

In Touch

November 2004



Quarterly Meeting at Downs Barn

The Quarterly Meeting will be held at the Cross & Stable, Downs Barn, on Saturday 4th December. The timetable will be as follows:

- 2.30 Ringing
- 3.30 Service
- 4.00 Mince Pies & Cups of Tea
- 4.30 Business Meeting

No names needed for tea (but contributions of mince pies welcome). No evening ringing.
Revised times as agreed at the AGM in March.

The Cross & Stable, Downs Barn

The Bells

Treble	1-3-14
2nd	2-0-0
3rd	2-1-17
4th	2-2-27
5th	3-0-8
6th	3-1-2
7th	4-2-11
Tenor	6-0-10

History

The Cross & Stable Church and Community Centre was completed in December 1986 – the Church was dedicated on 24th January 1987. Plans were in hand to install bells well before this though. In 1983, the Whitechapel Bell Foundry provided some structural advice to the architect. The ringers were looking for second hand bells. In September 1986 some of the

future Downs Barn band inspected the ring of eight at Llambradach. And in 1987, a sponsored peal of Cambridge S Minor was rung at Kingstone, Hereford a short while before those bells were bought. Because of a rise in building costs the bells were left in storage at Taylors Bellfoundry. The bells from Llambradach were transferred to Kingstone.

Fund raising had been steady but slow. Treasure hunts, barn dances and sponsored ringing had



Continued on Page 3

The new Tenor bell

Who's Who 2004/2005

Chairman

Mr Barry Eglesfield, 15 Chardacre, Two Mile Ash,
Milton Keynes, MK8 8JN
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Assistant Ringing Master

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Training Officer

Post currently vacant

Guild Representatives

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Archivist

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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

Our library of videos has grown. 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.

Over the Border in Northants Towcester Branch—2004

13 Nov	Branch Practice	Wicken
4 Dec	Branch Annual Dinner	Towcester



Our Grateful Thanks...

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

A special thank you goes to everyone who sends us Quarters soon after they have been rung—much appreciated.

The deadline for the next *In Touch* is:
Friday 28th January 2005

Sheila Watts & Sheila Ware
Editors



brought in a small amount and ringing open days using every other North Bucks tower brought in more. At the same time, it was not at all clear how the relatively large ring from Kingstone would fit in the tower.

In early 1992, the Oxford Diocesan Guild decided to make this a special project to mark 450 years of the Diocese of Oxford. The increased backing, enthusiasm and organisation made all the difference. Eight new bells were cast on 27th November 1992 witnessed by many ringers and supporters. The light weight of the ring made this a relatively rare event for the foundry as it allowed all eight to be cast together.

Guild members and bellhangers then got together to make the bell frame and fix the two big foundation beams to the tower walls.



With the frame ready to assemble and bells and fittings delivered, a team of ringers from North Bucks and further away spent the 1993 May Bank Holiday weekend putting together the meccano

kit. High points of the weekend were:

- 🔔 Hearing the back six for the first time with all the doors open
- 🔔 Gatecrashing the St Thomas' Oxford dedication to collect the treble
- 🔔 Hearing the eight for the first time
- 🔔 Not dropping the trapdoor through the hole in the ceiling
- 🔔 Not dropping a bell on a press photographer

A bit of recruitment from the congregation created the first band, some of which are still ringing today. The bells were dedicated by The Rt Revd Richard Harries, Bishop of Oxford, on Sunday 5th September 1993.

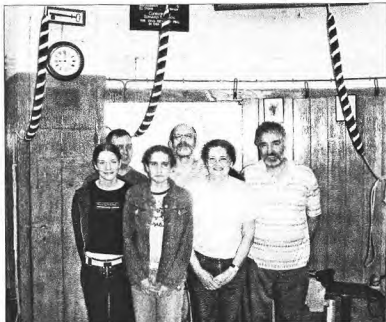
Since then the band has had ups and downs. Most recruits have been relatively young – and so not to everyone's taste – but have made quick progress. Retaining such young ringers is difficult though. They start with plenty of enthusiasm and spare time but run up against homework as soon as secondary education hits them.

