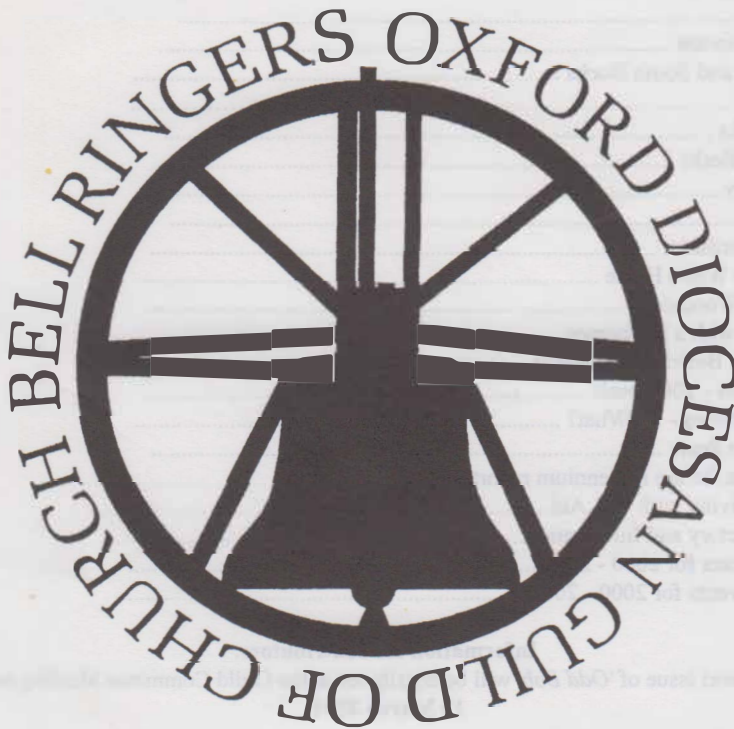


Issue 60

ODD BOB

Newsletter of the



November 2000

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Information for contributors:

The next issue of 'Odd Bob' will be distributed at the Guild Committee Meeting on
10 March 2001.

All contributions to the editor:
Mr A Rex Agg, 25 Wilton Road, Beaconsfield, Bucks HP9 2DE
not later than **12 February 2001.**

*The Editor is very grateful for the assistance of former editor, John Martin, in finalising
the preparation of this issue, and overseeing its printing and distribution.*

Master's Mutterings

Firstly, a big thank you to all who helped with and supported the Guild Festival in July. There have been many very complementary comments on this memorable event. It was good to see the Cathedral as full as it was for the service and also to see so many of the newer members taking part. Hopefully this is an indication that these recent recruits will continue with their ringing after this Millennium year.

Unfortunately we had to cancel the proposed Fun Day because of lack of support. I am not sure if it was an inappropriate type of event or whether it was one event too many at the wrong time of the year. The Millennium Working Group have concluded that it would not be worth trying to organise a similar event again, but there is no patent on what was suggested, so I hope Branches might like to use one or more of the ideas in their future plans. Looking back over the past few years suggests that members are looking for different types of social and ringing events rather than keeping to a fixed pattern. If anyone comes up with a successful idea, please let others know through reports in ODDBOB and Branch Newsletters.

Again the Radley and Easthampstead Courses have been very successful this year with both being over subscribed. It has been very noticeable that the average age of students on these courses has increased over the past few years. This is not entirely unexpected as many of the 'Millennium' recruits have been from the older age ranges and it is pleasing to see how keen they are to progress. However, we do have to remember that teaching older recruits requires some modifications in approach. Firstly, they usually have high expectations of themselves and can become disheartened very easily if they think that they are not progressing quickly enough. It should be remembered that in terms of learning to handle a bell, older students do tend to take longer than younger ones. Constant encouragement, setting realistic targets and giving clear descriptions of what is expected will all help here. Secondly, they quite often have more experience of 'training' situations, quite properly expecting high standards from those who are teaching them and not being too shy to point out deficiencies if they occur. Good planning and keeping the student informed of where they are going are necessary. We also need to take care to create situations where we will be able to retain these learners. One way is to remember that they have a number of skills which can be of great value to a band or a branch and to use these skills. They will stay if they feel they are contributing.

The Millennium year is now drawing to a close, although I suspect a significant number of ringers will make sure that the 'True Millennium' will be rung in with the same enthusiasm as the 'Official Millennium'. The Millennium Project has succeeded in recruiting a significant number of new ringers and we have seen many restoration projects completed over the past few years. What we must do now is to ensure that we continue to build on this success. It will be a great shame if we allow the momentum created by this historical landmark to disappear. We have learnt a lot recently and are in a good position to maintain the developments we have begun. I hope all towers and branches will give careful thought to how they can do this. The Millennium Working Group will be producing a report of the project during the first part of next year. It is intended to distribute a copy to each tower and it is hoped that this may provide some focus for thinking ahead.

John Wells

Jennifer Butler 1946-2000

Jennifer Butler, née Barker, was born on April 3rd 1946 at Thatcham. She was born with congenital cataracts and, but for a timely operation shortly after birth, would have been completely blind. Despite these difficulties with her sight and attendant prejudicial behaviour from others, she did very well academically. Whilst working with Blandy & Blandy, Solicitors, as a solicitor's clerk, she passed all the Legal Executive examinations, qualifying as a Fellow of the Institute. She was unable to take this up as she had passed all the exams in record time and had not spent enough time working on the job!

She began ringing in her late 'teens, after her Confirmation, as an extension of her developing interest in church activities. She also joined The Barfield Handbell Ringers, a tune-ringing group associated with St. Mary's, Thatcham, which was run by Bill Butler, later to become her husband.

Her first steps in change ringing on tower bells were taken under the guidance of Ron Christopher and she found learning to handle a bell quite difficult. This could have been partly due to the problems with her sight. Learning method ringing turned out to be a challenge, too, and she was once told that she would 'never make a ringer'!

When Bill lost his first wife, Audrey, to cancer in 1969, Jennifer was very supportive and baby-sat for his three young children when he had his duties to fulfil as General Secretary to the ODG. She remarked many years later, at a guild social function, that she realized that in marrying Bill, she was also marrying the Oxford Guild. This, in many ways epitomised the extent that personal sacrifice was to play in her life and demonstrated her wonderful sense of humour.



