



In Touch

May 1999

Inside this issue:

Who's Who The Soap Box	2
Bill Yates	3
3 & 4 Bell Outing	4
Brain Benders	5
New Bands & Workshop	6
Training Day & Alan Cozens	7
Ringing Times	8
Quarters	9
Around the Towers	10
AGM Minutes	11
Calendar	15
6-Bell Rules	16

Bradwell hosts June Quarterly and Striking Competition

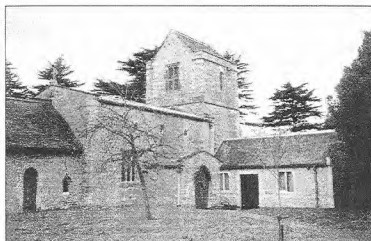
Saturday 5th June 1999

4.00 Draw & Competition Ringing
5.00 Service
5.30 Tea
6.15 Results & Business Meeting
Evening ringing until 9.00

Names for tea to Dick Grace
(01908-321110) by **Saturday 22nd May 1999**
Entries for the Striking Competition
to Richard Stanworth (01280-814172) by
Friday 4 June 1999

Why not enter your team (or teams) for the Competition? You don't have to be an expert and the more teams we have the more fun it will be.

The rules (see the back page) have been slightly simplified this year to try and make the running of the event a little smoother.



St Laurence, Bradwell

Wavendon wins the Cup!

It was good to have the Beginners' Striking Competition back with us on 9th April at Wavendon, judged by Godfrey Foat. The Branch Officers recently devised a more flexible set of rules, and we were encouraged to see so many learners of varying abilities turn up. All the ringers received a Certificate for taking part. Four bands competed in the Competition – Newport Pagnell, Downs Barn, Maids Moreton, and 'Wavendon' (this was an 'ad hoc' band from various towers).

After a short practice, each team rang rounds for three minutes – a long time when it's your first competition and your first go on Wavendon bells... We assembled afterwards in the Church for the results. Godfrey told us that he would award no marks, but would give general comments on the bands, and then announce the Runners Up, and the Winners. He encouraged learners to try to put themselves right quickly – generally it took too many rows to get right and marks added up. There were disagreements over the speed the bells should go, but also some periods of good striking. There were no disasters! Godfrey concluded by thanking Leonard Wilson for the use of his rather hard tombstone while listening to the ringing.

The band in second place was Newport Pagnell. The winners, Wavendon, will hold the Beginners Competition Silver Cup for the next year. (Photograph on page 3.)

Who's Who 1999/2000

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The Chairman's Soap Box

What is the Branch for?

In past years this didn't seem to be a question you would ask. You just join don't you? Everyone else did. Now, the incentive is mainly financial. The Guild's insurance accounts for a large part of the subs. The rest goes on the day to day running of the Guild and the branches. Without this, surely we would be just as well off having a Central Council insurance scheme and cut out the middle men.

So what else does the Branch do for us? It organises meetings (well you have got to have meetings haven't you?) and practices and the occasional competition. Well we could all organise our own practices. Actually there are several groups of towers who have been doing this for years. So why have Branch practices? Actually, we didn't have them at the start in 1904. I think they started in the 1950's. I imagine the thought went something like: "All of our good ringers are spread all over the Branch. If we got some of our better ringers together on a regular basis, it would be worthwhile learning some of the more advanced methods." Or, "All of our learners are spread all over the Branch. If we got some of them to ring with our better ringers together on a regular basis, they shouldn't stay as learners for much longer." Or "Some of our towers hardly ever get rung, why not get a band together to visit them from time to time." But which is it? Over the years, what with changes in the Branch officers, the Branch practices have tried to fit all of these ideals, usually all at the same time. A tall order for a 1½ hour session each month. Branch practices are among the hardest to run. Almost anyone could turn up, usually for the third reason, so as soon as they have rung once, most of them try to become invisible. A theme, or method of the month can help but often only benefits the very few who are learning that method. How many times do these ringers actually get to ring the method? If the practice is well attended they might only get one go and that may fire out. Without a special method, however, no-one will look at anything before the practice resulting in yet more Plain Bob Doubles.

So what should Branch practices be for? Should there be other opportunities for ringers to ring new methods? Would anyone actually turn up to structured training sessions? Perhaps non method aspects such as raising and lowering or striking?

What do you, the members of the Branch, think the Branch is for? Of course, the first person to suggest something new will be welcomed with open arms as a volunteer.

Doug Hird

Editorial

Doug's article leads me to ask "What is the Newsletter for?". I guess the answer must be 'communication'. I'm very grateful to everyone who contributed towards this, my first attempt at the Editorship of an issue of *In Touch*, and I hope it fulfils this requirement. Communication is, of course, a two way thing. It's good to be able to inform Branch members about Branch and Guild events, but it's far more interesting to most people to find out what's been going on in your area recently. I'll be delighted to hear from you!

Sheila Watts

Next Issue Copy Date: 9th July 1999



Beginners' Striking Competition – the victorious Wavendon band
L to R: David Joyce, Simon Head, Leigh Burgess, Christine Cable, Rachel Stacy, Brian Newman

Branch Practices

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

We will always welcome you to Branch practices; they are for the benefit of ALL members, whatever level you ring at. Don't forget to bring your instructor to help out. We can only make a success of practices if we also have experienced ringers to help and provide a strong framework around the less experienced ringers. The next focus on call changes is at **Emberton on 18th June**. We will always ring Plain Hunt, Plain Bob and Grandshire at any Branch practice for those who request it, so don't be put off if you

Guild Subscriptions 1999

Many thanks to all those towers who have paid their subs so promptly this year, and even more thanks to those who also included a donation towards the publication of *In Touch*. There are just a few towers left to pay, and I'd be delighted to relieve them of some money! It would be good to be able to send all subscriptions to the Guild immediately after the June Quarterly meeting. Please send your subs to me, or hand them over at the meeting!



Sheila Watts

can't ring the special method. This is merely a focus for those who wish to try something different.

Richard Stanworth

Fifty Years as Secretary

Bill Yates celebrated 50 years as Secretary of the Towcester branch of the Peterborough Guild, at the AGM held at Wicken on 30th January. Bill was taught to ring at Buckingham in 1936 by Frank Townsend, and began change ringing at Wicken with Harry Keeley, when the latter was a despatch rider at the Water Stratford prisoner of war camp. Bill subsequently rang a lot with Harry's son, Roger and also with George Holland. He was elected a member of the Oxford Diocesan Guild on 6th June 1936, and was made an honorary member on 2nd March 1991.