At the moment, ringing at Downs Barn is in a "rebuilding" phase. The building next to the Church is expected to be put up for sale this year so it is important that the bells are rung to avoid problems when it is sold. This has prompted some welcome intervention from the Great Linford band in particular. Sunday Service ringing is from 10:30 to 11:00 and is well supported by ringers from several other towers. Ringing on Tuesday evenings is from 6:30 to 7:30. This session is attended by a good number of ringers who would not be able to support a normal 7:30 practice. The later time is now available for fee paying activities. At the moment, there are no experienced ringers with the ability, inclination and time on their hands to run a band in the traditional way at Downs Barn but the current arrangement is sustainable for the foreseeable future. In the longer term, it is hoped that a band can be built from these foundations. Meanwhile, for outings quarters and peals, you can still call

Doug Hird who will call
Steve who will either call
back, or not.



Doug Hird



L to R: Catherine Stanworth, Michael Tinsley, Vicky Stanworth, Richard Stanworth, Helen Stanworth, David Stanworth (This is not Padbury ringing room!)

Trio of Firsts for Stanworth

By Catherine Stanworth

On 22nd August 2004 a group of ringers met at Padbury to attempt another Stanworth first quarter peal in aid of my birthday. The quarter began the same way as the other two, the youngest ringer on the treble and ringing Grandsire Doubles. Along with these similarities there were a few differences. This was the first of the firsts not to have a Yates ringing and not to be at Cosgrove, so therefore the first in the North Bucks.

The idea of this quarter was to have an entire Stanworth band but unfortunately John was unable to be there. Despite this we managed an entire Stanworth inside band.

After the quarter a nice meal was enjoyed to celebrate with the band and other family members. Richard created a certificate for Vicky to record the quarter. This was presented to her at the Padbury Harvest Lunch.



CENTENARY MUGS

Don't know what to give someone for Christmas?

Here's the answer—a Centenary Mug! A limited edition mug, definitely destined to appreciate in value and become a collector's item.....

They are in white fine bone china with the North Bucks logo on the front, and the Church logo on the reverse (depending on whether you are right or left handed)! Both logos are in blue/green. Buy yours now while there are still a few left!

They can be purchased at Branch practices and meetings, or contact Sheila Ware:

Tel: 01234-713667

Email: sandsw@clara.net



June 1904
North Bucks Branch



Founded at
St Faith, Newton Longville

Quarters

St Lawrence, Chicheley
Tuesday 20th July 2004

- 1 Emily Payne
- 2 Michael Haynes
- 3 Robert Churchill
- 4 James Saunders
- 5 John Hearn
- 6 William Stungo (C)

The band would like to associate this quarter in memory of Richard Stevens, formerly tower captain of Bicester, Oxon

St James the Great, Hanslope
Sunday 8th August 2004

1272 London Surprise Minor (49 mins)

- 1 Ian Thompson
- 2 Richard Haseldine
- 3 Roy Keeves
- 4 Anthony Gray
- 5 Nicholas Gray
- 6 Jonathan Griggs (C)

Rung for Sunday Service, and to celebrate the admission of Sheila Blenkhorn to the Freedom of Sudbury, Suffolk, on Wednesday 7th July 2004

St Lawrence, Bradwell
Sunday 15th August 2004

1260 Mixed Doubles (43 mins)

(Stedman, Grandsire, St Simons, St Martins, Plain Bob)

- 1 Christine Cable
- 2 Simon Head
- 3 Jill Joyce
- 4 Brian Newman
- 5 David Joyce (C)
- 6 Gordon Abbott

Thanksgiving for the life of Margaret A Mills, cousin of 4
Most methods—4

St Edburg, Bicester

Monday 16th August 2004

1259 Grandsire Caters (47 mins)

- 1 Rosemary Henson
- 2 Richard Yates
- 3 Steve Walker
- 4 Catherine Stanworth
- 5 Roy Jones
- 6 Simon Cole
- 7 John Harris
- 8 Michael Tinsley
- 9 Barry Eglesfield (C)
- 10 William Haynes

Rung as a tribute to Richard Stevens

1st of Caters—1

1st Quarter of Caters as Conductor

St Mary, Padbury
Sunday 22nd August 2004
1260 Grandsire Doubles

- 1 Victoria Stanworth
- 2 Helen Stanworth
- 3 Catherine Stanworth
- 4 David Stanworth
- 5 Richard Stanworth (C)
- 6 Michael Tinsley

Eighteenth Birthday Compliment to Catherine Stanworth

1st Quarter—1

St Faith, Newton Longville
Tuesday 24th August 2004

1264 Plain Bob Major (44 mins)

- 1 Christine Ryan
- 2 Jill Eales
- 3 Doug Hird
- 4 Christine Cable
- 5 Simon Head
- 6 Jill Joyce
- 7 Barry Eglesfield
- 8 David Joyce (C)