Her ringing career developed at Thatcham under Bill's guidance. She thoroughly enjoyed her peal ringing and made her way through Surprise Major and Royal methods of varying difficulty. The footnote in the comments column of her first peal of Bristol Major was "Jen completes Standard 8 and relinquishes membership of the Rabbits' Guild". Another, typical comment to a peal rung in 1987 by The Alternative Society of College Youths, was rung as a "350th anniversary compliment from the founding members of this society to that more senior and august body with the same initials". She admired the College Youths and had a hankering to become a member, having turned down the offer of membership to the Cumberlands on the grounds that the Duke of Cumberland was responsible for the wholesale slaughter of a nation.

Of her total of 446 peals, 414 were on tower bells. 32 were in-hand, 254 were at Thatcham and 398 were conducted by Bill. Her last peal in February of this year, in which I was privileged to take part, was on handbells. It was intended to be the start of a programme of rehabilitation, but this was not to be. She had also been having problems with the tendons in her forearm, which had effectively put her out of peal ringing and the strain was evident at the end of the handbell

peal. However, typically, her response was "We'll have to get the bell hangers in; that tenor is dropping badly!". Of all her peals she was particularly proud of the three she conducted; Grandsire Triples at Aldermaston, and Plain Bob Major and Grandsire Caters at Thatcham. During the 70s she produced a series of cartoons for *The Ringing World* on *Brer Bellringer*. These cartoons were also in evidence in hospital, largely directed against herself and her illness, for the entertainment of patients and medical staff.

Apart from her ringing, Jennifer shared a life-long interest in books with Bill and was extremely well read. She added her inimitable insights on literature to the poetry reading circle she attended on a Thursday when Bill was off peal ringing. She also did extensive work in the church and voluntary work in the community. After a brief period as Secretary to the Newbury WEA, she became a founding member of the Newbury Volunteer Bureau. In 1980 she helped set up the Thatcham Volunteer Bureau and became their first organiser, serving the Management Committee for eight years and undertaking stints as Chairman and Secretary. In 1975 she became Clerk to the Thatcham Parochial Charities. She implemented a programme which put the Charities on a much sounder financial footing and enjoyed her weekly visits to the alms folk, as they also enjoyed her fun and companionship.

Locally she will be best remembered for her work as Parish Administrator for St. Mary's Thatcham. In the late 1970s the move to reduce the load on the clergy was gaining momentum and in 1981 Thatcham was one of the first parishes in the country to appoint a Parish Administrator. Jennifer was the natural choice; her legal background was ideal, she was a good organiser and her ability to get on with everyone was unsurpassed. She was interested in people and made them aware of it; her interviewing techniques were a delight to watch. Many Thatcham residents' first introduction to the church was through Jennifer and, using her own experiences, she was able to convey to them the fun, happiness and pleasure of belonging. She continued in this job until January 2000. She was also Church Treasurer from 1983 to 1999.

Underlining the whole of Jennifer's life was her strong faith. She firmly believed that "the service started when the bells sounded their paean of praise to God."

The funeral service on October 2nd was celebrated in a packed church. The bells were rung half-muffled and 'whole pull and stand' was rung 35 times for the years that she had been a ringer, 10 during the service and 25 afterward. Ringers from all over the Exercise were represented, also large numbers of the parish and clergy. A course of Little Bob Major on handbells was rung over the coffin. There will be a Memorial Service at Thatcham for her on December 16th.

She loved life, and was very happily married to Bill – they were soul-mates. Unselfish to the end, her great worry was not her death, but the effect it would have on Bill and the others she was leaving behind. Her illness started in July 1999 and she faced it with dignity and courage. Only once did her fortitude falter. On the day she was told she had only days to live she said, "Perhaps God sets a limit to the amount of happiness any couple can have." She was a wonderful, wonderful person and will be missed by so many people.

Bill Butler and Bobbie May

A fund has been established: *The Jenny Butler Memorial Fund*.

Anyone wishing to donate to this should send cheques to Thatcham PCC at:

St Mary's Church Office, Friendship House, 7 Church Gate, Thatcham, Berks. RG19 3PN

The Guild Festival - July 8th 2000

Traditionally the Oxford Diocesan Guild's Annual Festival was held at the Cathedral in Oxford. However, in recent years other venues have been used (St Nicolas, Newbury being the first to break the mould when it celebrated its 900th anniversary in 1986), with only occasional visits to "headquarters".

However, Millennium year was thought to be a 'must' for the Cathedral and the Master, John Wells, began making preliminary arrangements with the Cathedral authorities more than two years ago so that July 8th would be secured for this special occasion. It was also decided to arrange a Festival Lunch at Christ Church to add to the celebrations. It was indeed a special and not-to-be-repeated event which captured the imagination of the membership and we turned out in force.

Ringling was brisk at St Ebbe and St Aldate, where we had to finish right on the stroke of 10.30 because some Oxford music students were still doing exams. Those who arrived early managed a ring in the Cathedral before the service touch was rung - Stedman Cinques conducted by the Deputy Master, Ken Davenport.

The main body of the Cathedral was packed for the Festival Eucharist. The celebrant was the Ven. Norman Russell, Archdeacon of Berkshire, who had been recruited at a dedication service earlier in the year when he demonstrated a great affinity with bell ringers, their art and their mission. His theme was 'The Unchanging God and Change', the need to go forward and yet retain the eternal truths. He was supported in the Eucharist by chalice bearers Willie Haynes from Otmoor and Brian Gatward (Honorary General Treasurer) from Theale. The Old Testament passage was read by Barry Cowper (Honorary General Secretary), the Gospel by Ken Davenport and the intercessions were led by the Master.

During the summer holidays the Cathedral Singers of Christ Church replace the Cathedral Choir. We thank Michelle Ellender for being the go-between and organist, Robert Webb, for giving us some wonderful music. The Mass of Vittoria was supplemented during the taking of Communion with the beautiful *Ave Verum Corpus* of William Byrd, and the *Ubi Caritas* and *Tantum Ergo* of Maurice Duruflé. We were ushered out in fine style with the *Toccata* from Boëllmann's *Suite Gothique*.

