



IN TOUCH

November 1997

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTH BUCKS BRANCH
OF THE OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD



Inside This Issue

1	Next Branch Meeting
2	Contacting Branch Officers
2	Editor's Word
3	Operation Millennium
5	Minutes of the Great
7	Ringling Master's Call
8	The Secretary Writes
8	John Wetherall
8	Handbell Roundup
9	Recent Ringing
10	Forthcoming Events

SHENLEY

Is the venue for the next Branch quarterly meeting on Saturday 6th December. Names for tea to Barry Smith (☎ 01908 501659 evenings) by Wednesday 3rd December, please.

3.30	Ringing
4.30	Service
5.00	Tea (Reading Room, Shenley Church End)
5.45	Business Meeting (Followed by Evening Ringing)

Don't forget that everyone is welcome at Branch meetings, but only members can vote. If you aren't already a member, why not become one. Contact the Branch officers to find out the benefits.

CONTACTING BRANCH OFFICERS

Chairman and Archivist

Doug Hird ☎ 01908 614741
19 Priory Street, Newport Pagnell. MK16 9AF
e-mail bdhir1.b.hird@abbeynational.co.uk

Secretary

Helen Stanworth ☎ 01280 814172
11 Valley Road, Linden Village, Buckingham.
MK1 8 7BW

Minute Secretary

Nigel Tittley ☎ 01908 646632
"The Willows", 15 Drayton Road, Newton
Longville, Milton Keynes. MK17 0BH
e-mail nigel@tittley.com

Treasurer

Sheila Ware ☎ 01234 713667
18 Colsons Way, Olney. MK46 5EQ

Ringling Master

Richard Stanworth ☎ 01280 814172
11 Valley Road, Linden Village, Buckingham.
MK1 8 7BW

Assistant Ringling Master

Alexandra Tittley ☎ 01908 646632
"The Willows" 15 Drayton Road, Newton
Longville, Milton Keynes. MK17 0BH

Guild Representatives

Alan Marchbank ☎ 01908 611434
6 Broadway Avenue, Giffard Park, Milton
Keynes. MK14 5QF

Doug O'Neale ☎ 01908 674585
48 Parklands, Great Linford, Milton Keynes.
MK14 5DZ

Newsletter Editor

Nicola King ☎ 01908 614741
19 Priory Street, Newport Pagnell. MK16 9AF
fax: 0171 8307834
e-mail: kingni@which.co.uk

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

Editor's word Oh yes, here she goes again. As you may see I've taken over the editorship of *In Touch* for the time being. Having been elected mid-year, I am in post for this edition and the one preceding the AGM. If anyone else fancies a turn, please speak up! It is your chance to know the news before it happens, your chance to bully the branch officers into providing copy, your chance to have a good laugh at the photos of ringers that don't make it into the journal. If you've recently acquired a computer or word-processor, use this opportunity to do something useful with it.

Copy date for the next issue is Friday 6th February 1998. I look forward to hearing of your ringing experiences during Christmas and the New Year.



And while I am on the subject of Christmas, each tower has been provided with a copy of a 'leaflet' with this edition of *In Touch*. These first saw the light of day at the Great Brickhill meeting in September as part of a plan to make people aware of ringing, and, hopefully, prompt them into taking an interest and perhaps learning to ring.

Please feel free to copy, adapt and otherwise use the 'leaflet' in your churches this year. Hand them out during December services, Advent and Carol services, or leave some in the church. If you like, I'll even give you a disk copy to edit, or if you ask me nicely, personalize one for your tower. Don't forget to add an address if you want people to send something to you. Next year, we could use a PO Box to centrally co-ordinate responses. I've another draft of one for use during weddings and I hope to release that to you next year.

I'd welcome any feedback about the 'leaflet', and particularly any 'success' stories, i.e. new recruits who saw it and thought, "YES - ringing is for ME!"

Nicki
x

OPERATION MILLENNIUM

OR ...

Increasing the number of ringers into the millennium

Doug Hird

After an initial flurry of enthusiasm and excitement, we can now think about the millennium arrangements calmly and sensibly. The Guild's questionnaire helped us to fill a few gaps in our knowledge of the Branch and confirmed most of our initial opinions.