In the early fifties Bill pioneered many peals of Surprise Minor and called the first peal of London Surprise Minor for the PDG at Helmdon. His name is on most peal boards in south Northamptonshire and north Buckinghamshire, and even on some further afield in Dorset and Wales. Bill was famous for his many tours, when he organised 'Yates goes to Somerset' and other locations. Although Bill has rung over 400 peals he has never forgotten the grassroots of ringing and has always been willing to support struggling towers.

Bill's special day began late by his standards with an 8.30 am start for a peal of Yorkshire at Wicken with Peterborough Guild and Branch officers and longstanding friends. Lunch was at The Cock at Potterspury with more officers and friends, when the PDG Master, Robin Rogers, paid tribute to Bill, prompting many anecdotes.

Wicken has featured prominently in the media recently with articles in the *Telegraph* and *Readers Digest*. On this occasion there were interviews with Anglia Television before the usual Church service when the collection was taken by two of Bill's grandsons, James Yates and Henry Drage. There were about 70 friends and relatives at the tea and Bill was presented with a plaque commemorating his long service and a montage of photographs illustrating his ringing career. The photos surrounded a copy of the Guild report confirming 'Mr W A Yates was elected secretary at the Annual Meeting in January 1949'.

With thanks to Lynn Fuller of the PDG, and *The Ringing World*



Bill representing the North Bucks Branch in a striking competition at Amersham

The 3 and 4 Bell Outing to 8

Gareth Grayson & Catherine Stacy

The 3 & 4 bell society are a group that ring on all those 3 & 4s that other ringers don't investigate. On the 13th March this group arranged an outing in the Beds and Bucks area. We were invited on this outing and not knowing what to expect, we went along. Unfortunately the distance between towers was a bit excessive. Here is what happened:

Edworth:

The tower was relatively new in comparison with the church. This three was quite a challenge and dropped quite easily. There was a fixed ladder next to the treble which made control hard. The matter was not helped when the local farmer's dog wanted to catch hold - he soon found it harder than anticipated and retreated with 'tail' between the legs. The bells were old yet harmonious. As there were only three bells, ringing was over sooner than anticipated.

Little Brickhill:

This church was attacked heavily by the Victorians and they just about kept the pleasant village feature about this church. This was another three bell tower and rather interesting. They were in tune as the 1, 3 and 5 of a major six. The Bells went easily enough but there is a lot of frame movement and ringing should be for short periods only, if at all. Gillett & Co. introduced a clock mechanism into the tower in 1887 and the hour hammer protrudes into the treble pit. This resulted in the removal of a normal slider and was replaced by a bodedged job.

Bedford - St Peter de Merton:

Originally a six, turned eight with two Taylor trebles. An irregular rope circle was the most pointed attraction. The bells were quite smooth although they did not sound nice. The ringing was a striking mess as Mr Hearn and his friend enjoyed playing games in what should have been good Bob Major. We also rang an interesting variation of Plain Bob Minimus on the front then the back bells together. This was quite amusing and some very nice musical changes were heard.

School Chapel - Bedford:

A lot of hassle for one bell. Although the bell is hung for full circle ringing, it is only used for chiming and there was not a full rope attached to the wheel or any sign of a stay. Therefore, a full rope was put in place and the bell was fully muffled. All this for ten minutes ringing. The bell is a fine casting by Taylors and was installed with new fittings around 1940. The tone was very clear but the bell was hard work. This really was just a tower grab and we did not think that it was really worth the bother.

Great Barford:

I remember hearing these whilst camping with the Air Cadets down by the river. They sounded good then and now I have rung them. These bells were beautiful and lived up to their reputation of being good. A very old ring by various founders, all in a large wooden frame and on plain bearings. The tenor was about 16 cwt and went very well. They are a ground floor ring with a similar rope length to that of North Crawley and they had just put new ropes on them. We very much enjoyed this tower and it made the outing worth going on.

Bolnhouse:

A large church with a fine tower. It was a large ground floor area for four ropes and there was quite a draft. An unusual feature was a stunning vault made out of wood similar to Maids Moreton. The church looked (inside) almost like Broughton church, only slightly bigger. The bells were obviously used as they were in quite good condition and went well.

Melchbourne:

We had to wait a little while before someone came to unlock the tower but the church had lots of interesting features in it. It was a Georgian church and obviously lacked money as the roof was in need of repair. The locals had presumably spent all the money on strengthening the tower and putting a new platform up. The bells were very loud but they appeared to have benefited from the tower restructuring. The village was blessed with various minimus methods, including Kent.

Newton Blossomville:

An upstairs three and very respectful. The tenor was about 5 cwt and was cast by a Chandler. The ceiling was of stone ribbed vaulting and the tower was very spacious for a three. Upstairs was very nice because there was plenty of room to actually look at the bells whilst they were being rung.

It was a very nice day for an outing and we did enjoy the ringing. However, such an organisation should be very wary of the condition of some of these towers. Ringing at awkward towers is one thing, ringing at towers that are considered unsafe is another. Bell ringers should enjoy ringing bells no matter how many there are. But they should not touch them if it will only make it worse.

A Quarter Two Many!

Catherine Stacy

Not only as an attempt to practice and ring more than the usual Bob Doubles, Gareth and myself wished to ring at other eight bell towers in the area that maybe do not get the quarter attention that nicer towers get. Unfortunately, Sunday 28th was a bad ring day and of the two quarters that were organised not one of them was completed. The first was held at Newton Longville! It was not as easy as anticipated and only after three leads of Grandsire Triples we all concluded that this was a job for a later date. Still, we made use of the bells and rang plain courses of Kent and Cambridge Minor along with other little Plain Methods on eight. Obviously not quite put off by this, half the band went to Newport Pagnell and tried for a quarter of PB Doubles with a 7-6-8 cover. This also was not to be and after two attempts and a bash of 360 changes we collapsed and rested. Of course, we were very disheartened, but you win some and you lose some.

Wedding Bells

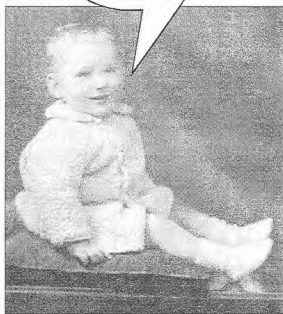
We are delighted to report that Godfrey Foat and Christine Murphy will be getting 'spiced'. Godfrey, who was tower captain at Newport Pagnell, and Chris, who rang in the Newport Band mainly in the 1980s, say the wedding "will be a quiet affair sometime later this year". Godfrey and Chris now live in Silsoe, Bedfordshire.



BRAIN BENDERS

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

This box will
come in handy
for turning in
the tenor in a
few year's
time.....



Can you name this North Bucks ringer?

In this WORDSEARCH you'll find
25 words connected with Ringing,
and a few others.