A group photograph was organised in the Quad immediately after the service and, with about 200 people, this was no easy matter. Credit here goes to the photographer, Paul Lucas, for getting us through quickly and with humour.

The meal that followed was in Christ Church Great Hall, an experience in itself, and 188 Guild members sat down to a lunch which was efficiently dispensed. After the meal the Master asked us to be upstanding for the Loyal Toast and that was followed by a toast to the Guild which was proposed by Bill Butler. Bill, known throughout the exercise, was the obvious person to do this. He has held most of the senior posts in the Guild, including Master, Secretary and Librarian and, now a Vice-President, is our resident historian, having written the history of the Guild's first 100 years. [*The text of his speech is appended - Ed.*]

Formalities over, we returned to the other business of the day, that of ringing in the City of Oxford. Lincoln College was next on the agenda and the ringing room was bursting at the seams.

Unfortunately New College were 'off' because of a wedding and the key at St Cross had mysteriously disappeared, so we were locked out. Apologies were later received from both venues for these totally unforeseen disappointments. Some people decided to take a tea break and were rewarded with a good ring at Carfax tower, several even venturing to the top to gain a glorious view of Oxford.

Thanks for the smooth running of the day must in great part go to Barry Cowper, who quietly goes about his business making sure that things happen. The Master, John Wells, must also take great credit for getting the other hundreds of little jobs done that make so much difference on these occasions. Particular thanks also to David and Katie Lane and members of the Oxford Society for acting as good humoured stewards in the face of large numbers of ringers and the couple of unfortunate hiccups with the towers.

As more than one member remarked, this was a particularly memorable event for a special year.
Bobbie May

This article, with minor alterations, was printed in The Ringing World on July 28th 2000.

The following is the text of Bill Butler's speech, proposing the health of the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers, at the Guild Festival lunch at Christ Church Hall, Oxford.

'Master, Ladies and Gentlemen.

'When I considered why the Master had invited me to propose this toast of the Oxford Diocesan Guild I realised it was probably because I was getting on a bit, or what I would describe as elderly and some of you as old! However, there are currently only a few Guild members dashing around the country ringing peals who could claim that they had rung with founder members of the Guild and people who had attended the very first Guild Festival, 119 years ago.

'When I started ringing 55 years ago there were just a few of these old ringers left: one I particularly remember was Thomas Trollope, then in his eighties, who had been taught to ring as a boy by Washbrook. Thomas gave some books which formed the nucleus of the Guild Library, and was made one of the Guild Vice-Presidents. He lived on until he was in his mid-nineties.

'I'd like to spend a few minutes thinking about some of these 19th century ringers and comparing them with us today, and I'd like to do this through looking at the Guild Objectives.

'In 1881 the Guild framed just three objectives. First, they placed "The recognition of ringers as church officers"; the second was "To cultivate the art of change-ringing", and the third was "To promote belfry reform where needed". In true Miss World style I'd like to consider these in reverse order.

'In the late 19th century, belfry reform was considered to be urgently required. Ringers in general had a bad reputation - even worse than some of us have now! Guild members could only be elected on the recommendation of their parish priest who had to confirm that they were of good character. This had to be backed up by a reputable member of the Guild who also had to vouch for their ringing expertise. Not everyone who applied was admitted: one capable change-ringer

was turned down several times because his incumbent thought he spent too much time in the public house!

'We are less critical today. Most new members are admitted on the proposition of their tower captain and elected on the nod. The Guild enrolls about 300 new members each year and loses about the same number, so perhaps we should examine the applications of those applying for membership more critically. However, I think I can report that ringers have a much better overall image in the 21st century than they did in the late 19th.

'The Guild's second objective in 1881 was to increase the number of change-ringers. In the year 2000 this has moved down to be our third objective. In the last 100 years or so change-ringing has expanded beyond a 19th century ringer's wildest dreams. Back in the Guild's early days many, many towers only rang call-changes from cards. The zeal with which some of the early Guild missionaries tried to convert these ringers to change-ringing lost some of them and closed their towers. Eventually they got it right and more towers went over from ringing call-changes to change-ringing. However, it took many years and when I started ringing in 1945 only a few towers could regularly ring more than Grandsire or Plain Bob. A branch band was required to ring Stedman, and only the strongest branches could manage Surprise.

'From the late 1950s onwards there was a positive explosion of ringing new methods to peals which raised standards both in method ringing and striking. Some people consider peals to be detrimental towards Sunday Service ringing, but the knowledge that boundaries are being extended always acts as a spur. In my younger days I was interested in athletics and can well remember when the record time for running a mile was over four minutes. When Roger Bannister broke the four minute barrier in 1953 here in Oxford it gave a tremendous boost to the sport and was the start of a new Elizabethan age.

'The 1960s and 1970s saw new ringers elected to run the Guild. The retiring officers, steeped in Victorian mode, had performed sterling service, but it was time for new ideas. The traditional monthly practice, based on ringing, service, tea, meeting, followed by more ringing, had lost some of its appeal for ringers who had less time to spare. The Guild started an Education Committee which ran one-day courses, weekend courses and LEA courses. Striking contests were arranged - to a 19th century officer it would have been unthinkable to hold a striking contest.

'Teaching methods have improved and with them the overall standard of ringing in the diocese. We still have towers struggling with the basics, but the Guild can and will help them. At the other end of the scale we have some individual towers who can muster a local band far more capable than a Guild-wide band of 50 years ago.

'In 1881 the Guild placed as its prime objective "The recognition of the true position of ringers as church officers". The Guild still has that as an objective but has now modified it and placed it after all the others. It now reads: "The recognition of ringers as church workers".

'I think the founders of the Guild expressed it better. They had seen the effect of the reforms that had taken place in the Church of England following the Oxford Movement in the 1830s. The bands of singers which had led the services had been cast aside and replaced with robed choirs; the teams of instrumentalists had been supplanted by organists. In the period between this being done and the Guild being founded, choirs and organists had gained in stature and had gained a voice in church matters. The Guild's founders wanted this to happen with ringers.