1st of Major—4

For the Branch Centenary, rung on the Conductor's half-century

St Lawrence, Bradwell
Sunday 29th August 2004

1260 Plain Bob Doubles (43 mins)

- 1 David Green
- 2 Jennifer Brookman
- 3 Jill Joyce
- 4 Christine Cable
- 5 David Joyce (C)
- 6 Jean Phillips

A birthday compliment to the Conductor

1st Quarter—6

All Saints, Loughton
Monday 30th August 2004

1320 Cambridge Surprise Minor

- 1 Becky Fawcett
- 2 Ted Fawcett
- 3 Ann Birch
- 4 Derek Stainsby
- 5 Bob Winstanley (C)
- 6 Terry Page

For the Centenary of the North Bucks Branch of the Oxford Diocesan Guild

1st of Surprise Minor inside—3

More Quarters

All Saints, Leighton Buzzard
Sunday 12th September 2004
1259 Grandsire Caters

- 1 E Haighton
- 2 Catherine Stanworth
- 3 Bob Tregillus
- 4 Jane Dunn
- 5 Simon Head
- 6 Alan Marchbank
- 7 Philip Dunn
- 8 Jonathan Pawley
- 9 Barry Eglesfield (C)
- 10 Michael Tinsley

Rung in thanksgiving for the life of Lucy Shepherd, and
as part of the North Bucks Centenary year

St Lawrence, Bradwell
Sunday 12th September 2004
1260 Plain Bob Doubles (41 mins)

- 1 Christine Cable
- 2 David Green
- 3 Andrew King
- 4 Ian Green
- 5 David Joyce (C)
- 6 Dean Meakins

1st in method—2

Holy Trinity, Old Wolverton
Tuesday 14th September 2004
1260 Doubles—3 methods
(Stedman, Grandsire, Plain Bob)

- 1 John Mercer
- 2 Sally Partridge
- 3 James Woodcock
- 4 Malcolm Hooton
- 5 Michael Nimmo (C)
- 6 Ivan Philpott

To celebrate the marriage of Gabriele Stutz and John Mercer

Cross & Stable, Downs Barn
Tuesday 14th September 2004
1250 Cambridge Surprise Major (42 mins)

- 1 B Doug Hird
- 2 Edie Robinson
- 3 Peter Tribble
- 4 Christine Cable
- 5 Bob Winstanley
- 6 Simon Head
- 7 David Joyce
- 8 Barry Eglesfield (C)

1st of Surprise Major—4. Rung as a follow-up to
Easthampstead Ringing School

St Thomas, Simpson
Sunday 19th September 2004
720 London & 576 Cambridge Surprise Minor

- 1 Catherine Stanworth
- 2 Peter Tribble
- 3 Christine Tribble
- 4 Simon Head
- 5 Michael Tinsley
- 6 Barry Eglesfield (C)

In memory of Bob Harrison, and for the Centenary of
the North Bucks Branch of the Oxford Diocesan Guild

St Mary, Banbury
Friday 24th September 2004
1287 Stedman Caters

- 1 Barry Eglesfield
- 2 Mick Journeaux
- 3 Catherine Stanworth
- 4 Jean Davies
- 5 Diana Reeves
- 6 Bob Reeves
- 7 Barry Davies
- 8 Michael Tinsley
- 9 Graham Clifton (C)
- 10 John Stanworth

An 18th birthday compliment to Catherine Stanworth

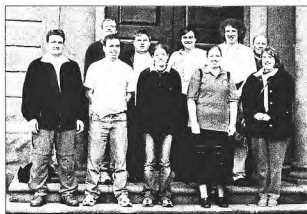
1st of Stedman—3

1st of Stedman Caters—8

Holy Cross, Daventry
Saturday 25th September 2004
1259 Grandsire Caters

- 1 David Joyce
- 2 Catherine Stanworth
- 3 Jill Joyce
- 4 Christine Cable
- 5 Peter Tribble
- 6 Simon Head
- 7 John Stanworth
- 8 Alan Marchbank
- 9 Barry Eglesfield (C)
- 10 Michael Tinsley

A North Bucks Centenary Quarter, by an all paid up
North Bucks Branch band



See next page for Daventry write-up

Even More Quarters

Michael Tinsley writes....