The words are located horizontally,
vertically and diagonally, up or
down.

See if you can find all of them –
first correct answer to the Editor
gets a prize.....

Three Ringers

Two men and a lady whose
surnames are Minor, Major and
Royal (not necessarily in that order)
ring at three different churches with
6, 8 and 10 bells. Minor doesn't
ring at the six bell tower, nor Major
at the eight bell tower, nor Royal at
the ring of ten. The lady said that
she thought this was a remarkable
coincidence and Minor agreed with
her, although the ringer from the ten
bell tower was unimpressed.

If the lady's name is not Royal,
which tower does each belong to?

C	A	N	O	N	A	C	D	F	U	L	E	A	D	C
B	G	A	I	S	W	H	E	E	L	T	V	W	X	O
B	L	I	P	H	K	M	L	I	O	A	B	G	H	V
C	E	O	M	S	O	K	C	L	I	P	U	J	H	E
R	A	E	R	I	N	G	E	R	A	D	S	T	E	R
B	R	D	L	N	N	Q	U	W	G	C	P	E	A	L
V	N	L	S	G	T	T	O	E	A	J	M	D	D	Z
S	E	Q	U	L	P	T	O	Y	R	F	A	L	S	E
B	R	R	V	E	S	N	A	U	P	O	I	D	T	T
E	D	E	T	A	B	O	E	I	C	W	S	O	O	B
G	S	P	L	I	C	E	A	Y	Z	H	P	N	C	C
N	C	P	B	G	M	O	A	K	B	L	E	V	K	D
A	D	A	F	N	P	T	S	B	O	X	U	V	D	R
H	Y	L	L	A	S	W	I	X	B	Y	J	R	B	U
C	H	C	T	S	U	R	P	R	I	S	E	E	P	M

Sheila Ware

New Bands

Sherington

We hear there are a small group of Sherington people who are interested in learning to ring and forming a new band in the village.

Tyringham

The progress at Tyringham continues, and the band recently experienced somewhat different bells on a 'night out' at Clifton Reynes.

Wavendon

Simon Head (who has recently returned to Milton Keynes from a period of exile in the North) and Leigh Burgess, are starting to teach a new band at Wavendon tower, which has been fairly silent for some years. Practice night will be Friday, and all are welcome. Please contact Simon and Leigh on 01908-670560, or turn up on the night to help.



Tyringham visits Clifton Reynes

L to R: Gerald Williamson, Ingrid Hansford, Kath Williamson (tower captain), Margaret Appleby, Brian Hansford, (David Williamson – not present)

Olney

Monthly Eight Bell Practice

Following our article in the last issue of *In Touch*, we are pleased to report that attendance at the monthly Olney practice was well up on the previous few months – a total of seventeen ringers were present. We would like to say a big thank you to all those who made the effort to attend – especially to those who had travelled quite a distance. We had an enjoyable practice and rang a good variety of methods – from Plain Bob Triples to Superlative – something to suit everyone!

In case you didn't see the last *In Touch*, practices are held on the fourth Monday of the month (except when this date falls on a Bank Holiday, when it is brought forward one week). They are not practices for basic learners, but if you can ring any method on eight bells, you will be very welcome. Please join us and help keep these practices going! The dates for the next few practices are 24 May, 28 June, 26 July, 23 August, 27 September.

Roy Keeves

Further details from: Roy Keeves 01908-510105, Sheila Ware 01234-713667

Bell Handling Workshop

The Guild has held several of these workshops and I thought that it was about time that I went along to find out what went on. I had put my name down for the Saturday afternoon at Steeple Aston and was going to take Victoria along as my 'Guinea Pig' for teaching. A few days beforehand Pat Newton called me and said that as I was the only attendee for the afternoon session, would I like to bring Rebecca as well, and they could both get lots of handling practice under expert supervision.

The three of us went along and had a very full afternoon. Rebecca and Victoria both progressed from ringing backstrokes on their own to ringing the full stroke (with a little help) under the expert supervision of Len Palfrey and Pat Newton.

During this time I went through the types of training exercises which are covered in the workshops which have been run by the Guild. The workshop can either concentrate on showing potential tutors how to teach people to handle a bell or on the ways of correcting various bell handling faults. I also acted as a learner with John Wells as the tutor so that I could see how faults can be corrected.

I have been involved in teaching a number of people to ring and have evolved my own methods of teaching. It was gratifying to know that my way was almost the same way as the Guild recommends. I also feel much more confident in applying these methods to sort out handling problems. The girls thoroughly enjoyed their afternoon and thought their tutors were much better than Dad. Our thanks to all three - Pat, Len and John - for their help.

We have been considering running some sort of bell handling workshop within the branch. If you are interested, either as a potential teacher, or as a learner, then please let one of the committee know so that we can get it organised. In the meantime you may find the Central Council Bellhandling video useful (see back page).

Richard Stanworth

Health & Safety in your Belfry

As mentioned at the AGM a useful leaflet on Health and Safety in towers is available from the Ecclesiastical Insurance Office (EIO). It is called 'Guidance Notes for Churches - Section 3: Health & Safety', and can be obtained by calling the EIO on 0345 773322. The Editor also has a copy for loan.

Oxford Guild – Youth Training Day

John Stanworth

The day was due to start at 9.30 at Bray Church but I didn't arrive until about 10.00 as we had to drop off my sisters at their swimming lessons before we left Buckingham. We all rang together so that the tutors could find out what everyone could do. I had a go at Cambridge Minor inside on the front six (not particularly tuneful). This was the method which I wanted to practice on the course. I also rang inside for Bob Doubles, covered to plain hunt on five, and rang the seventh to rounds. Grandsire Triples was also rung but this was just as I arrived so I didn't get to ring in it.

We stopped at eleven for a break and went to the church hall. Here we had an introductory talk from Pat Newton who had organised the day. I had heard most of it before (this was my third year on the training day). This was followed by tutorials in groups with the tutors who were going to take us out after lunch. My group consisted of four students, one was going to practice Stedman & Grandsire, one Yorkshire and Rutland Surprise, myself and another member of the group Cambridge. Our tutors were John and June Wells, and Graham Firman. We all spent the rest

of the morning going through the theory of the method we had chosen. John Wells was my tutor.

Lunch was eaten in the church hall - everyone had to bring their own food but drinks were available. Dad had bought me some sandwiches on the way as he had been too busy with getting ready for the Branch AGM to make any at home before we left.

After lunch we split up with the various tutor groups going different ways to ring at two towers during the afternoon. The first tower for my group was Hughendon. Here I rang Cambridge Minor and Major, covered to Stedman Triples, and rang inside to Grandsire Doubles on the back six. We had two hours here and then moved on to the next tower.

