

Towcester Branch, PDG

4 March - Roade

Northampton Branch, PDG

25 February - Church Brampton

25 March - Boughton

22 April - Wootton

More from Croydon's Weekly Standard

A gradual trawl through Newport's local paper from the 1860's onwards is adding greatly to our understanding of ringing at that time. Being based in Newport, most of the news is pretty local but surrounding villages get quite a lot of coverage. Try exploring the Branch web site to see what there is for your tower. The overall picture for this first 15 years looks like the table below.

Doug Hird, Archivist

TOWER	1859	1860	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	1866	1867	1868	1869	1870	1871	1872	1873
Bletchley										2					
Broughton															1
Emberton							1	1			2	1	1		
Fenny Stratford				1				1							
Gayhurst													1		
Hanslope					1				3		1		2		
Haversham					1										
Lathbury									1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Lavendon					1										
Linslade										1	2				
Little Brickhill							1								
Loughton					1										
Newport Pagnell	1	3	1	1	2	3	3	1	10	6		4	2	4	4
North Crawley		2			1										
Old Wolverton														1	
Olney		2	1	2	4	2	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	4	1
Shenley												1			2
Sherington												1			
Simpson									1						
Stony Stratford			1							1	1				
Tyringham												1			1
Wavendon									1						
Weston Underwood						1									1



ODG celebrates 125 years

Today our Church bell ringers are pillars of society, in the main, but it hasn't always been so.

At the beginning of the 19th century Church services were in a state of disarray with the singers and Church orchestras of Thomas Hardy's time vying with each other for solos and more or less controlling the Services. The bell ringers were worse: often they refused to ring for Divine Service, making a merry noise only if they were paid for civic duties. A desperate need to regularize all these happenings led to the evolution of the Oxford movement, a complex revolution within the Church but which laid down the foundations of what we recognize today in established Church tradition.

The wind and string bands were ousted and organs introduced in the Church and the old singers replaced by a robed choir. However, the ringers proved to be intransigent. They continued to set themselves apart, brew up in the belfry and lock themselves in, ringing any time of day or night at their own pleasure and, in one case at least, tied up the bells and locked the vicar out of his own tower. These men, who were poor and rough, would compete with rival bands from other villages for prizes of hats, gloves and other basics of life and an 'away' team might even be forced to sleep under hedges having walked many miles for the competition. There was almost invariably bad blood between them.

One hundred and twenty-five years ago this January the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers was formed. It was one of many such associations beginning to blossom up and down the country. A few like-minded clergymen who loved their art and hated what ringing had become in the Churches went out to evangelise the community. They stood cheek by jowl with the local, dissolute hard men who were the ringers and taught them to ring properly, rather than just make an unpleasant noise. They laid down regulations for belfry reform and gradually law and order was maintained in the Church. The ODG celebrated its founding on January 17th. An initial meeting in Reading in 1881 was the precursor to the establishment of the Guild in Oxford on this date. This year will see

celebratory ringing throughout the Diocese of Oxford (Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire) with a Festival Service in July at Christchurch Cathedral, Oxford.

But for this Movement the tradition of Church bell ringing in this country as we know it would probably have died out.

With thanks to Bobbie May, Public Relations Officer for the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers. Also the Ringing World.

Taken from Bill Butler's book "100 Years of the ODG" - copies available at £3 from Bobbie May,

Secretarial Stuff

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 me 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. A stamped addressed envelope was included. We try to maintain accurate information and can only do this if you help.

Branch Survey

A Branch Survey was also sent out with the tower information letter. If your tower has not yet returned the survey, then please do so, as the information collected and your comments will help with planning the future activities of the Branch.

Email Distribution of Notices etc

Email can greatly speed up the distribution of notices about Guild and Branch events. I already have the email addresses of some tower correspondents and will be contacting each of them to see if they wish to receive notices in this way. Any tower correspondent receiving notices in this way must undertake to print them off and display them on their tower notice board. So that this is not too great a burden, this means of distribution will be limited to notices of two pages or less. The correspondent can also forward the notice to members of their tower if they wish. If you haven't given your email address to the Secretary and would like to receive electronic notices for your tower, then please send an email to the Secretary (secretary@northbucks.org.uk). If you are not sure if she has your email address, then send details to her anyway.