It all started when I was phoned up by the tower captain at Bicester; he asked me if I could find a conductor and a few people to help out with a quarter peal for Richard Stevens. The plan was to ring a quarter peal of Grandsire Caters. I phoned around looking for a conductor and got hold of our Branch Chairman – Barry. He explained that he had not called it for a while but said he would be willing to conduct it.

I think the success of this quarter must have given Barry the taste of calling Caters again, as he has been fixing them up with our neighbouring rings of ten.

On the 12th September Barry had the rare chance of ringing at Leighton Buzzard, the composition that he had decided to call was very musical. When placing the band Barry called for a tenor ringer, so I volunteered myself and duly climbed the tenor box and enjoyed the roll ups that this composition gave.

Then on September 25th a North Bucks Band met on the steps of Daventry, Holy Cross, to attempt a Quarter Peal. This was achieved on the first attempt without any restarts! We believe that this is the first time for many years that a total North Bucks Branch band has rung a quarter of Caters.

The aim has been to practice together in preparation for the 10-bell striking competition in November.

St Lawrence, Bradwell

Sunday 26th September 2004

1260 Mixed Doubles (42 mins)

(St Osmund, St Remigius, Huntley Place, Winchenden Place, St Nicholas, Reverse Canterbury, Eynesbury, St Martins, St Simons, Plain Bob and Grandsire)

- 1 Christine Abbott
- 2 Christine Cable
- 3 Jill Joyce
- 4 Simon Head
- 5 David Joyce (C)
- 6 Gordon Abbott

An engagement compliment to Kathy Brookman and Charlie Turner

Most methods for all except 4

All Saints, Lathbury

Sunday 26th September 2004

1260 Grandsire Doubles

- 1 B Douglas Hird
- 2 Christine Cable
- 3 David Joyce
- 4 Simon Head
- 5 Barry R Eglesfield (C)

For the Centenary of the North Bucks Branch of the Oxford Diocesan Guild

St Peter, Tyringham

Sunday 26th September 2004

1260 Doubles (Grandsire, St Simons, Plain Bob)

- 1 Christine Cable
- 2 Charles Knight
- 3 Simon Head
- 4 David Joyce
- 5 Barry Eglesfield (C)

For the Centenary of the North Bucks Branch of the Oxford Diocesan Guild

St Faith, Newton Longville

Tuesday 28th September 2004

1280 Yorkshire Surprise Major (48 mins)

- 1 Bob Winstanley
- 2 Edie Robinson
- 3 Peter Tribble
- 4 Christine Cable
- 5 Simon Head
- 6 Jill Joyce
- 7 David Joyce
- 8 Barry Eglesfield (C)

1st of Yorkshire—4. Rung as a follow-up to Easthamstead ringing school

St Edmund, Maids Moreton

Thursday 7th October 2004

1296 Cambridge Surprise Minor

- 1 Ruth Stokes
- 2 Jonathan Spencer
- 3 Ray Vickers
- 4 Andrew J Spencer
- 5 Chris Stokes
- 6 Barry Eglesfield (C)

Rung in memory of Lucy Shepherd, by her friends, and for the Centenary of the North Bucks Branch of the Oxford Diocesan Guild

St Edward the Confessor, Shalstone

Sunday 10th October 2004

1260 Doubles (Stedman, Grandsire, Plain Bob)

- 1 Ray Vickers
- 2 Jonathan Spencer
- 3 Ann Fletcher
- 4 Laurence Gibson
- 5 Andrew Spencer (C)

Rung for Harvest and for the Centenary of the North Bucks Branch of the Oxford Diocesan Guild

St Lawrence, Bradwell

Sunday 10th October 2004

2004 Plain Bob Minor (60 mins)

- 1 Christine Abbott
- 2 Christine Cable
- 3 Christina Tribble
- 4 Brian Newman
- 5 Simon Head
- 6 David Joyce (C)

1st Date Touch—1, 4 and 5

In celebration of the Ruby Wedding Anniversary of Grace and George Capon, and the Silver Wedding Anniversary of Helen and Petar Maric

Even More Quarters

Assumption of the BVM, Wavendon
Wednesday 13th October 2004

1272 Chester Surprise Minor

- 1 Christine Cable
- 2 Edie Robinson
- 3 Peter Tribble
- 4 Terry Page
- 5 Simon Head
- 6 Barry Eglesfield (C)