Our second tower was High Wycombe. Here we mostly rang the front eight, using the sharp second to give a true octave. I rang more Cambridge Minor and Major, the ninth to call changes, and the treble to a touch of Grandsire Caters - I wasn't too sure about this as I don't ring on ten very often. At the end of our time here we were able to stay for the optional evening session if we wished - I had chosen to do this.

The evening session began with us all meeting at McDonalds for tea. We then went to the Oakley Hall near the church for sessions on handbell ringing - changes or tunes - or rope splicing.

I had chosen rope splicing. We were shown how to do a short splice and how to make a loop for lengthening the tail end. We were then able to have a go ourselves. I had a go at a short splice which I managed to do successfully. That took us to 8.45 when the whole family came to pick me up, having come straight from Downs Barn.

This was generally a good day - I thoroughly enjoyed it. My list of achievements were - ringing Cambridge Minor inside on my own; Cambridge Major inside with a little help; short splicing. The day was good fun - much more fun than the Branch AGM!! It was very informative and there were lots of benefits from it. If you're between 12 and 18 why don't you go next year - watch out for the posters - see you there!

Guild Festival Saturday 10th July

The format of the Festival has been changed this year to encourage more members to attend. Part of the lack of support was felt to be due to the length of the day. In view of this, the Festival service will now be held during the afternoon and will be followed by a barbecue. The Festival will be based on Great Missenden. There will be some towers available early in the afternoon before the service. This event, unlike the ringing day, is for members only so please support it if you can. Full details will be circulated to towers nearer to the date.

Helen Stanworth



My name is Alan Cozens
(1966)

Alan Cozens

Alan Cozens celebrates 50 years of ringing this summer. He was taught to ring by Fred Bailey at Roade and spent many years ringing there, including a spell of twelve years as tower captain. In 1956 he also began to ring at Hanslope, helping to establish a regular band. Alan is a well known character in North Bucks and South Northants, still a regular at Hanslope and also at Cosgrove and Easton Neston. He has clocked up 137 peals and 238 quarters, all in his first 50 years of ringing.

Whilst discussing Alan's achievements recently, (over a well-earned round of post-ringing liquid refreshment) the Hanslope band realised that a considerable number of years-worth of experience is present in the tower each week. For example, the 'most experienced' doubles band could boast 185 years of ringing between them, whilst all eight bells at Hanslope could be rung safe in the hands of ringers with a total of about 230 years experience. (This, of course, begs the question of why exactly recent quarter peals of Stedman have been reluctant to 'go'.)

Anyway, many congratulations Alan from your friends at Hanslope. How about a celebratory quarter peal this summer to mark your golden anniversary? We could ring your favourite method - GO STEDMAN!!!
Natalie Green

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS



North Bucks Branch - Tower Ringing Times

Tower	Bells	Sunday	Practice Day	Time	Notes	Contact	Phone no.
Beachampton	5	11:00 (1), 09:30 (2, 3 & 4)				Jo Nevill	01908-566937
Blotchley	8	09:30	Mon	19:30-21:00		Paul Faithfull	01908-379025
Bow Brickhill	4	UNRINGABLE					
Bradwell	6	10:00	Wed	19:30-21:00		Dick Grace	01908-321110
Broughton	4						
Buckingham	8	09:15 (3 & 4), 17:15 (1)	Wed	19:30-21:00	Last of Month #1	Peter Nicholson	01280-822373
Calverton	6	17:30	Wed	By	arrangement	Malcolm Hooton	01908-565380
Chicheley	6	17:30 (1)	Mon	19:30-21:00	Alt with North Crawley #2	Mr D Robertson	01234-391371
Clifton Reynes	6	By arrangement				Mike Davies	01234-711082
Downs Barn	8	10:00	Tue	19:30-21:00		Doug Hird	01908-614741
Drayton Parslow	6	17:30 (2,4)				Rev. N. Cotton	01525-240287
Emberton	6	17:30 Fortnightly	Tue	19:45-21:00		Sheila Watts	01234-713667
Fenny Stratford	6	09:00	Thu	20:00-21:00		Peter White	01908-642826
Great Brickhill	6	UNRINGABLE				Hugh Butler	01525-261663
Great Linford	6	10:15	Tue	19:30-21:00		Alan Marchbank	01908-611434
Hanslope	8	10:15	Thu	19:30-21:00		Sheila Blenkhorn	01908-510105
Haversham	3					Rev Simon	01908-312136
Lathbury	5	09:00 (1), 10:30 (3)	Tue	19:30-21:00		Maureen Smith	01908-612395
Lavendon	6	10:15 (3)	Wed	19:30-21:00		Brian Clifton	01234-712774
Leckhampstead	5		Thu	19:30-21:00		Paul Verrier	01280-860439
Lillingstone Lovell	5	09:00 (2,4)	Tue	19:30-21:00		Robin Culley	01280-860665
Little Brickhill	3					Rosemary Everston	01525-261555
Loughton	6	10:30	Mon	19:30-21:00	Alt with Shenley #3	Derek Stainsby	01908-666492
Maids Moreton	6	09:00 (1), 17:15 (2), 10:45 (4)	Wed	19:00-20:30	All except last Wed #1	David Goodger	01280-812868
Milton Keynes Village	6	10:30 (2,4)	Tue	20:00-21:00		Patricia Gifford	01908-665439
Moulsoe	4						
Newport Pagnell	8	08:50, 17:20	Wed	19:30-21:00	Sun eve. by arrangement	Gareth Grayson	01908-210073
Newton Blossomville	3						
Newton Longville	8	By arrangement	Thu	19:30-21:00		Benedicte Titley	01908-646632
North Crawley	6	17:30 (2,4)	Mon	19:30-21:00	Alt with Chicheley #2	Kerry Rose	01234-391785
Old Wolverton	6	10:00	Tue	19:15-21:00		Mike Nimmo	01908-321011
Olney	8	09:30	Thu	19:30-21:00		Charles Knight	01234-713719
Shalstone	5					Mrs P Morgan	01280-703759
Shenley	6	09:00	Mon	19:30-21:00	Alt with Loughton #3	John Brookman	01908-260413
Sherington	5	10:30 (1), 09:00 (2,3,4,5)				Ella Field	01908-610560
Simpson	6	UNRINGABLE				Brian Baldwin	01908-670579
Stoke Goldington	6	09:15 (2)	Fri	19:30-21:00	2,4 alt Weston Underwood #4	Owen Warren	01908-551416
Stoke Hammond	3					John Bowler	01525-270202
Stony Stratford	8	09:00	Mon	19:30-21:00		Malcolm Hooton	01908-565380
Stowe	6	09:00 (2), 17:15 (4)	Thu	By	arrangement	Bill Yates	01280-814937
Thornborough	5					Ray Goodger	01280-812976
Tingewick	5		Mon	19:30-20:30		Lois Houghton-	01280-848658
Twyford Bucks	6					Mr E Herring	01869-277671
Tyringham	5					Marion Hansford	01234-711566
Wavendon	6		Fri	19:30-21:00		Leigh Burgess	01908-670560
Weston Underwood	6	By arrangement	Fri	19:30-21:00	2,4 alt Stoke Goldington	Owen Warren	01908-551416
Whaddon	6		Tue	19:30-21:00		Derek White	01908-501987
Woughton-on-the-Green	6	09:30	Thu	20:00-21:00		Brian Baldwin	01908-670579