'But did it? Are ringers now regarded in the same light as all other church organisations? Do clergy really consider the work of ringers as important as that of the choir, the organist, the servers and the sidesmen, or do they just pay lip service to it as a principle? If they had to choose between losing the choir or the ringers, which would they choose? Personally I have always considered the service as starting when the bells first pull off for Sunday ringing; when we all begin our praise to God. Have we got this message across to everyone else connected with the church - do we in fact believe it ourselves?

'It has long been a contention of mine that many tower captains are extremely well qualified, and have as much experience in ringing matters as organists have in their field. How many tower captains do you know who are under contract to their church like their organist? I agitated for many years for this to happen at Thatcham - not for the money (I promised to pay this all back with the tax rebate), but for the recognition of all ringers. Do we in the Guild place enough importance on our fifth objective?

'When the Guild started in 1881, one man above all others got it started on a firm foundation. That man was not Revd F E Robinson, although his is the name which is probably remembered most. It was Revd Dolben Paul, now almost completely forgotten. He was the man who wrote literally hundreds of letters to ringers and influential people all over the diocese gathering their support. He spoke here at the first Guild Festival, commenting that his ancestor, John Paul, is probably the only ringer whose portrait is in this hall. Dolben Paul was very proud of the fact that there had been a ringer in every generation of his family since that time, although sadly the line died out with him.

'It was due to men like him that the Guild was founded on a firm foundation. Subsequent generations of ringers have carried the Guild on. In the 1920s the Editor of *The Ringing World* wrote that 'What the Oxford Guild does today, the Exercise will do tomorrow'. We ran the first ringing courses in the 1920s, our Restoration Fund dates from 1926, our Bell Fund now has had an enormous impact on bell restorations within the diocese and, tongue in cheek, our peal ringers keep *The Ringing World* going! I'm proud to have been associated with this Guild all my ringing life, and I'm sure you are all equally proud too. Let us drink a toast to 'The Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers'.

The Oxford Diocesan Bell Fund (Registered Charity No. 268390)

The Trustees have met twice this year. Provisional grants have been allocated to:

Banbury	£150	Great Milton *	£4,000
Brightwell Baldwin	£2,900	Iffley *	£580
Brightwalton	£750	Leckhampstead *	£580
Chilton	£4,750	Stewkley **	£4,500
Farnham Royal	£1,300	Weston Turville	£325

The Managing Trustees have advised applicants that in view of the large number of other grants that have been paid during 1999-2000, the grants marked * will not be paid until 2002 and the one grant marked ** will not be paid until 2003, irrespective of when the projects are completed. New money raised to September 2000 amounted to £17,533.93. A major item within this figure

is the legacy of £10,000.00 from the estate of the late Henry Lawrensen. Henry had the vision that led to the formation of the Bell Fund. He was the Chair of Trustees during the formative years of the Bell Fund and retained a close personal interest in its activities. The Trustees, in agreement with Henry's family, have itemised this legacy within the assets of the Bell Fund so that the name 'Henry Lawrensen' will be remembered in future years.

The Draw realised £1411.60. The Managing Trustees wish to express their special thanks to the organisers of the Draw, June and Stephen Rossiter, and to the following Branches for donating prize money: Banbury, Bicester, Chiltern, Chipping Norton, East Berks and South Bucks, Old North Berks, Oxford City, Reading and Vale of the White Horse. The annual Ringing Day realised £595.00 and thanks are due to all those who helped to make this a successful event.

The income from the Sponsored Quarter Peals amounted to £1,872.67. This event is held every Leap Year. South Oxon (with £2.35 per member) were presented with the shield, which is awarded to the Branch that raised the most money per member. In summary, 6 Branches supported the event by raising:

Chiltern	£175.00	Sonning Deanery	£56.50
East Berks & South Bucks	£888.60	South Oxon	£294.50
Reading	£377.57	Vale of the White Horse	£80.50

Other donations received from Branches totalled £2,068.71. Donations from 13 PCCs amounted to £312.00 and 7 tower funds have contributed £384.00. Covenanted donations of £377.00 have been received from individuals. Donations totalling £294.95 were received in memory of the late Mr F W R Keen of Chinnor. The collection from the Guild Festival was shared with the Cathedral authorities. The Bell Fund received £120, together with a letter of appreciation for the support to the Cathedral from the Dean's secretary.

Grants have been paid to Banbury, Buscot, Cuddington, Dinton, Great Tew, Grendon Underwood, Headington, Little Milton, Nettlebed, Purley, Shrivenham, Soulbury and Wallingford.

The Managing Trustees would like to thank all those who contributed to the continued success of the Fund. As can be seen from this report, 2000 is an outstanding year for the Bell Fund.

Brian Gatward

Group personal accident insurance

The Guild has arranged Group Personal Accident Insurance cover via Ecclesiastical Insurance Group for Guild members.

Scope of coverage

Guild members are covered whilst ringing or attending to routine maintenance work to the bells in any church or bell tower, or whilst travelling to or from a church or bell tower to practice or take part in bell ringing anywhere in the United Kingdom. ("Routine maintenance" means any works for which approval in accordance with the Care of Churches Measure is not required - separate cover can be arranged where needed in connection with these more major items of work).

Insurance is extended to include members teaching bell ringing and persons under instruction by a Guild member at a church or bell tower within the Diocese of Oxford.

The members of the Towers and Belfries Committee are specifically covered for carrying out their duties on behalf of the Guild.