For the Centenary of the North Bucks Branch of the
Oxford Diocesan Guild

St Mary, Clifton Reynes
Friday 15th October 2004

1296 Beverley & Surfleet Surprise Minor

- 1 Christine Cable
- 2 Bob Winstanley
- 3 Ruth Stokes
- 4 Chris Stokes
- 5 Simon Head
- 6 Barry Eglesfield (C)

For the Centenary of the North Bucks Branch of the
Oxford Diocesan Guild

SS Peter & Paul, Olney
Sunday 17th October 2004
1260 Stedman Triples (49 mins)

- 1 Christine Cable
- 2 Margaret Whiteley
- 3 Lorraine Andrews
- 4 Jill Joyce
- 5 David Phillipson
- 6 Martin Whiteley (C)
- 7 David Joyce
- 8 Martin Heaslip

1st of Stedman Triples—1

St James the Great, Hanslope
Sunday 17th October 2004
1344 Ashstead Surprise Major (51 mins)

- 1 Stuart Grout
- 2 Alan Cozens
- 3 Richard Haseldine
- 4 Tony Gray
- 5 Ian Thompson
- 6 Chris Stokes
- 7 Roy Keeves
- 8 Jonathan Griggs (C)

For Sunday Service.
1st Treble Bob—1. 1st for all in method

St Martin, Fenny Stratford
Monday 18th October 2004
1320 York & Durham Surprise Minor

- 1 Charles Knight
- 2 Terry Page
- 3 Bob Winstanley
- 4 Simon Head
- 5 B Doug Hird
- 6 Barry Eglesfield (C)

For the Centenary of the North Bucks Branch of the
Oxford Diocesan Guild

St Mary, Shenley
Monday 25th October 2004
1272 Ipswich Surprise Minor

- 1 ? (sorry, name not given!)
- 2 Bob Winstanley
- 3 Terry Page
- 4 B Doug Hird
- 5 Simon Head
- 6 Barry Eglesfield (C)

For the Centenary of the North Bucks Branch of the
Oxford Diocesan Guild

St Lawrence, Chicheley
Friday 29th October 2004
720 Double Court & 576 Cambridge Surprise Minor

- 1 Jonathan Griggs
- 2 Roy Keeves
- 3 Ian Thompson
- 4 Tony Gray
- 5 Nick Gray
- 6 Richard Haseldine (C)

For the Centenary of the North Bucks Branch of the
Oxford Diocesan Guild

All Saints, Loughton
Monday 1st November 2004
1320 Bourne Surprise Minor

- 1 Bob Winstanley
- 2 Derek Stainsby
- 3 Terry Page
- 4 Simon Head
- 5 Doug Hird
- 6 Barry Eglesfield (C)

Rung for the Patronal Festival, and for the Centenary
of the North Bucks Branch of the Oxford Diocesan
Guild

Looks like a bumper year for
Quarters. Do send them to the
Editors immediately they've been
rung—to avoid error!

In the last issue of *In Touch* we asked for your suggestions for what David was saying when he was imprisoned in the stocks at the Centenary Day. The winner, Sheila Blenkhorn, said this.....



I knew I should have taken up that special offer for the hands free kit!!



Twelve Bells for Milton Keynes?

David Middleton wrote to the Branch Officers just before the last Quarterly Meeting:

"I understand that it was once planned to build a Campanile for Christ the Cornerstone. Should we approach Milton Keynes Council and the Church to have a free-standing (12 bell?) Campanile, built with Heritage Lottery funding and corporate sponsorship as a joint local authority and Church initiative? It could be built either next to, or across the road from the Church near the shopping centre as a municipal and community asset. Perhaps someone would like to lead and manage the project? As we do not have anything more than eight bells, it would certainly improve our chances of winning ten and twelve bell competitions! No real city should be without its own bells!"

We are hoping to discuss this at the December Quarterly—do come along and air your views!

Steeple Aston Ringing School 23rd October 2004

This year's course was oversubscribed as in previous years, but managed to run five groups of learners for three sessions of 90 minutes practice, as well as an hour of theory at the beginning of the day. North Bucks provided one tutor, four all-day helpers & three part-day helpers. Sadly, no-one from our Branch appeared on the list of students, so I suspect that none bothered to apply?

Each tutor was allocated five students and five helpers (except the triples group who got the two extra helpers that were essential). The consensus amongst most of the groups was that we needed more helpers, and that fewer students should have allowed more chance to progress, but all seemed to make the best of a very long hard day.