Total : 48 Towers

Last Updated : 16 April 1999

PLEASE PASS ANY AMENDMENTS/UPDATES TO RICHARD STANWORTH (01280-814172)

Quarters & Peals

The Cross & Stable, Downs Barn
4th December 1998
1260 Cambridge & Yorkshire Surprise
Major, Spliced

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

St James the Great, Hanslope
6th December 1998

1260 Stedman Triples

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

For Service.

SS Peter & Paul, Buckingham
16th January 1999

1264 Plain Bob Major

- 1 Lawrence Gibson
- 2 Andrew Spencer
- 3 Gerald Kingston
- 4 Peter Nicholson
- 5 William Yates
- 6 David Goodger
- 7 Nigel Williams
- 8 Michael Tinsley (C)

All Saints, Emberton

13th February 1999

1260 Plain Bob Minor

- 1 Brian Hinchliffe
- 2 May Richardson
- 3 Richard Day
- 4 Jan Richardson
- 5 Michael Chester
- 6 Robin E M Woolley (C)

Rung by the Teachers' Guild.

St Giles, Northampton

19th February 1999

1259 Grandsire Caters

- 1 Carole Harmer
- 2 Phil Haslam
- 3 Natalie Green
- 4 Alan Cozens
- 5 Ian Thompson
- 6 Nick Gray
- 7 Jonathan Griggs (C)
- 8 Roy Keeves
- 9 George Green
- 10 P David Taylor

SS Peter & Paul, Newport Pagnell

28th February 1999

1260 Grandsire Triples

- 1 David Beckley (1st quarter)
- 2 Peter Tribble
- 3 Catherine Stacy (1st in method)
- 4 Mike Neale
- 5 Christine Jones
- 6 Gareth Grayson (1st in method)
- 7 Owen Davis (C)
- 8 Andrew Jeffries

Rung for the Baptism of the son and nephew of the treble ringer.

St James the Great, Hanslope

1st March 1999

1250 Cambridge Surprise Major

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

To celebrate the signing of the Ottawa Treaty on Land Mines.

St Edmund, Maids Moreton

18th March 1999

1296 Cambridge Surprise Minor

- 1 David Goodger
- 2 Andrew Spencer
- 3 William Yates
- 4 Philip Curtis
- 5 Roger King
- 6 Michael Tinsley (C)

Rung half-muffled on the evening of the funeral of Rev Terence Lewis 1915-1999.

St James the Great, Hanslope

11th April 1999

1280 Plain Bob Major

- 1 Natalie Green
- 2 Carole Harmer
- 3 Sheila Watts
- 4 Jonathan Griggs
- 5 P David Taylor
- 6 Ian Thompson
- 7 Phil Haslam
- 8 Roy Keeves (C)

For Service, and in thanksgiving for the life of Sidney R Garratt.

Quarters rung to congratulate Bill Yates on completing 50 years as Secretary of the Towcester Branch of the Peterborough Diocesan Guild

S Mary the Virgin, Padbury

17th February 1999

1260 Grandsire Doubles

- 1 Catherine Stanworth
- 2 Helen Stanworth
- 3 William Yates
- 4 Gerald Kingston
- 5 Richard Stanworth (C)
- 6 John Stanworth

Assumption of BVM, Stowe

17th February 1999

1260 Grandsire Doubles

- 1 Catherine Stanworth
- 2 William Yates
- 3 John Stanworth (1st inside)
- 4 Gerald Kingston
- 5 Richard Stanworth (C)
- 6 Helen Stanworth

St Mary, Grafton Regis

20th February 1999

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

- 1 Nick Gray
- 2 Jonathan Griggs
- 3 Alan Cozens (C)
- 4 P David Taylor
- 5 Roy Keeves

St Edmund, Maids Moreton

20th February 1999

1296 Cambridge Surprise Minor

- 1 David Goodger
- 2 Anne Fletcher
- 3 William Yates
- 4 Richard Stanworth
- 5 John Lewis
- 6 Michael Tinsley (C)

St Mary, Thornborough

22nd February 1999

1260 Doubles (Grandsire,

Stedman, St Simons & Plain Bob)

- 1 David Goodger
- 2 Gerald Kingston
- 3 William Yates
- 4 Michael Tinsley
- 5 Andrew Spencer (C)

SS Peter & Paul, Buckingham

27th February 1999

1260 Grandsire Triples

- 1 Helen Stanworth
- 2 Andrew Spencer
- 3 Michael Tinsley
- 4 Roger King
- 5 William Yates
- 6 Peter Nicholson
- 7 Richard Stanworth (C)
- 8 David Goodger

Around the Towers

Lathbury

Lathbury have been going for about a year now and have seen some of the difficulties of ringing. They started life off with five recruits and now they are down to four. This is an unfortunate position as it takes very little to disrupt a routine practice. However, the good side is they ring for the Sunday services. It is hard to believe that a community village such as Lathbury cannot muster more than four people. I hope that the ringers at Lathbury will continue to visit other towers and gain experience in bell control and striking more than anything else.

Gareth Grayson

Newport Pagnell

I have had an interesting year as tower captain and have found out how awkward organising a practice can be. Ringing has improved and I am aiming for Plain Bob Major by the end of this year. At the present I have enough learners to deal with so I will not be doing any more recruiting until the middle of this year. In 1998 we did not get through many quarters, so hopefully 1999 will see one quarter attempt a month.

Gareth Grayson

Hanslope

The ringers of Hanslope joined in the **Red Nose Day** fundraising at their practice on Thursday 11th March. The following charges were levied on the ringers:

For messing up a method – £1 maximum

For not setting your bell – £1 maximum

Jonathan Griggs had the honour of wearing the Red Nose! The fundraising continued the next night at the Stoke Goldington practice, when the Editor surrendered 50p for going wrong in St Clements, and high charges were threatened when someone challenged the conductor.... Jonathan tells us that over £10 has been raised for **Comic Relief**.