Benefits payable in the event of a claim

<i>Age Range (years)</i>	<i>Temporary Total Disablement</i>	<i>Permanent Disablement</i>	<i>Death</i>
16-70	£100 per week for up to 104 weeks	£10,000	£10,000
9 - 16	Nil	£500	£500
71-75	Nil	£1,000	£1,000
76-80	Nil	Nil	£1,000

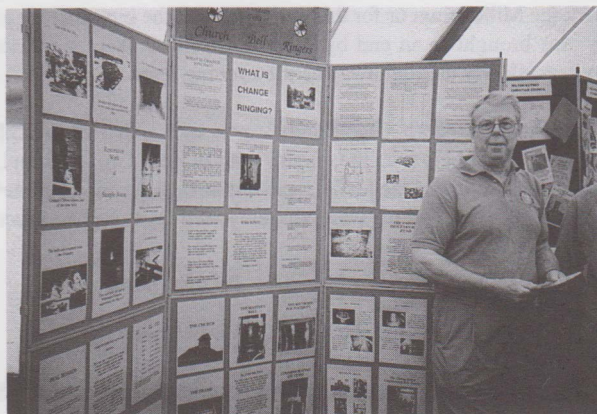
Claims and queries concerning the operation of the insurance

Claims and queries should be directed in the first instance to the Honorary General Treasurer, contact details on page 31.

Claims must be confirmed in writing.

Please remember that it is a condition of all policies that claims must be reported to the Insurers as soon as practicable. A claim that is not notified within a reasonable time may be rejected.

Pentecost 2000



Sunday, June 11th 2000 was a bright but breezy day when some 15 000 people gathered throughout the morning and early afternoon at the Bucks County Showground at Weedon. just

north of Aylesbury, to join in the celebration of Pentecost 2000. Churches of all denominations from all parts of Buckinghamshire had decided to come together on that day to take part in an Act of Praise in mid afternoon, to enjoy the various exhibitions which had been set up in tents all around the open arena, to listen to several different groups performing on the covered stage, and just to socialise and soak up the atmosphere. The Guild mounted its display boards and there was a good degree of interest shown. It remains to be seen whether the number of pamphlets handed out brings in any new recruits but, in any event, it was an ideal opportunity to raise the profile of the Guild in the eyes of a large number of people.

The previous evening and night had been set aside for the younger element to take part in a disco and many had stayed the whole time. There were some fairly jaded faces around by Sunday morning but the entertainment continued unabated, leading up to the Opening Ceremony, performed by Kathy Staff of Nora Batty fame, and followed by a pair of parachute jumpers who nearly made it to the large cross set out for them but landed safely nevertheless.

Once the sound system had been properly adjusted, four Guild members (Pat and Robert Newton and Angela and Ken Darvill) had a 15-minute slot, centre stage, to ring a handbell introduction to the main event of the day, a joint act of worship. They rang a touch of Kent Treble Bob Major which was heard loud and clear close to the stage and was certainly audible over the speakers by the majority of those present. Those present appreciated and enjoyed this well-presented example of an art not too often demonstrated to as large an audience as this.



An impressive parade of Church Banners, many of which had been designed and made specifically to mark the Millennium or for this event, formed the introductory procession for the Service. The day was brought to an end by a concert from Graham Kendrick which a large number stayed to hear, slowly drifting away as the evening wore on.

My thanks are due to Pat and Robert, Angela and Ken, as well as to Tim and Gill Pett who came all the way from Abingdon to help man the display, and to Ruth Groves from Little Missenden who also took her turn handing out the leaflets and answering questions at the stand. This was quite literally an unique occasion which was extremely well organised and successfully staged, making for a memorable day out.

Barry Cowper

Oxford D. G. 10-bell Competition

This year's 10-bell competition was a departure from previous years, in that it has now become separated from the Guild Festival Day. It was thought that an over-long day might have been a factor in deterring branches from entering. As it was, four teams entered from East Berks & South Bucks, Old North Berks, North Bucks and Reading, thus doubling last year's entry. Only time will judge if this is a winning formula.

The competition was held on the augmented, light ten at St. Thomas' Oxford and judges were Paul and Kate Flavell from Kingston-on-Thames; the test piece, Grandsire Caters. The judges marked the ringing in percentages and had four criteria for judging the work of the competing bands: Leading, Ringing at the same speed, Accuracy of method, and Ringing as a team. They pronounced the over-all standard to be very good, though individual remarks were revealingly perceptive!

Of the first team, Old North Berks, they said that the opening rounds were good, but that the little bells clipped once they went into the method. The speed was good, but uneven and not all were ringing at the same speed, with the little bells having a tendency to rush.

East Berks & South Bucks used their practice time well. A trippy start was soon rectified with some nice measured ringing. The bigger bells were not close enough to the smaller ones, but the second half settled with some good ringing.

Did North Bucks overshoot their practice time? There was a hesitant start with quick back-stroke leads and some hesitations in the middle of the row. The ringing settled and recovered from a later hiccup, with the ringing improving towards the end.

Reading made excellent use of their practice time. The ringing was fast and the judges wondered whether this momentum could be maintained. The ringing opened up with no clipping from the little bells. Good, crisp ringing enabled the music of the touch to come through. There were occasional blemishes, but on the whole it was superb ringing.

The results:

- | | |
|--------------------|-------|
| 1. Reading | 92% |
| 2. EBSB | 87% |
| 3. Old North Berks | 74.8% |
| 4. North Bucks | 62%. |



After the results, Ken Davenport, Deputy Guild Master, thanked the judges and gave them a token. Alex Byrne, captain of the Reading team, would have come forward to receive the trophy,

if it had been returned by the previous winners!

Bobbie May

ODG 6-bell Competition Final 2000

Saturday 7th October saw the final of the Guild's 6-bell competition at Brightwell Baldwin in the South Oxon Branch. Each branch enters a tower band and this representative is selected by some kind of competition. Thirteen of the 15 branches eligible were able to send a band and heats were held at Great Haseley and Little Milton. Rumours were soon abroad that the competition was fierce and the results of the heats very close.

Nobody envied the judges, Andrew Craddock from Hursley and Philip Gorrod from Winchester Cathedral, as they set about their task of judging the final at Brightwell Baldwin. This six isn't the easiest ring of bells, but all the competitors rose to the occasion. There was very little criticism of the ringing and the judges did admit that they were not unanimous in their reading of the faults and an average was taken. Andrew did say of most of the teams that in any other circumstances, that is outside the *crème de la crème* of the Oxford Guild, they would be outright winners.