It would be good to see a few more helpers from our Branch next year - although all-day helpers are useful, an extra person or two at each session would allow helpers the odd break. One of my helpers rang in every touch throughout the day, other than ringing up and down, which really is asking an awful lot!! It would also be good to see a few learners from our Branch, who are interested enough in bothering to progress their own ringing, joining next year's course.

David Joyce



Belfry Gossip



Newport Pagnell

Plans to install a balcony are moving forward. It is a potentially big project, and the PCC could easily be frightened off the idea. So the ringers are pushing for low cost options at every opportunity and a meeting at Newton Longville is likely to be useful. This project will eventually present an opportunity for Branch members to play with lifting gear and look important in hard hats. Practices are a bit thin on the ground at the moment but we often get eight on Sunday mornings. Recruiting of learners will start as soon as the CRB formalities have been sorted out.

Lathbury

A meeting with the PCC has been set up to help them understand more about their bells and what local ringers can do to keep them ringing.

Willen

Some interest in sorting the bells out, but a large re-roofing project is going to take top priority for the next year or so.

Guild Open Day & Eight Bell Striking Competition 2005

The North Bucks will be hosting these events next May Day Bank Holiday, Monday 2nd May 2005.

Plans are in hand for the two heats of the striking competition to be held at Stony Stratford and Newton Longville, with winners from the heats going to Hanslope for the final.

The Open Day raises funds for the Guild Bell Fund and will involve just about all of the ringable towers in the Branch. Towers will be open along two routes, starting in the west of the branch and moving eastwards through the day. Expect to receive a request to use your tower soon.

Guild Six Bell Striking Competition 2004

Hanslope were our representatives in the competition held on Saturday 2nd October.

They were drawn to ring second of six teams in the heat at Peasmore in the Newbury Branch. These are a fairly light (8cwt) easy going ring but one or two of the bell were a little odd struck which made it difficult to establish a good rhythm. Two extents of Grandsire Double were rung with the best of the ringing at the start of the second extent. The band taking part were Roy Keeves, Richard Stanworth, Ian Thompson, Tony Gray, Jonathan Griggs, and Stuart Grout. The judges placed the teams in the heat as follows:

1st	All Saints, Wokingham (Sonning Deanery)	29
2nd	Hugh Wycombe (EBSB)	41
3rd	St Aldates, Oxford (Oxford)	43
4th	Hanslope (North Bucks)	58
5th	Blewbury (Old North Berks)	62
6th	Bampton (Witney & Woodstock)	71

Hanslope just missed a place in the final as only the first three teams went through.



Christmas Special

You will see from the Calendar that the December practice at Cosgrove is a Christmas Special! In order to get you in the mood for Christmas we will try a few seasonal methods, some well known, others not so. All can be found on the various method/blue line websites such as Visual Method Archive (<http://www.ex.ac.uk/~ajbeer/vismeth.htm>) or contact the ringing master if you would like the blue lines in advance. Copies will be available on the night.

Seasonal Methods:

St Nicholas Bob Doubles
Ivy Delight Minor
Nativity Surprise Minor
Star of Bethlehem Delight Minor





Nicholson Engineering Limited

Church Bellhangers and Ironsmiths of Distinction

"As a firm we are committed to the use of bells as an important part of the regular ministry and worship of the Church in this country. Although many do not attend Church, all within earshot hear the sound of the bells and at least some are drawn to reflect on their message. This is central to our philosophy as, day-by-day, we carry on our trade."

Andrew Nicholson



Nicholson's Church Bell Works, Bridport, Dorset

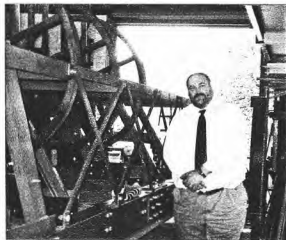
Richard Farrant showed us how wheels and the "other wooden bits" are made - "we only use English Oak at Nicholson's".



Richard Farrant in his workshop

We were on holiday in west Dorset in September, and discovered that Nicholson Engineering were holding their Open Day in aid of Cancer Research UK on the Saturday we were due to come home. Needless to say, we delayed our departure and visited their works in Bridport, only a couple of miles from our holiday cottage.

It was a fascinating experience, and we were made very welcome by the Nicholson staff. The new bells for Crediton were on display, and a coach load of Crediton ringers were expected for a barbeque lunch later on.



Andrew Nicholson with the new Crediton bells



This is apparently what all good woodworkers eat for lunch!