Ring of:	Total Bells	Total Ringers
1	9	0
2	12	0
3	48	0
4	12	0
5	45	7
6	144	144
8	64	83
Totals	334	234

In short, we will need some more ringers, especially in five bell towers and, as our six bell ringers are not conveniently arranged in every tower, the six bell towers also need help.

Ring of:	Towers without ringers
1	9
2	6
3	16
4	3
5	5
6	4
Total	43

Considering the amount of time and effort needed to train new ringers, the limited aim of everyone ringing together for the millennium offers little return. Our real incentive is to build up numbers such that we have sufficient ringers to ring for all Sunday services and weddings (on any day) and all still have enough energy left to practice.

So, what could we do? A few bands don't actually need to do anything, although I am sure they will carry on teaching and building. A significant number do need to strengthen, some from a very low base. The following outline plan shows some of the specific activities that I propose we organize over the next few years, more or less in order.

What will be needed from the existing membership is help with teaching. If you have no experience, don't worry. Take this as a good opportunity to gain some. The first thing I plan to do is to discuss how we are going to teach new ringers. For the experienced teachers, this will be an opportunity to pool resources and possibly pick up a few new ideas.

Some of what I am proposing will seem intensive. It is supposed to be. A proportion of recruits will be young people who expect quick results. Others will be in a slightly older age group who will probably rise to the challenge. If we lose some after just a week, it won't feel as bad as if we lost them after more than a month of effort. If we teach them well in the first week, they will be easier to bring up to speed. Other parts of the plan are intended to bring on new ringers without impacting too heavily on our existing practices.

How much of this can be achieved will depend on the number of volunteers who come forward in the early stages. As we build up momentum, it should become a partly self-supporting activity. I will be on the phone for "volunteers" for specific activities.

Based on the results of the millennium survey, I have drawn up a number of activities which, broadly, fall into two types; locally oriented activities, and general branch activities. The local activities focus on the needs of individual towers, the branch activities look at what the Branch needs to do on a wider scale. They are outlined on the next page.

PROPOSED MILLENNIUM RINGING ACTIVITIES

Locally oriented activities

INACTIVE TOWERS

Ringable Towers

One week crash course for up to 10 new ringers making use of all evenings in the week.

Requirements:

- Recruiting materials
- Agreement on teaching techniques
- Course notes / plan
- Homework material
- Branch welcome pack
- Sufficient teachers with ability to teach bell handling

To follow up: attendance of the new ringers at practices of supporting bands.

Unringable Towers

One evening session with interested locals on chiming or whatever is appropriate.

ACTIVE TOWERS

Reinforcing weak bands

One or two bell handling teaching sessions. Support at subsequent practice nights by one or two experienced ringers and attendance of the new ringers at practices of supporting bands.

Requirements:

- Recruiting materials
- Agreement on teaching techniques
- Homework material
- Branch welcome pack
- Sufficient teachers with ability to teach bell handling and/or elementary change ringing

Strengthening bands

4 directions:

- Increase in number of ringers with extra skills e.g. teachers / conductors
- Increase in method complexity
- Maintenance of number of ringers
- Improvement in quality of striking

General Branch activities

Co-ordinated awareness raising activities:

Requirements

- Articles in local press etc.
- Recruitment leaflets for specific occasions / locations etc.
- Branch Welcome Pack
- Customised displays for church open days and similar events

Lapsed ringers refresher day

Requirements:

- Recruiting / advertising material
- Agreement on teaching techniques
- Homework material
- Branch welcome pack
- Teachers

Branch courses

e.g. How to teach bell handling, Plain Hunt to Plain Bob etc.

Requirements:

- Advertising material
- Agreement on teaching techniques
- Course notes / plan
- Homework material
- Teachers / conductors

At this stage I'd welcome comments and suggestions from Branch members about these proposals. If you, or your tower, feel you need some training, or help, or just a few visits to help sort out a specific problem, please get in touch as soon as possible. We need to plan carefully and work hard to achieve the aim of more, and better, ringers for the millennium.

MINUTES OF QUARTERLY MEETING HELD AT GREAT BRICKHILL 6TH SEPTEMBER 1997



Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting.