Thanks for the smooth running of the day must go to Hilarie Rogers, who organized the towers and excellent running buffet, and Ken Davenport, Deputy Guild Master, who saw to all other aspects of the competition.

The results were (and they really were as close as this!):

1 High Wycombe 22 faults –
(Grandsire
Doubles)

2 Hanslope 23 faults –
(Grandsire Doubles)

3 Reading 27 faults –
(Cambridge Minor)

4 Aston Clinton 41 faults –
(Plain Bob Minor)

5 Faringdon 45 faults –
(Grandsire Doubles)

6 Newbury 49 faults –
(Plain Bob Doubles).



Also competing in what was the most fiercely fought competition in many years were Drayton St. Leonard, Bicester, Marston, Aylesbury, Easthampstead, Appleton and Stonesfield.

Bobbie May

The Oxford Diocesan Guild's Millennium Beer Project

It was about two year's ago now that the Oxford Diocesan Guild's Millennium Working Group, set up to explore ways of celebrating January 1st 2000, was presented with the idea of commissioning a special brew from the Hook Norton Brewery, a suggestion which was agreed without a great deal of argument and Graham Clifton agreed to talk to the Brewery and explore the possibilities. He discovered that half of one of the Brewery's "Summer Special" brews would amount to 760 cases, each case being 12 half-litre bottles of 5%ABV ale. The idea of selling that number of cases seemed a little daunting but it was agreed that we should see how far we could get, arranging a date with the Brewery by which we could cancel the whole idea.

One potential problem was that the Guild, naturally perhaps, did not have a licence for selling the beer and we therefore agreed with Hook Norton that the sales would be made through their shop. The beer would be held for us and collection would take place as soon as possible after it had been bottled, labelled and was ready for consumption, all of which should come together in mid-June this year.

Circulars were sent round to all branches of the Guild, giving details and we waited to see what would happen. To start with there was not a very encouraging response but, as the cut-off date approached, appropriate reminders were dispatched and 550 packs were ordered in time for us to give the go-ahead.

Meanwhile it was necessary to think up a name for the brew and to get a special label prepared. Several suggestions for names were put forward from various quarters and included a number of puns, such as "Grandsire Tipples". It was finally agreed that the beer should be called "Ringers' Delight" and the slogan "Ring in the New with Strikingly Good Ale" should be added. A competition for a design was organised among Guild members and the winner from several entries was Rosemary Henson of Ludgershall, who came up with a very attractive label which encompassed all the legal requirements for labelling as well as incorporating the Guild Logo, a steeped tower, a large golden bell crossed by the number 2000, the whole surrounded by a representation of a sally in two shades of gold. It was very effective. Second prize went to Derek Clements of Kintbury.

A regular procession of members called at the Brewery on July 1st, taking away a goodly proportion of the cases. It is a measure of the success of the project and the attraction of the brew that some members took extra cases on the day, whilst a lot returned for a second tranche after their first tasting with the result that all 760 cases were sold within three weeks. A great result and people are still asking for more - sadly having to be turned away.

I hear that even some confirmed lager drinkers have converted to this ale, whilst there is at least one person who has never liked beer at all who now drinks this one. However, there was one who professed not to like it, but no matter as her husband is delighted!

A large debt of gratitude is due to Graham Clifton for his hard work in securing this very special means of commemorating the Millennium. The story will form part of the history of the Oxford Guild's celebration of the turn of the millennium, a history which is shortly to be prepared recording all the events which took place within the Guild around January 1st 2000 and during the rest of the year.

Barry Cowper

Guild Library

Many thanks to those who have sent copies of your branch newsletters. If any other branches would like copies of your newsletters to be kept in the library, please send them to me (*see Librarian in Guild Officers' listing for contact details*).

Unfortunately I still don't have the library as yet; there are problems getting the boxes to convey the stock in. However, there is nothing that can't be solved and I hope to have the books before too long. When I get them I will look at how books can be conveyed to people who want to borrow them. If anybody has any questions or comments about the library, please contact me.

Doug Beaumont

News from the Branches

Banbury

It doesn't seem more than five minutes since the last *Odd Bob* – that policemen were getting younger used to be regarded as a sign of increasing age, but I think an apparent increased frequency of *Odd Bobs* is a better indication.

What has been happening at the “sharp end” over the summer?

The Banbury Branch was formed when five towers joined together in June 1925, so we have just had our 75th birthday. This was marked by quarter peals being rung in 20 of the towers, involving as many local ringers as possible. It was a good effort.

Our Branch 6-bell striking competition was hosted by Rousham in July, and followed by a magnificent Bar-B-Q in the beautiful gardens of Rousham Manor. We are grateful to the owner for his hospitality, the Rousham ringers for their organisation, and to our Guild Master and his wife for judging. If only the weather had cooperated - it was an evening for winter woollies. For those interested in these things, Steeple Aston won again.

As far as tower news is concerned, Banbury are now having practices every Wednesday at 7.30, and Mollington have changed from Wednesday to 2nd and 4th Thursdays. Tadmarton bells are currently being rehung by Whites, and will be dedicated on Sunday 5th November.

We are due to have our half-yearly meeting, as I write this, and will be having our Annual Branch outing to Leicester in November. I hope it is well supported

We continue to have regular monthly practices, which are reasonably well supported by the same familiar faces – I don't know how we get the newer towers to join us, but I'm sure this is not peculiar to us!

Ian Rodrick

Bicester

The half-yearly meeting of the branch was held at Bicester on Thursday, 5th October with some 20 members in attendance. A discussion took place on the merits of using e-mail for the

circulation of relevant information. There were some doubts in regard to cost inflicted on those required to activate the messages and passing printed copies off to their respective towers. It was agreed, however, to proceed and highlight any problems as they arise.

The branch is pleased to welcome two new members from Souldern - Reginald Coleman and Kevin Fellows. We wish them a happy and constructive time during their membership of the Guild/Branch. We were also pleased to welcome Sarah and Anthony Cole to the branch following their recent marriage. They have moved to Bicester, and are now transferred from the Witney and Woodstock Branch.