Nicholson's aim is always to emulate the skills of those medieval craftsmen who produced bells of such fine detail and artistry. They are able to rehang old bells with new fittings either in old frames or in new frames of cast iron, fabricated steel or hardwood. They also specialise in the restoration of old frames and fittings wherever possible, preferring to conserve the craftsmanship of past generations where appropriate and combining this with the new where necessary. New bells are cast at Whitechapel and transported to Bridport for hanging.

We understand that 200-300 people (mostly ringers) visited during the day, and nearly £500 was raised for Cancer Research UK.

The Editors

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS NORTH BUCKS BRANCH

Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting held at Leckhampstead on 4th September 2004

Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to Leckhampstead, a beautiful peal of five bells with a superb tone.

In Memoriam

The Chairman asked the meeting to remember Richard Stevens, formerly of Bicester, who has been a supporter of ringing in the area. He asked that Ted Barnett and Pat Chapman, well known by the exercise at large, also be remembered. A few moments of silence were then observed.

Apologies for Absence

Received from Catherine Stanworth, John Stanworth, Michael Tinsley, Ann Mercer, Gillian and Charlie Macdonald, Doug Hird, The Maids Moreton Band, Simon Head, Tine Marchbank, Ros Tyrell, and Edie Robinson.

Minutes of previous Meeting

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Great Linford in March had been published in the August 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 from the Minutes

David Joyce enquired if any progress had been made in appointing a Training Officer. The Chairman reported that no one has been found yet. It was agreed that the authority given to the officers to second a suitable person be extended until the next meeting. It was suggested that any person appointed at this stage of the year be prepared to continue next year in order to make the appointment worthwhile.

Election of New Members

The following nominations had been received:

<u>Tower</u>	<u>Name</u>
Great Brickhill	Simon Irwin

Proposed David Middleton, seconded Richard Stanworth

Tingewick Ian Smart

Proposed Lois Houghton-Brown, seconded Helen Stanworth

They were elected without dissent.

Officers Reports

Secretary The Secretary gave out details of some events which she had received notice of. A Memorial Service for Richard Stevens will be held at Bicester on Sunday 19th September at 6.00 p.m. It is hoped to have ringing before and after the Service. A training course on teaching the early stages of ringing, called Laying the Right Foundations, will be held on 9th October. Some details were put into *In Touch*. If anyone is interested then there may still be a few places available. There is also the possibility that a second course will be held if there is sufficient demand.

Ringing Master The Ringing Master reported on the various competitions that had taken place since the last meeting. We entered the Guild 8 Bell Competition but didn't get through to the final. Hanslope had won the Branch 6 Bell Striking Competition and will go forward to the Guild Competition where they will be defending their title. We had quite a good turn out for the Inter-Branch Competition at Wicken but didn't manage to win either of the trophies. The Chairman commented that he felt we were let down by North Bucks members ringing for the Towcester Branch. However it was pointed out that quite a number of our members are also Towcester Branch members, so they are able to ring for either side.

Treasurer The Treasurer presented an interim account for the Centenary activities. The pig roast made a profit of £54.51 and the Centenary mugs have so far made a profit of £55.10. We started with 180 mugs and have about 40 left to be sold. Income from stalls went a long way to covering the other costs. We are very grateful to those towers who helped out with stalls and sideshows. We are also extremely grateful for the donations received from members of the Centenary committee, both large and small. This has made a big difference to our finances. A collection was taken at the Service towards the Newton Longville ringing gallery but the amount contributed is not available at present. Sheila will try to find out the figure and report this. The loss on the event is currently £122.14 but this will reduce as the remaining mugs are sold. If the bulk of the mugs can be sold then there will actually be a profit on the event.

The Branch Account balance at the Building Society stands at a healthy £1031.31, which is pleasing after the Centenary has taken place. Most towers have paid their 2004 Guild Subscriptions. Four towers remain with subs unpaid – Bletchley, Downs Barn, Leckhampstead, and Wavendon. Contributions towards the Guild Bell Fund will be greatly appreciated – the collecting box will be passed round.

Forthcoming Events

Centenary Dinner – No support has been forthcoming for this event or the alternative fish & chip supper.

An up to date calendar had been circulated to all present. Richard Stanworth reported that all events on this calendar have now been confirmed. Olney is not available in October, so the Practice will be at Lavendon. The Guild ten-bell Competition will be held at Appleton and volunteers are needed to take part. The method will be Grandsire Caters. The calendar for the first quarter of 2005 has yet to be planned and suggestions were invited from the meeting.