Training Sessions

If you would like help at your tower over the next year then please let the Ringing Master know and he will see what can be done. Please remember however that we all have commitments to our own towers and can only help you out when we have the time available, so don't expect an instant response to your request for help. Please note that at any tower where we come to help we will expect to run the ringing and attempt to structure the session to give most benefit to those present.

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

Richard Stanworth

Striking Competitions

The Guild 10-bell competition is on July 10th at Long Crenon. I need to get together a band for this day. If you have experience of ringing on ten and would like to take part then please let the Ringing Master know (Tel 01280-814172). The method this year is Little Bob Royal. It is on the same day as the Guild Festival so we can go on there after the competition.

We also have our annual 'battle' against the Towcester Branch (friendly of course) on Saturday 31st July. This year we are playing 'away' at Easton Neston. There are sections for all abilities, so if you would like to take part, please let me know and you can be practically guaranteed a place.

Richard Stanworth

Gareth Grayson wrote to the Management of the CMK Shopping Centre enquiring why the large clock near Smiths no longer strikes and chimes – here's his letter and their reply.

Dear Sir

I have recently noticed that the clock next to the information centre no longer strikes the quarters or the hour. It is quite a central meeting place and the clock mechanism probably looks quite interesting to a member of public who has not seen such a device before. It is therefore a shame that Joe Bloggs cannot see or hear what is supposed to happen. Could you please tell me why the chimes no longer play and if they will be sounding out once more in the near future?

Yours sincerely

Gareth Grayson
(A Campanologist)

the shopping centre milton keynes

Mr. G. Grayson
14 Trent Drive
Newport Pagnell
Bucks
MK16 9DB

26th March 1999

Dear Mr. Grayson

Thank you for taking the time in completing our comments and suggestion form. I was very interested to read your views. I must also apologise for the delay in replying to your comments.

Unfortunately due to the majority of customer requests we have silenced the clock chimes until further notice.
I do hope this will not deter you from shopping in Milton Keynes in the future.

Thank you once again for your comments.

Yours sincerely

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held at Downs Barn on 6th March 1999

Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman, Doug Hird, welcomed all those present to the meeting, and to the Branch's newest ring of bells. As the church was booked for another event at 7.30 the meeting would have to keep strictly to the agenda

Apologies for Absence

Received from Alan & Tine Marchbank, Pauline Smith, Jonathan Waters, Godfrey Foat, Anne Fletcher, Peter Nicholson, John Stanworth, Roy Keeves, Sheila Blenkhorn, John Wells (Guild Master) & David Scrutton.

Minutes of previous Meeting

The minutes of the Quarterly meeting held at Bletchley last December were published in the February edition of 'In Touch'. Sheila Watts pointed out an error in these minutes in that the raffle at the meeting had raised £10.50, not £7.50. After this had been corrected on the record copy, it was agreed by those present that the Chairman sign the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

Election of New Members

Nominations had been received proposing 15 new members -

Tower	Name	Proposed by	Seconded by
Emberton	Andrew Walster	Sheila Watts	Phil Haslam
	Miss Stephanie Cook (Junior)		
	Miss Ruth Cook (Junior)		
	Miss Jo Muckett (Junior)		
Lathbury	Mrs Maureen Smith	Gareth Grayson	Catherine Stacy
	Erwin De Wert		
	Miss Fiona De Wert (Junior)		
	Alistair Langford		
Buckingham	Roger King	Bill Yates	Richard Stanworth
Great Brickhill	Anthony Middleton	Hugh Butler	Doug Hird
	Miss Fiona Middleton (Junior)		
Downs Barn	Miss Nikki Dowsett (Junior)	Doug Hird	Nicola King
	Miss Samantha Louise Mulcahy (Junior)		
	Miss Charlotte Fitzgerald (Junior)		
	Miss Karen Hillary (Junior)		

All were elected without dissent. The Chairman welcomed them all to the Guild and Branch and asked those present to stand and make themselves known to the meeting.

Officers Reports

Chairman. We have continued pretty well with what the Branch is supposed to be doing throughout the year. This is brought out in the attendances at meetings. We still get the old faithfuls coming to Branch Practices so I think we are continuing to do the right sort of thing. We are still looking forward to the future in what we are trying to do in terms of courses being organised and the planning of ringing at practices. The general organisation has gone pretty well and is looking fairly stable, with not too many officers wanting to jump ship. I think we are also pretty well set for the next year as well.

Secretary. The pattern of monthly Branch Practices and quarterly meetings continued as in previous years. Average attendances at quarterly meetings were down by nearly 1/3rd on the previous year, although the number of towers represented was the same.

We were saddened to learn at our quarterly meeting in September that Doug O'Neale, one of our Guild Representatives, had died suddenly the previous day. Although Doug had only been ringing for a few years, he brought an enthusiastic approach to all that he did and was valued as a Branch committee member. He will be much missed.

This year has been one more of consolidation than growth. Membership has remained static overall with as many new members and returning members joining as have lapsed or moved on.

We are to host the Guild AGM in May 1999. The service, tea and meeting are to be held at the Church of Christ the Cornerstone in Central Milton Keynes. Further details will be given under forthcoming events.

Finally may I, on behalf of the Branch, pass on congratulations to our local TV star, Bill Yates, on completing 50 years as Secretary of the Towcester Branch of the Peterborough Guild. Members then showed their concurrence with this last statement with applause.

Treasurer. Copies of the audited accounts had been circulated. (A copy is included at the end of the minutes.) From the subscriptions £358.50 was available to us after the Guild had been paid their share. £53.00 was raised by the raffles at the quarterly meetings which was passed straight to the Guild Bell Fund. No raffle was held at the June meeting as Maids Moreton were running one in aid of their Tower Roof fund. £23.16 was the net amount received from donations at Branch Practices after tower donations had been made. Donations towards the cost of *In Touch* were £142.00 for which we are very grateful. These covered most of the cost of production. The miscellaneous donation of £25.00 was received from the Bicester Branch. This was from their Open Day as some of the towers in our Branch were included in the itinerary.

David Joyce asked whether the amount left as a tower donation after Branch Practices depended on how much was collected at the time. It was confirmed that if less than £5 was collected then all of the collection was left as a tower donation. It was felt that £5 should be left as a tower donation even if the collection was less than this amount as the tower had still been made available to us.

The motion that 'A donation of £5 be left after Branch Practices regardless of the amount collected' was proposed by David Joyce and seconded by Brian Newman. On a show of hands the motion was carried.

The Treasurer then gave an update of the current state of the finances - she has still to receive subscriptions from 11 towers. The current balance is £772.71, with £68.00 received as donations towards *In Touch*. The raffle this afternoon had raised £22.00

Ringin' Master. Eleven Practices were held during the year, one less than in 1997, with an average attendance of 17 ringers at each, the same level as in 1997. We continued with quarterly practices where the focus was on rounds and call changes. These were generally well received with above average attendances, except for the December practice - perhaps it was too close to Christmas.