Two members have left the area. Philip Toogood of Kirtlington has moved to the Northampton area, and Captain Michael Milne has completed his tour of duty with the staff of Bicester Parish Church. Thanks are extended from the branch to both for their time with us, and best wishes go with them for the future.

The branch autumn outing was held on Saturday, 21st October when ringing was enjoyed at Church Enstone, Wiggington, Great Tew and Hook Norton. Our thanks are due to the church authorities for allowing us to ring, and to Keith Thomas, our Deputy Ringing Master, for making the arrangements.

We now look forward to the ringing for the Christmas period, and the end or the beginning of the millennium - depending on how your counting system works!

Richard Stevens

Central Bucks

The branch membership has continued to increase throughout the year and now stands at around 220.

Branch practises have been held each month. We held our branch 6 bell striking competition in June which Aylesbury won and then represented the branch at the Guild competition in October.

Unfortunately they were knocked out in the heat – the standard of ringing this year was very high.

A very enjoyable and well supported annual outing took place in September. We were lucky to have a very nice sunny day and we visited 5 towers in the North Kent area – ringing for a wedding at one of them! Our thanks to Mark Sellin and Peter Fay for their organisation.

In October the Orchard Cup striking competition was held, this year it was the turn of the Chiltern branch to host it. Aylesbury were the only team that entered from the Central Bucks branch. Congratulations to the Aston Clinton Gentlemen team who won again this year.

As this is the last *Odd Bob* of the year on behalf of all the ringers and officers of the Central Bucks branch I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Ann Pedley

Chiltern

The Branch was very saddened by the death of Marion Ellisdon, formerly a ringer at Slapton and latterly Cheddington. Slapton church was full with many standing for her funeral. Much was said

of her great qualities, her courage, her public service and her dedication to ringing bells. Her friends and fellow ringers miss her very much.

Both 8-bell and Branch practices have been well supported over the last four months and a good training session was held at Ellesborough on 29th July.

Our two augmentation projects, mentioned in the last *Odd Bob*, are going well. Weston Turville's new bell should be cast soon and Aston Clinton are deep into fund-raising projects.
More anon.

Mike Davis

Chipping Norton

The 100th birthday of the Queen Mother was celebrated by the towers in the branch by the ringing of call changes, quarter peals and a full peal of Grandsire Triples, all taking place on the day or over the weekend.

In September at Chadlington local ringers rang a quarter peal as a retirement compliment to the Revd T. Thornton, the vicar of the parishes of Chadlington, Ascott-under-Wychwood and Spelsbury. We all wish him a happy retirement in Cumbria.

Less than a week later another quarter peal was being rung at Churchill, this time in welcome for the Revd Tony Cannon to the parishes of Kingham and Churchill.

The attendance at branch practices has been variable, with some only having enough to ring the bells available!

The Branch annual dinner took place in October and was well attended with many ringers bringing their partners. It was held at the Cross Hands Inn, Salford Hill. All those attending had a good time and the rumours about the huge portions of food were all true!

Barry Andrews

East Berks and South Bucks

Several striking competitions have taken place since the last edition of *Odd Bob*. In June, five teams contested the Branch 6-bell competition at Chalfont St Peter. Our thanks go to John Peverett of Watford and Sue Morton of Bushey for judging. The results were: 1. High Wycombe (28 faults), 2. Beaconsfield (33), 3. Bray (70), 4. a scratch band (87) and 5. Fulmer (144).

Congratulations go to our Branch band, ably led by Guy Darvill of Beaconsfield, which won the Guild Under-18 Striking Competition at North Hinksey in July.

In October we held the final of our knock-out striking competition, the Lorna Newton contest. Two teams had to withdraw in the last few days because of "staff shortages", so only four of the expected six bands were present at Hambleden. We are grateful to Simon Feather of Warfield for judging and to the local ringers for the superb tea provided. The results were: 1. Lane End, 2. Bray, 3. Stoke Poges and 4. Cookham. Thanks also to Robert Newton who presented the cups in memory of his aunt and uncle. The competition was followed by the Half-yearly meeting and evening ringing at Henley.

In April serious damage was sustained at High Wycombe when the crown staple of the tenor clapper broke and the clapper was caught between the rim of the bell and part of the frame. Fortunately, although a chunk of metal was broken out of the rim of the bell, the bell was not cracked. Repairs were carried out by Whites of Appleton and all 12 bells were back in action again for practice on 31st July.

We have continued to hold our regular branch practices, most of them well attended, and it has been possible to ring a wide range of methods. Now we are looking forward to some sponsored ringing for the BBC Children in Need Appeal, to a Christmas Social at Amersham and to a Post-Christmas Outing.

Pat Moore

Newbury

The Newbury branch AGM was held at East Garston on the 14th October, with a record attendance for recent years of 40 members, plus Ken Davenport representing the Guild. East Garston is one of five "phoenix" towers in the branch which have resurrected themselves from scratch in time for the millennium, the others being Beenham, Aldermaston, Yattendon and Lambourn. It now has a very lively band who have set a very high standard for future branch teas! It was fitting that they should be presented on this occasion with the Richard Marshall Shield which they won at the Striking Competition in June. The main tower competition was won by Newbury, followed closely by Bucklebury. The contest was held at Beenham, where Marcus Allum and his crew provided a superb barbecue - anyone looking for a good butcher within reach of Tilehurst need do no more than follow their lead. Newbury went on to come 6th in the Guild six bell contest in October.

At the AGM we held a minutes silence for three members who had died in the last year. The most well known in the Guild was of course Jenny Butler, for whom there will be a memorial service on December 16th, and the collection at the service went towards her memorial fund. Jenny had been so much a part of the life of both Thatcham and the Newbury branch for over thirty years, and it is still hard to understand that she is no longer with us. Her bubbly personality and wonderful sense of humour thankfully never deserted her, and our thoughts were very much with Bill, who could not be with us. The other two members remembered were Brian Clements from Peasmore, and Martin Goodwin from Newbury, both stalwarts in their own towers.