In Memoriam

The Chairman asked the Meeting to stand in silence for a few moments and join with the rest of the nation in remembering Diana, Princess of Wales, and also to remember Ted Lambert of Cosgrove.

Apologies for Absence

Received from Godfrey Foat, David and Jill Joyce, David and Fiona Maybrey.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

These were published in the August edition of *In Touch* and were displayed on the notice boards before the meeting. It was agreed that they be taken as read.

Matters Arising

100 Club The Chairman and David Bardwell had not yet discussed this matter. Because David was leaving the area, the matter was referred back to the committee.

Election of New Members

One non-resident member wished to transfer to resident membership - Jo White of Downs Barn.

Nominations had been received proposing 14 new members -

Leckhampstead

Beth King, Patricia Verrier (Junior), David Verrier (Junior), Paul Verrier, Thelma Spragg, Melanie Sadler, Bidie Cash
Proposed by: David Moore
Seconded by: Robin W Culley

Hanslope

Sian Haseldine (Junior)
Proposed by: Sheila Blenkhorn
Seconded by: Roy Keeves

Great Linford

Lindsay Atkinson (Junior)
Proposed by: Alan Marchbank
Seconded by: Brian Newman

Newport Pagnell

Catherine Stacy (Junior), Julie Candle (Junior)
Proposed by: Gareth Grayson
Seconded by: Alan Marchbank

Olney

Jessica Webster (Junior), Matthew Ball
Proposed by: Charles Knight
Seconded by: Sheila Ware

Great Brickhill

Butch Baker
Proposed by: Hugh Butler
Seconded by: Jeremy Hopkinson

All were elected without dissent. The Chairman welcomed the new members to the Guild, and asked those present to stand and make themselves known to the Meeting.

Election of Branch Treasurer

David and Rosa Bardwell were leaving the area and had resigned as Treasurer and Newsletter Editor. The Chairman thanked them for their service to the branch and the enthusiasm they had brought to the posts.

Sheila Ware was proposed as Treasurer by Sheila Watts and seconded by Nicki King. Sheila Ware was prepared to take on the post until the AGM. She was elected unopposed.

Election of Branch Newsletter Editor

Nicki King was proposed by the Chairman and seconded by Sheila Watts. She also agreed to take on the post until the AGM. She was elected unopposed.

GREAT BRICKHILL MEETING

MINUTES Continued

Any Other Business

Letters had been received from Old Wolverton, Olney and Leckhampstead seeking grants from Branch funds. It was agreed that these be discussed at this meeting.

Old Wolverton An appeal had been launched for £60,000, of which approximately half would be spent on the bells, frame and two trebles to make a ring of eight. Alan Marchbank asked if it was known what the anticipated shortfall in funds was. He understood that there had been a bequest, which was to fund part of the appeal. The officers did not know about the state of the funding for this project and no one was present from Old Wolverton to provide any information.

Nicki King proposed a motion that a representative be invited to speak at the Quarterly meeting in December to explain the project in more detail. Barry Eglesfield seconded this motion. This motion was passed on a show of hands, with no one opposing the motion. The Branch Secretary was instructed to write and invite a representative to attend the next meeting.

Olney Sheila Ware reported that a lot of DIY work has been done at Olney to get the bells and ringing chamber into a fit state. Money was needed for some new benches for the ringing chamber at a total cost of £400. The Olney band was re-formed about a year ago. Alan Marchbank has inspected the bells in the last year. The band has done some work to improve the 'go' of the bells, and had decorated the ringing chamber. Donations had been received from the Church and from the ringers themselves. They were short of about £100. Alan Marchbank proposed that a grant of £100 be made to Olney. This was seconded by Brian Newman and agreed without dissent.

Leckhampstead A new band had been formed and they were trying to improve the go of the bells. Paul Verrier, Tower Captain, spoke of the keenness of the new band. The band was desperate for some new ropes because the

existing ones were in a very poor state. They had approached the Church for help with the purchase of new ropes, for which they had a quote of £87.25 + VAT per rope. They were hopeful of some funding from the Church Council. Brian Newman proposed that the branch purchase one new rope for the tower.