Helen Stanworth

Minutes of Quarterly Meeting held at Woughton on the Green on 4th December 2005

Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman, Alan Marchbank, welcomed everyone to Woughton. He commented that the last Quarterly Meeting held here was in December 1999. It probably has something to do with it being a nice warm Church that we come here in December, as there is no point going to a cold place and freezing to death. Thank you to Brian and Norma Baldwin for organising the afternoon, and thanks to Duncan Sylvester for leading the Service and playing the organ.

Apologies for Absence

Received from Michael Tinsley, Catherine Stanworth, John Stanworth, Donna Bond, Christine Cable, Edie Robinson, Ros Tyrell, James Maltby, Alex Marchbank, John Marchbank and Tine Marchbank

Minutes of previous Meeting

The minutes of the Quarterly Meeting held at Thornborough in September had been published in the November edition of *In Touch*. It was agreed by the meeting that the Chairman sign the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

Matters Arising

Vicky Stanworth had attended the Steeple Aston Course and the Treasurer had paid the grant to her.

Election of New Members

A nomination had been received proposing one new member:

Lower	Name
Great Linford	Victoria Small (Junior)
Proposed	Alan Marchbank, Seconded Brian Newman.
She was elected	without dissent.

Officers Reports

Ringling Master As reported in *In Touch*, Hanslope represented us in the Guild six-bell competition but didn't get through to the final. We entered a band in the 10-bell competition last week and came fourth out of five entries. We did well considering we hadn't managed a practice together beforehand, being quite close behind the third placed band. Reading won with 83%, EBSB were second with 79%, Vale of White Horse were third with 64%, and we were fourth with 61%. There was a large gap between second and third, but third and fourth were quite close. Thank you to everyone who took part. A joint practice with the Towcester Branch at Wicken was well attended, and generally enjoyed, and worth doing again. Plans are in hand for next year.

Treasurer The balance at the Building Society is currently £942.19. There is still one tower outstanding to pay 2005 subscriptions – Great Brickhill. Alan

Marchbank commented that he had been speaking to David Middleton recently, and he had promised to get the money together for the subscriptions. Branch Officers are reminded to submit expense details to the Treasurer. Letters requesting 2006 subscriptions will be sent out soon after 1st January. The collection at the meeting for the Guild Bell Fund had collected £10. Thank you to those who contributed.

Guild Representative Brian Newman gave a report on behalf of the representatives who had attended the Guild Autumn Committee Meeting the previous week. Insurance – some minor changes have been made to the policy but these do not affect member's benefits from the policy. One personal accident claim has been settled, the total payment being some £8000. Child Protection – Guidelines for bellringing have now been included in the booklet issued by the Diocese. All first-named Churchwardens should now have a copy of this booklet if you wish to consult it. In general the issues raised by the Guild have been included. Restoration Fund – over £1200 pounds raised this year for the fund. Two grants, to Childrey and Whitchurch, have been paid out and St Cross (Oxford) may be making an application.

Sub-committee Reports – Towers & Belfries are looking for more members. Members usually come from the General Committee but they would like to co-opt anyone else who has an interest. If you are interested then please let one of the reps know (Alan or Brian) and they will pass the message on. Communication – A working group has been set up to look at ways of improving this across the Guild. Our own Steward, David Joyce, is on this working group. He was asked to talk about this topic and found himself elected. If you have any ideas for this then please pass them to David.

Guild 125th Anniversary – The Guild Festival will be held in Oxford, similar to the Millennium festival, with a service in the Cathedral and a festival lunch, not in the College, as that is not available. We need to encourage everyone to go. The Guild has allocated £1000 to cover publicity and possibly a personal invitation. The arrangements are in the hands of a small working party.

Budget – Brian Gatward, Guild Treasurer presented this on behalf of his assistant, Terry Wagstaff. The funds are in a healthy situation so that, even after the grant has been made for the festival, there should still be a balance at the end of the year of over £8000. This is in line with the Guild's aim of holding 50% of general income in reserve.

Library – The librarian gave a short report. The Guild library is held in his house, but it is growing and it may not be able to be held in one place for much longer. He is prudently disposing of spare copies of books, which he will try to sell on if possible, or dispose of in

an appropriate manner – not just throw them away. Currently he receives about one query a month, usually by telephone. The issue of size is one that we will be sure to come back to again.

Peal Fees – The report editor had been asked about the cost of printing peals and if the peal fee covered the cost of printing. She reported that the current fee of 35p per ringer per peal does cover the current cost. The peal fee is unchanged.

Diary of Events – This is published in *Odd Bob* and in our own newsletter when relevant. The closing date for contributions to the annual report is 31st January 2006.