We retained the Inter Branch Striking Competition Trophy in our annual match against the Towcester Branch held at Olney, the third year in a row that we have won the overall competition. This makes the score 6-5 to the Towcester Branch. 1999 will be our chance to level the score. Unfortunately we did not retain the George Holland Stedman Trophy, partly due to an interruption by a local lady, who didn't like the way I asked her to go away.

A successful individual training session was held at Clifton Reynes in October for a member of the Olney band to make progress with Plain Bob Doubles. Similar sessions can be arranged for others if requested.

Plans are in hand for the resurrection of the Beginners Striking Competition. We hope this will attract a good entry. The rules have been kept fairly simple. More about this under Forthcoming Events.

Branch Archivist. It has been a very quiet year with not many requests for information. I had a request from the Towcester Branch for information about early peals rung at Wicken. As it is on the border of the Branch a number of the ringers were common to Calverton, Stony Stratford and Wicken. I have been looking at ways of making the information available as a more user friendly and flexible resource. I am looking at two possible ways of doing this. One is to make a copy of the whole data set onto a CD. The other is to incorporate the database part into a North Bucks Internet site. I hope to talk more about this under any other business.

The notice boards are still available for use. If anyone would like information preparing for events such as a flower festival or show then please get in touch. This can include details of the bells, photos, old peals, things like that. If anyone wishes to look at the data then please leave it a couple of weeks as it is still packed away after our move.

Election of Officers

<u>Post</u>	<u>Nomination</u>	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Seconded</u>
Chairman	Doug Hird	David Joyce	Hugh Butler
Secretary	Helen Stanworth	Hugh Butler	Sheila Watts
Treasurer	Sheila Watts	Richard Stanworth	Brian Newman
Ringin' Master	Richard Stanworth	Brian Newman	Sheila Ware
Assistant Master	Gareth Grayson	Hugh Butler	Catherine Stacy
Guild Representatives	Alan Marchbank	Brian Newman	Richard Stanworth
	David Middleton	Richard Stanworth	Hugh Butler
Branch Archivist	Doug Hird	Brian Newman	Gareth Grayson

All the above were elected unopposed.

Two nominations were received for Newsletter Editor. The first nomination was Gareth Grayson, proposed by Andrew Jeffries and seconded by Brian Newman. The second nomination was Sheila Watts proposed by letter by Roy Keeves & Sheila Blenkhorn and seconded by Doug Hird. The Chairman read out the letter of support from Roy and Sheila for their nomination. The candidates were then asked to withdraw whilst the election was held. On a show of hands Sheila Watts was elected as the Newsletter Editor.

Both the Chairman and Hugh Butler thanked Andrew Jeffries for taking on the job of newsletter editor last year at a time when no-one else was prepared to do it.

Forthcoming Events

The calendar of forthcoming events is pretty well finalised and has been published in *In Touch*.

In the near future we are hosting the Guild AGM on 15th May. Ringing beforehand will be at Buckingham and Calverton and the service is at Christ the Cornerstone in Central Milton Keynes. We hope to have ringing afterwards at Downs Barn. There is a real attempt there in the morning but we hope to be able to go there in the evening. The towers beforehand have been changed as the original towers requested are unavailable due to weddings. The Secretary is looking for volunteers to help with teas on that day please. There will be about 80 people to cater for.

All the other meetings and practices have been confirmed except for Great Linford in June and Newton Longville in August. Andrew advised that Great Linford would not be available due to the Waterside Festival.

The start of the Striking Competition at Bradwell has been delayed until 4.00 p.m. due to an earlier wedding. Full details will appear in the next In Touch. The Ringing Master reminded everyone about the Beginners Striking Competition on Friday 9th April at Wavendon. The rules have been published in In Touch. Please come along in teams or as individuals who will be made up into teams on the day.

The Ringing Master also queried whether we should hold a December practice as it is only a week before Christmas and was poorly attended last year. It was generally agreed that we should continue with Branch Practice in December.

The Chairman reminded everyone that full details of forthcoming events will appear in In Touch

Millennium Report

Doug Hird gave an update on millennium activities within the Branch. The steering group which was set up as requested by the Guild consists of Doug Hird, Hugh Butler, Tine Marchbank, and Nigel Titley. We have not met together as a group in the last year but have built up an understanding of what we think can be achieved. There are three things we can aim for :

1. make use of the millennium activities to recruit ringers for service ringing rather than just ringing for the millennium
2. ring for the service on 1st January 2000 at towers where we have bands
3. ring at as many of the towers without bands as we possibly can at some time on 1st January

The rationale behind this is that the towers with bands are in the main population centres. Towers without bands are generally where there are small populations so fewer people will miss out on hearing ringing at midday. Progress has been patchy. In fact since the project started some of our bands have gone backwards in terms of membership. We will do as much as we can. We also have to be aware that people will not be available because, for one reason or another, they will have to work.

The Guild sent out another questionnaire to us around Christmas time. This will get completed, more as an interesting addition to the Branch archive. It will be a useful follow up on the previous questionnaire and will show where effort has gone into recruiting and what effect it has had.

Any Other Business

Guild Bell Fund and Restoration Fund We have been asked by the Guild to consider the relationship between the Guild Restoration Fund and the Guild Bell Fund. The General Secretary, Barry Cowper was asked to outline the differences between the two funds. He summarised the organisation of the funds and the things they are able to support as follows:

The Bell Fund is a Capital Fund. That is it accumulates capital and is only allowed to spend the interest. This is used to make grants towards bell maintenance and restoration. The rules of the Bell Fund specifically prevent it from making grants towards augmentations.

The Restoration Fund is a 'Raise and spend' fund. This means that it can spend all the money that is raised if the trustees wish. Grants can be made for all the same work that the Bell Fund can make grants. In addition it can make grants towards augmentations. This fund has also been used as an investment vehicle for specific projects, such as the bells here at Downs Barn.

Following further discussion of the various merits of the separate funds and the problems of amalgamating the funds, the Chairman summed up the general feeling of the meeting by concluding that the flexibility offered by the current situation is so useful with the two types of fund that any change must maintain that flexibility. He also concluded that amalgamating the funds was likely to be long winded and expensive. A vote was then taken on whether the Branch should support a change to the set-up of the funds. There was an overwhelming vote in favour of continuing with the present situation of two separate funds.

The Secretary reported that she had a pile of envelopes for distribution to towers and asked that if anyone could help then please collect them from her after the meeting.