Alan Marchbank proposed an amendment that two ropes should be purchased, this was seconded by Hugh Butler. This amendment was carried without dissent, and the amended motion was also passed on a show of hands.

Alan Marchbank also agreed to inspect the bells at Leckhampstead and advise on any additional work required. The secretary would be writing to Leckhampstead to advise them of the decision.

Branch Secretaries Meeting

This would be held on 3rd October at Radley. Any items for discussion were to be given to Helen Stanworth by 19th September (Branch practice at Woughton).

Competition Results

Richard Stanworth announced that the Branch had retained the Inter Branch Trophy in the competition against the Towcester Branch of the Peterborough Diocesan Guild, and had also won the George Holland Stedman Trophy for the first time. Both these trophies were on display. Richard proposed that the George Holland trophy be kept at Maids Moreton for the first year.

Ringing After the Meeting

Richard also announced that there would be a short period of general ringing after the meeting for those who had not yet rung. This would be followed by a quarter peal in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales.

Thanks

The Chairman thanked Hugh Butler and the Great Brickhill band for a splendid tea and for arranging the afternoon. Thanks were also given to Rev Stephen Toze for taking the service and to Barry Eglesfield for playing the organ..

THE RINGING MASTER'S CALL

Richard Stanworth

Branch Practices

At the monthly branch practices we try to visit, over time, all the ringable towers in the branch and to cater for all ringers in the branch. These practices are for **ALL** ringers in the Branch to get around, try different rings of bells, ring with other ringers, try new methods, and improve ringing of methods already known. The special methods, when chosen for a practice, are to provide a focus for those ringers who wish to try something new or consolidate a method. These special methods are not rung to the exclusion of the standard things normally rung at branch practices. We will always ring rounds, call changes, plain hunt, Grandsire, Plain Bob if required by anyone attending a practice, as well as anything else requested (within reason!). Come along and join us. Branch practices are a chance to practice those methods that you never manage at home as you always seem to be just one short.

Inter Guild Striking Competition

As reported at the Great Brickhill meeting, we retained the Inter Guild trophy in the annual competition against the Towcester Branch of the Peterborough Diocesan Guild. We also won the George Holland Stedman trophy for the first time.

Those taking part were Sheila Blenkhorn, Jill Joyce, Helen Stanworth, Gareth Grayson, Jonathan Griggs, Doug Hird, David Joyce, Roy Keeves, Richard Stanworth, Michael Tinsley, Nigel Titley, Peter Tribble.

This was the tenth anniversary of this competition, the Towcester Branch has won the trophy six times and the North Bucks Branch has won it four times. However, only once - in 1989 - has the competition been completely one-sided and been won 3-0. Only in the eight bell section has it been one-sided - this year was the first time ever that the North Bucks won this section. The other two sections have been more even, with the scores being 7-3 to North Bucks in the six bell section and all square (5-5) in the call changes.



Members of the North Bucks Branch 10-bell Striking Competition Band, and offspring, at Amersham. The band was placed fourth. (Yes I know the story has been in *In Touch* before, but you've not had a picture yet - Ed.).

THE SECRETARY WRITES

Helen Stanworth

Guild Report

It's coming round to that time again! Your name will appear in the Annual Report for 1997 exactly as it appeared in the 1996 report. If this is NOT how you wish it to appear, then please let me know by 31st December how it should appear. New members names will be printed in the list exactly as they were written on the membership nomination form unless you let me know otherwise.

Please also let me know of any changes to tower correspondents and ringing times (practice and services) for inclusion in the report.

Bell Fund Stall

The E Berks & S Bucks Branch run a stall to raise money for the Guild Bell Fund at all Guild events. I have a copy of a catalogue, which will be available at Branch events. Please let me know if you wish to look through it.

Bellhandling Video

The branch now has a copy of the video produced by the Central Council entitled '*Bellhandling - a tutor's companion*'. This is aimed at people teaching bellhandling but may also be helpful to those learning to ring. The video may be borrowed from me free of charge. However, a deposit of £5 is required against the safe return of the video.