David Joyce added that there had been much discussion about the format of the Service at the Guild Festival, whether it should be informal or a formal Service with Communion, and which would get the best attendance. No decision was made but David thought that we could well be asked what the turnout might be from our Branch. Those present can't speak for others from their towers but we need to find out. Alan added that we should ask tower members – the date of the Festival is fixed at 8th July – how many of them would attend the Festival in Oxford on that date. We ought to be able to get some idea of the number by our AGM. By then there may well be personal invitations for every Guild member.

David Joyce also added that spare copies of old Guild reports are available from Bobbie May for a short time before she takes action to dispose of them. She had intended to recycle them but David had suggested to her that perhaps one of the bookshops that advertise in the Ringing World might be interested in them.

Forthcoming Events

An up to date calendar had been circulated to all present. Points Arising:

Shenley is not yet confirmed – check with the Secretary beforehand if you are not sure.

Actual date of the Guild 125th Anniversary is Tuesday 17th January 2006, a good opportunity for peals and quarters around that date.

The AGM is at Bradwell – a change from the previous calendar.

Events for April to June have only recently been planned so none are confirmed yet.

Guild Festival is on 8th July next year in Oxford, as already discussed.

Next Event – Branch Practice with Christmas Morning Surprise Minor as the special method.

Alan raised the point that sometimes dates in the calendar are not known because of changes made since it had been published. It was agreed that up to date copies of the calendar be available at all Branch events for members to take if they wished. This should include a number to contact in order to check about unconfirmed events, i.e. the Branch Secretary.

Any Other Business

External Communication The Chairman asked Doug Hird to talk about communication outside the Branch to

the media around it. Doug explained that this was something that had occurred earlier in the year thinking about the situation in Newport where there is a problem that could well be an issue elsewhere in the Branch. The big issue at Newport is that we can't ring peals because the Church is frightened that someone might complain. Nobody has done, but they are frightened about it, and that they wouldn't know what to say if there was a complaint. Out of this he had written an article in the August edition of *In Touch* and he presented the main points from this article in proposing that the Branch create a post of Public Relations Officer to communicate with the people outside ringing about ringing. The post would evolve around the person in the post but Doug would see the main points to be:

- Raise awareness of ringing locally
- Pick interesting items in the Branch to bring to the attention of the local media
- Report ringing in general

These would have a bearing on such things as recruitment and fund raising – many local rings are in need of work on them. People will be more willing to give money if they know something about ringing. The PRO would be a focal point for feeding information out to the media. They would also be a point of contact for enquiries coming in from the media and could deal with hostile enquiries. Local ringers who are contacted could direct the enquiry to the PRO for a considered response. The PRO should stay in touch with other PROs, to find out what is going on more widely, find out how it should be done more widely, and getting best practice off other people. This needs thinking about between now and March as to how we can achieve this.

Alan added that the officers think that we need this post, but we don't want to impose it on anyone. We think that it is quite critical for North Bucks, and the Exercise, to start communicating in a much more organised way with the media.

Terry Page asked about how general is the existence of PROs. Alan said the Central Council has set up a PRO working group and that the ODG PRO, Bobbie May, is now on the Central Council. There is a general recognition that this whole matter of organised contact needs addressing.

The Chairman then set out how he saw this progressing. He does not want to impose this post on the Branch, he wants the members to discuss it in their tower and come to the AGM and say if they want the post. He asked those present to go to their towers and ask them if this is something that they want.

Sheila Blenkhorn commented that the poor attendance at the meeting suggested that it wasn't external communication that needs improving but internal communication.

Internal Communication The Chairman commented that this brought him on to the next item to discuss. The officers have divided up the towers between them and they will then ring the tower correspondents before Quarterly meetings and make sure that they have

North Bucks Branch—Calendar 2006

FEBRUARY	17	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Carlisle S Minor	Shenley
MARCH	4	3.30	Annual General Meeting	Bradwell
	11		<i>Spring General Committee Meeting</i>	<i>Central Bucks Branch</i>
	17	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Erin Doubles	Lillingstone Lovell
APRIL	8		<i>Radley Course</i>	<i>Radley</i>
	15		<i>Guild Handbell Day</i>	<i>Reading Branch</i>
	21	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: TBA	Milton Keynes Village
MAY	1		<i>Annual Ringing Day Eight Bell Striking Competition</i>	<i>Vale of White Horse Branch</i>
	5		<i>In Touch Deadline</i>	
	19	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Kent TB Minor	Stowe
	20		<i>Guild Annual General Meeting</i>	<i>South Oxon Branch</i>
JUNE	3	3.30	Quarterly Meeting	Calverton
	16*	7.30	Branch Six Bell Striking Competition	Wavendon
JULY	8		<i>125th Anniversary Guild Festival</i>	<i>Oxford</i>

Items marked * were unconfirmed as at 3 February 2006
Events in *italics* are Guild events, etc.