After some discussion, the following programme was agreed: Branch Practices: January – Olney; February – Newton Longville; March – Chicheley. Lavendon was suggested for the AGM, with Whaddon as an alternative. Richard asked for helpers for the Steeple Aston Course being held on the 23rd October. Sessions range from Bob Doubles up to Bob Major.

Any Other Business

Derek Stainsby reported that there are now parking restrictions around Loughton Church from 12 noon until 9 pm, Monday to Saturday. This means that the only parking available nearby is the small Church car park opposite the Church. These restrictions have been introduced because Loughton is near to both the football ground and the railway station in order to prevent long term parking in the area.

David Middleton raised the matter of ringing at Bletchley. He had been asked to arrange ringing there for a wedding at the end of July. The Church office had informed him that the bells couldn't be rung "for reasons of health and safety", and he had to inform the family that they could not have bells. This is all because a projector (cost £10,000) is positioned precariously and unprotected in the middle of the gallery, where a stray rope could easily catch it. The ringing gallery is also being used for storage, which is preventing the bells from being rung. He is concerned that we have effectively lost the use of a ring within the Branch. He proposed that letters be written to the incumbent, Archdeacon, and even the Bishop, asking that the gallery be cleared in order to allow ringing to resume.

During discussion on this matter a number of points were raised. The projector is not fixed down, as a permanent fixture would need a faculty. If this was forced on them

then this might make it even more difficult to ring. There is a danger that if we are too confrontational then this might make matters worse than they already are. It is not clear if this is only a temporary problem because the incumbent doesn't like bells. If this is so then, in due course, the incumbent will move on and be replaced by one who is bell friendly. It was thought better to approach the Church and try to ascertain the exact position. We can use the Branch Centenary as a reason to want to ring at Bletchley. An approach can be made asking when we can ring the bells for the Centenary, thus giving them a range of dates when this could be done.

Alan Marchbank offered to approach Bletchley and ask for the bells to ring for the Branch Centenary. The offer was accepted by the meeting.

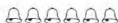
David Middleton also raised the idea of a campanile in Central Milton Keynes. He understood that this was proposed as part of Christ the Cornerstone. He wondered if the Branch should consider this again with the possibility of Heritage Lottery funding. It was agreed that this proposal be put into the next *In Touch* to allow for further discussion. Some of those who remembered the original proposal said that a tower was not part of the Church plan and that it had been considered inappropriate for the type of building. Concerns were also expressed about manning such a tower – we have problems finding enough ringers for the present towers, without adding another one.

David Middleton also announced that the plans to restore Great Brickhill bells were moving forward with an application being made to the ODG Bell Fund at their meeting in September.

David Joyce raised a concern about Downs Barn. He felt embarrassed that we had got help from the Guild in getting the bells put in but that at present it appears that they are not being rung. It was agreed that the Branch should attempt to arrange ringing at Downs Barn in order to ensure that the bells continue to be rung regularly. It was thought that Service times had also been changed and that it might be possible to arrange regular Service ringing. It was clear that not enough was known about the present situation there. Barry Eglesfield agreed to find out the situation at Downs Barn and to organise a regular practice there if possible.

Thanks

Richard Stanworth proposed a vote of thanks to the Leckhampstead band for their hospitality; Valerie Rusden for taking the Service; and to Beth King for playing the organ. The members present showed their appreciation in the usual manner. The Chairman then closed the meeting. Evening ringing was held at Maids Moreton.



North Bucks Branch—Calendar 2004/2005

NOVEMBER	19	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Superlative Surprise Major	Stony Stratford
	27		<i>Ten-Bell Striking Competition Autumn General Committee Meeting</i>	<i>Appleton Kidlington</i>
DECEMBER	*4	2.30	Quarterly Meeting (The time has been changed as agreed at the AGM)	Downs Barn
	17	7.30	Branch Practice Christmas Special—be prepared for anything!	Cosgrove
2005 JANUARY	*21	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Double Norwich Court Bob Major	Olney
FEBRUARY	*18	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Stedman Triples	Newton Longville
MARCH	*5	3.30	Annual General Meeting	Whaddon
	12		<i>Spring General Committee Meeting</i>	<i>Witney & Woodstock Branch</i>
	18	7.30	Branch Practice Special Method: Ipswich Surprise Minor	Chicheley
MAY	2		<i>Guild Open Day & Eight Bell Striking Competition</i>	<i>North Bucks Branch</i>

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