HANDBELL RINGING ROUNDUP

Godfrey Foat

18 Ashfield, Stantonbury, Milton Keynes, 21 April 1997
1260 Plain Bob Minor
Alan Marchbank 1-2, Godfrey Foat (C) 3-4, Ron Snack 5-6.

6 Broadway Avenue, Giffard Park, Milton Keynes, 9 June 1997
1260 Plain Bob Minor
Ron Snack 1-2, Alan Marchbank 3-4, Godfrey Foat (C) 5-6.

Great Linford, Milton Keynes, St Andrew's Church, 14 June 1997
1260 Plain Bob Minor
Alan Marchbank 1-2, Ron Snack 3-4, Godfrey Foat (C) 5-6.
As part of the Great Linford Waterside Festival

JOHN WETHERALL

Many of you may have read the account of the funeral of John Wetherall of Lavendon, which was published in *The Citizen* newspaper on October 23rd 1997. Doubtless due to lack of space, the published piece neglected to mention the fact that John was regular ringer and member of the Lavendon band. Through the sponsored cycle ride, John's work for the Historic Churches fund has doubtless benefited many of the churches in the Branch. The cycle ride has taken many people into churches who might otherwise never have entered them.

Brian Clifton writes:

John was a founder member of the St Michael's band formed to ring the bells after rehanging and augmenting to six in 1974. He was an active ringer right up to the time of his sudden death. He is sadly missed in St Michael's Tower and in Lavendon village in general.

The following quarter peal was rung in memoriam.

St Michael's, Lavendon

15 October 1997

1260 Doubles (Stedman, Grandsire, Plain Bob)

- 1 Sally Adnitt
- 2 Josephine Smith
- 3 Ann Clifton
- 4 Brian Clifton (C)
- 5 Ken Wildman
- 6 John Lay

Rung half muffled.

16 Wandsworth Place, Bradwell Common, Milton Keynes, 28 July 1997

1440 Plain Bob Minor
Alan Marchbank 1-2, Ron Snack 3-4, Godfrey Foat (C) 5-6.

16 Wandsworth Place, Bradwell Common, Milton Keynes, 29 September 1997

720 Kent TB, 540 Plain Bob Minor
Alan Marchbank 1-2, Ron Snack 3-4, Godfrey Foat (C) 5-6.

RECENT RINGING

Following the tragic death of Diana, Princess of Wales, Branch members responded admirably. Many towers showed their respects by ringing half-muffled for Sunday services and attempting quarter peals. These quarters have been sent to *In Touch* as a record of ringing in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales.

Buckingham, Bucks. 5 September 1997

1260 Grandsire Triples: Peter Nicholson 1, Ann Fletcher 2, Gerald Kingston 3, Charles E. Truman 4, Andrew J. Spencer 5, Michael Tinsley 6, William A. Yates (C) 7, David Goodger 8.

Downs Barn, Bucks. 31 August 1997

1260 Grandsire Triples: Nicola King 1, David J. Maybrey 2, Peter Tribble 3, Christina Jones 4, Brian M. Baldwin 5, Simon Head 6, B. Douglas Hird (C) 7, Jon Hill 8.

Emberton, Bucks. 7 September 1997

1260 Minor (2m): David Jones 1, Sheila Watts 2, Nicola King 3, Christina Jones 4, B. Douglas Hird 5, David Phillipson (C) 6.

Great Brickhill, Bucks. 6 September 1997

1260 Doubles (4m): Helen Stanworth 1, Barry Smith 2, B. Douglas Hird 3, Alan Marchbank (C) 4, Richard Stanworth 5, Hugh Barber 6.

Hanslope, Bucks. 14 September 1997

1260 Grandsire Triples: Carole Harmer 1, Richard Haseldine 2, Cathy Priestley 3, Alan Cozens 4, Ian Thompson 5, Nicholas Gray 6, Jonathan Griggs (C) 7, Roy Keeves 8.

Maids Moreton, Bucks. 31 August 1997

1380 Doubles (3m inc Stedman): Ann Fletcher 1, Richard Stanworth 2, William Yates (C) 3, Michael Tinsley 4, David Goodger 5, Helen Stanworth 6.