Eddie Jeffries

Eddie was a Branch member at Old Bradwell in 1958 and 1959 while he had a shop in Wolverton. The archives have not been completed in detail for that period so we don't have any other information from that time. His last performance in North Bucks was a Bedford District sponsored quarter at Lavendon in 1980. He did ring two peals in North Bucks though. Belgrave S Major at Hanslope in 1949 and Treble to 7 S Minor at Maids Moreton in 1984.

I can confirm that the standard tall tale of Eddie meeting a visiting band and telling them that he didn't ring and then proceeding to sort out Spliced Surprise Major is true. He did it to a band of MUGs at Bromham in the late 70's. This was particularly enjoyable as I had heard the story already and knew what was coming.

Eddie is buried in Bromham Churchyard a little to the West of the tower. So when you ring there make the effort to make it sound good for him please.

Doug Hird

received *In Touch* and ask if there is anything from the minutes that they would like discussed, have they got any new members, are they going to be coming or sending apologies. It is also hoped that this will be a two-way link, that the towers will ring their officer contact if they need any help. David Joyce commented that this might take some time to work down to towers, as it will depend on whether the tower contact communicates actively with the members in his tower. This communication will take time to achieve effectively and officers will need to evolve the best form of communication with each tower. The list of towers for which each officer is responsible will appear in the next *In Touch*.

Survey The Chairman also advised that a simple survey would be sent out to each tower to try and establish the age range of ringers in the Branch and the ringing ability of the ringers. The survey also includes three open questions:

- What should the Branch do more of – things that we do and you support and enjoy and want to do more of. If we don't know then we haven't got a chance of organising more.
- What should the Branch do less of – what things do we do that you don't enjoy and therefore you don't support.
- What youth activities should we offer – to encourage more activities by the younger members of the Branch.

We need to know the answers to these questions because unless we start knowing what the membership of the Branch wants to do, we can't manage the Branch. Please talk about these in your towers.

Terry Page asked if the survey was of members at the tower or people who ring at the tower. At this stage the survey will be of tower members only. Questions about visiting/regular ringers at towers could well be included in a future survey. Comments can be added at the end of the survey if you wish.

The Chairman stated that we would look at the formula of events. For example this Saturday meeting with service and tea is a formula that hasn't changed since he started ringing in 1970. This works for him but does it work today, with young people in the Branch working at weekends. This may be an area that needs looking at, depending on the replies we get. The Guild is also worried about how to communicate with all its 2000 members. If we can connect with our 200, then this should make things easier for the Guild.

All offers of help, all observations, all comments really gratefully received. If we are getting things wrong, tell us. If there are things that you like, tell us, and we'll organise more of them. If there are things that we aren't doing that we should, then tell us that as well. **Bookstall** David Joyce reported that he had laid out at the back of the Church, as well as the Guild bookstall, the remnants of Godfrey Foat's bookstall, which were passed to Sheila a few years ago. This has raised a little over £30 for the Branch but is not selling much any more. The books are not current and most people in North Bucks have bought what they want from it. Pat Newton has agreed to take the remaining stock

into the Guild bookstall, so this is your last chance to have a look through it. It was agreed that a letter be written to Godfrey explaining what has been done with the books and thanking him for his contribution.

Thanks

The Chairman proposed the vote of thanks to Brian and Norma Baldwin and the Woughton ringers for making us welcome to the nice warm Church, and to Duncan the Minister for taking the Service and playing the organ. Members showed their appreciation in the usual manner.

Eight-Bell Striking Competition

After comments made at the Autumn committee meeting about complex touches and obscure methods, and as a result of examining the rules, the test piece this year will be a plain course of Yorkshire Surprise Major. I hope that this will encourage members to take part and we can enter at least one band.

The competition will be hosted by the Vale of White Horse Branch.

Beginners Striking Competition

In view of the very poor attendance last year, we are giving this a miss this year and will review the future of this competition in light of the results of the survey.

Six-Bell Striking Competition

A small group of officers are reviewing the rules of the Branch competition to see if we can make the event more attractive to members and encourage a larger entry.

We hope to report back at the next meeting.

Richard Stanworth