The Chairman had a number of membership certificates which were presented to those present or handed to a member of the tower.

David Joyce showed a leaflet available from the Ecclesiastical Insurance Office (EIO) concerning Health and Safety in Churches. He particularly mentioned that section 3 is most relevant to ringers and towers. These leaflets can be obtained free from the EIO by ringing 0345 773322.

Thanks

The Ringing Master thanked the Chairman and the Downs Barn ringers for their hospitality and the excellent tea. Members showed their appreciation in the usual manner.

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELLRINGERS – NORTH BUCKS BRANCH
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT 1998

INCOME		£	£	EXPENDITURE		£	£
January	Balance brought forward		728.20				
	Building Society Account						
June	Building Society Interest	12.01					
December	Building Society Interest	9.56					
			21.57				
	1998 Guild Subscriptions 171 senior x £5.50	940.50					
	1998 Guild Subscriptions 33 junior x £4.00	132.00			1998 Guild Subscriptions 204 x £3.50		714.00
			1072.50				
				February	Grant to Leckhampstead tower		309.97
	Meeting raffles – March/Sept/December		53.00		Guild Bell Fund (meeting raffles)		53.00
	Branch practice donations		71.16		Tower donations from Branch Practices		48.00
	In Touch donations		142.00	Feb/Jun/Aug/Oct	In Touch printing expenses	144.95	
	Miscellaneous donation		25.00		In Touch Editor expenses	42.16	
							187.11
				Jan/Nov	Ringling World advertising account		100.00
				June	Striking Competition expenses		20.00
					Engraving of trophy (1997 & 1998)		21.75
					Miscellaneous printing		2.16
					Secretary's expenses		70.23
					Treasurer's expenses		20.61
					Honorarium for Auditor		10.00
				December	Balance carried forward		556.60
					Building Society Account		
			£2113.43				£2113.43

Checked as correct

 J. Hillison
 22.12.98

North Bucks Branch – Calendar 1999/2000

May	3		<i>Ringling Day</i> <i>Guild Eight Bell Striking Competition</i>	<i>Witney & Woodstock</i> <i>South Leigh</i>
	15	1.30 2.30 4.00	Guild AGM Afternoon ringing Service, Tea & Meeting Evening Ringing	Buckingham Calverton Christ the Cornerstone Downs Barn*
	21	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Reverse Canterbury	Lathbury
	29		<i>Handbell Day</i>	<i>Reading</i>
June	5	4.00	Quarterly Meeting & Striking Competition <i>10 Bell Course (S.Royal)</i>	Bradwell <i>Bicester/Banbury</i>
	18	7.30	Branch Practice Focus on Rounds & Call Changes	Emberton
July	10		<i>Guild Festival</i> <i>Guild 10 Bell Striking Competition</i>	<i>Great Missenden</i> <i>Long Crendon</i>
	16	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Double Oxford	Twyford
	31	*6-8.00	Striking Competition v. Towcester Branch	Easton Neston
August	20	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Grandsire Triples	Newton Longville
September	4	3.30	Quarterly Meeting Evening Ringing	Olney Lavendon
	10-12		<i>Easthampstead Course</i>	<i>Easthampstead</i>
	17	7.30	Branch Practice Focus on Rounds & Call Changes	Stowe
October	15	*7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Grandsire Doubles	Leckhampstead
November	19	*7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Oxford TB Minor	Chicheley
December	4	*3.30	Quarterly Meeting	Woughton
	17	*7.30	Branch Practice Focus on Rounds & Call Changes	Great Linford
January 2000	1	12.00	Millennium Ringing	Everywhere !!
	21	*7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Beverley S Minor	Shenley
February	18	*7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Oxford TB Minor	Weston Underwood
March	4	*3.30	Annual General Meeting	Buckingham
	19	*7.30	Branch Practice Focus on Rounds & Call Changes	Old Wolverton

Items marked * were unconfirmed as at 9 April 1999

Italicised events are Guild events

Other Diary Dates

May			
22	7.30	PDG Towcester Branch Joint Practice	Daventry
24	7.30	8-Bell Practice	Olney
June			
28	7.30	8-Bell Practice	Olney
July			
3	7.00	PDG Towcester Branch Practice	Ashton
	8.00		Stoke Bruerne
26	7.30	8-Bell Practice	Olney
August			
14	7.00	PDG Towcester Branch Practice	Cosgrove
23	7.30	8-Bell Practice	Olney
September			
25	3.00	PDG Towcester Branch Meeting & 6 Bell Striking Competition	Bradden
27	7.30	8-Bell Practice	Wappenham
October			
2		PDG Towcester Branch Outing	Bury St Edmunds
30	2.00	PDG Towcester Branch Training Day	Road
	7.00	PDG Towcester Branch Quiz Night	Stoke Bruerne
November			
27		PDG Towcester Branch Dinner	Towcester
January 2000			
29	3.30	PDG Towcester Branch AGM	Pattishall

Have you any diary dates you'd like to see advertised in *In Touch*? If so, let the Secretary or the Editor know.

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.

Have you Seen Them?

The Annual Guild Report for 1998 and the Guild Newsletter "Odd Bob", issue 55 have been sent out to all towers in the Branch with members. If you haven't seen either of these yet, please ask your tower correspondent about them.



Get Selling

Don't forget to sell your tickets for the Bell Fund Draw. All monies, counterfoils and any unsold tickets should be returned to the Branch Secretary by Friday 18th June or direct to the promoter by 28th June. Please make all cheques payable to "Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers". Any spare tickets should be returned to me as soon as possible.

Helen Stanworth

Six Bell Striking Competition - 5th June 1999

Rules

1. Entries must be made to the Ringing Master by 4th June 1999.
2. Ringers should ring regularly at the tower, within the Branch, that they represent. At least 5 members of the team must be paid-up members of the Branch.
3. No ringer may ring for more than one team.
4. A tower may enter more than one team.
5. Up to two minutes practice ringing per team will be allowed before the test piece.
6. The start of the test piece will be notified to the judges by ringing two whole pulls on the treble.
7. The test piece will consist of at least 20 rows of rounds, followed by 120 changes in one or more methods, or 120 rows of call changes. If method is rung then plain courses are acceptable. If call changes are rung, then at least 10 changes must be called and at least three different bells brought down to lead.
8. Where possible, a judge from outside the Branch will be appointed for the competition. He or she will be asked to offer constructive comment and advice on the ringing by each band, as well as presenting their markings. The judge's decision is final.
9. A Branch officer or other suitable person will act as tower steward and timekeeper. The steward may be asked to indicate the end of the first 20 rows and the 140th row if call changes are rung.
10. Any ropes adjusted must be returned to their original length at the end of the ringing.