Shenley, Bucks. 6 September 1997

1260 Grandsire Doubles: Anne McIntyre 1, Lorraine Brookman 2 (first of Grandsire), Peter Tribble 3, Christina Jones 4, B. Douglas Hird (C) 5, Barry Smith 6.

Stoke Goldington, Bucks. 8 September 1997

1260 Stedman Doubles: Sheila Watts 1, Natalie Green 2, Ian Thompson 3, Jonathan Griggs 4, Roy Keeves (C) 5, Owen Warren 6.

16 Wandsworth Place, Bradwell Common.

1 September 1997

1440 Plain Bob Minor: Alan Marchbank 1-2, Ron Shack 3-4, Godfrey Foat (C) 5-6.

OTHER QUARTER PEALS

Downs Barn, Bucks. 22 July 1997.

1260 Plain Bob Doubles: Ann Griffin (1st Quarter) 1, Jon Hill (1st inside) 2, Jo White 3, David J. Maybrey 4, B. Douglas Hird (C) 5, Nicola King 6.

Downs Barn, Bucks. 29 July 1997.

1260 Grandsire Doubles: Jon Hill 1, Jo White 2, Nicola King 3, John Brookman 4, B. Douglas Hird (C) 5, Ann Griffin 6 (1st tenor behind).

Hanslope, Bucks. 3 August 1997.

1260 Stedman Triples: Natalie Green 1, Alan Cozens 2, Cathy Priestley 3, Jonathan Griggs 4, Ian Thompson 5, Roy Keeves 6, Richard Haseldine (C) 7, David Taylor 8. Rung for Sunday service and in memory of Ted Lambert of Cosgrove, Northants.

Milton Keynes Village, Bucks. 18 October 1997.

1340 Kent Treble Bob Minor: Bob Winstanley 1, Christina Jones (1st in method) 2, Peter Tribble 3, Raymond Watkin 4, Phil Dunn 5, Monty Gilbert (C) 6.

Woughton on the Green, Bucks. 18 October 1997.

1260 Plain Bob Minor: Steve Crane 1, Christina Jones 2, Raymond Watkin 3, Bob Winstanley 4, Monty Gilbert 5, Peter Tribble (first as conductor) (C) 6.

NEWS FROM SHENLEY

Barry Smith

The first major work on the bells since rehanging in 1908 will be completed in time for the Quarterly Meeting at Shenley on 6th December (see front cover for details). The clappers are being rebushed and the pulleys replaced by Whites of Appleton. For those of

you who have not rung at Shenley recently, there have been a number of changes including new ropes and a redecorated ringing room. As the church should also have been repainted in time for the meeting, we look forward to welcoming the Branch to St Mary's.

Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers North Bucks Branch

Calendar 1997-98

NOVEMBER

Fri. 21 st	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Grandsire Doubles	Tingewick
-----------------------	------	--	-----------

DECEMBER

Sat 6 th	3.30	Quarterly Meeting	Shenley
Fri. 19 th	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Ipswich S Minor	Lavendon

1998

JANUARY

Fri. 16 th	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Stedman Triples	Buckingham
-----------------------	------	--	------------

FEBRUARY

Fri. 20 th	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Little Bob Minor	Stoke Goldington
-----------------------	------	---	---------------------

MARCH

Sat 7 th	3.00	*	Tyringham
	4.00	Annual General Meeting	Newport Pagnell
Fri. 20 th	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Lincolnshire S Major	Downs Barn

APRIL

Sat 4 th	*	Youth Training Day	E Berks & S Bucks
Sat 11 th		Handbell Day	Reading
Fri. 17 th	7.30	Branch Practice No Special Method	Emberton
Sat 25 th		Radley Course	Old N Berks Branch

MAY

Mon 4 th		Eight Bell Striking Competition Guild Ringing Day	E Berks & S Bucks
Fri. 15 th	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Kent Treble Bob Minor	Cosgrove
Sat 16 th		Guild AGM	Churchill Chipping Norton Branch

JUNE

Sat 7 th	3.30	* Quarterly Meeting and Striking Competition	Maids Moreton
Fri. 20 th	7.30	* Branch Practice Special Method: Cambridge Surprise Minor	Loughton

Items marked * were unconfirmed as at 5 October 1997

Italicised events are Guild events