There were a couple of officer changes - Richard Marshall had decided to step down as Chairman as his other commitments have meant that he does not have the time he would like to devote to the post. He has been replaced by Adam Rae-Smith, but we are very grateful that he has agreed to stay on the committee as Vice-Chairman to offer his help, advice and support. Nick Holland also stepped down as Secretary, as he and Sarah want to be able to keep their future plans and movements open after their recent wedding. He has been replaced by Rosemary Maslen from Beenham - Rosemary and her husband Chris learnt to ring a couple of years ago and are already experienced quarter peelers.

All in all, the year 2000 and its approach seems to have breathed new life into the Newbury branch - every ringable bell was rung at the midday service - an achievement which seemed impossible to achieve a few years ago when the project was first discussed.

Adam Rae-Smith

North Bucks Branch

We were invited to a joint surprise major practice with the Luton District of the Bedfordshire Association at Woburn in July. This was well enough attended to justify holding another joint practice in January, this time at Bletchley, we hope. These will continue so long as the attendance warrants them.

The honours were divided this year at our annual inter branch competition against the Towcester Branch which was held at Hanslope. They won the George Holland Stedman Trophy whilst we won the Jack Green Trophy for the overall competition. It was generally agreed that the competition was quite close this year. It is also pleasing to see so many members taking part.

Many members attended a pleasant evening at Stowe in August to celebrate Bill Yates' 80th birthday. In addition a coach load of ringers and friends took Bill on a mystery tour which ended up with dinner on the 'Master Cutler' whilst it journeyed from Loughborough to Leicester and return on the old Great Central Railway.

Our September Quarterly meeting was held at Lillingstone Lovell, with afternoon ringing at Leckhampstead. Being at the end of the holiday and outing season, this meeting was not as well supported as some. However a pleasant afternoon was had by those attending.

Our congratulations to the Hanslope band who achieved second place in the Guild six bell striking competition, the best result for our branch for some time.

Helen Stanworth

Old North Berks

The Branch was well represented at the Guild Festival held in Oxford on the 8th of July. Many ringers enjoyed ringing at the towers before the service at Christchurch, and had lunch in the Hall. Ringing in the afternoon was a bit of a disappointment due to a cancellation and the non-arrival of a key to unlock a tower. Despite this it was still a very memorable day.

The half-day outing and barbecue on the 22nd July was a great success, although the arranging of the towers proved a bit of a headache. The first tower, Chieveley, had to be replaced with Compton. The second tower was cancelled, replaced, and cancelled yet again, so the ringers took liquid refreshment and relaxed at a nearby public house. The rest of the day carried on uneventfully at Purley, South Stoke and Goring. About 20 ringers or more enjoyed the day's ringing. Then it was back to the home of Peter and Louise Butler at Blewbury for the barbecue. This was indeed a very pleasant evening spent with good food, drink and cheerful company. The weather was kind to the 35 people who came along, and allowed several of us to enjoy games of skittles on Peter's skittle alley. Some even dared to try Peter's mock 'bell' hanging in his garage. One person, who shall remain nameless, would surely have broken the stay - had there been one!

Our next social event is a Quiz Night to be held at Radley Village Hall on Saturday, 18th November. Hopefully this will be as well attended as our past autumn socials have been.

Regarding Chilton, the bells have now been removed from the tower and work is progressing in the church in readiness for their return. Unfortunately there will now be quite a delay until their

return - possibly the beginning of December, and the provisional date for their dedication is New Year's Eve. At the present time it is hoped the bells will be available to the Branch for ringing in the New Year on 1st January 2001 from 10.00 am to midday. If they are not ready in time, then ringing will be at Milton instead.

Regarding Milton, plans are going ahead for the rehangng of the bells and other associated work. They will either have a complete new eight, or dispose of the front two, have the back four tuned, and add four new bells. Both schemes would involve scrapping the wooden frame. The cost will be around £50 000 for the bell work and at least four new bells. They have secured a promise of money to pay for the clock work and the ringing platform, so need only the money for the bells.

This branch and the Reading Branch have now agreed to the transfer of Moultsford into the Reading Branch. Hopefully this will be discussed and confirmed at the Guild General Committee Meeting in November.

Shirley Haines

Oxford City

There have been several ringing outings over the last few months; Marston took in the picturesque settings of towers bordering the Thames from Purley up to the watercress beds of Ewelme and members from across the Branch enjoyed a variety of Buckinghamshire towers and a meal together in Beaconsfield. Earlier in the year two Marston ringers rang their first quarters, Ailsa Reid and Peter Lloyd. A quarter was rung at Marston to celebrate the life of Betty Deam, mother of stalwart St Nicholas ringers Noel and Hugh, who passed away in April. Although not a ringer herself she actively encouraged her sons to learn to ring, the pursuit having skipped a couple of generations in the family.

Kidlington like many other towers rang to celebrate the Queen Mother's centenary on 4th August. On Saturday 24th June they also accomplished a peal of Surprise Cleaners Major, details are set out below, but not published in The Ringing World. Kidlington tower was open for the village flower festival, but despite plenty of visitors, no new recruits were forthcoming. Peter Franklin informs me that they are looking forward to ringing in the new millennium in 2001.

Regular practices at St Aldate are now able to take place on 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month – not only do we have emergency lighting, but we have proper lighting too! Anyone wishing to join the practices and finding the north door shut should wait until a gap in the ringing and then shout up to us!

ST. MARY'S BELLRINGERS.

On Saturday June 24th, 2000.

A peal of Surprise Cleaners Major
was carried out in 3 hrs 30mins

Mop	Rachel Woodforde
Dusters	Victoria & Ian Davey Wilson
Refreshments	Jane Marlow
Broom	Rev Anthony Ellis
Dustpan	Ron Burgess
Stepladder	Andy Broadbent
Handbrush	Peter Franklin
Hoover	Tony Stewart

A top to bottom well done

Katie Lane

Reading

One of the hot and sunny days of the summer was chosen for our Branch outing, organised by Tony Woodville, to the Test Valley area. Some 20 ringers (and one dog) from nine different towers visited five churches finishing with Sparsholt, of Ringing Course fame. The evening was rounded off with refreshments at The Plough where that of the liquid variety was most welcome.

The Quiz Night in September, at Pangbourne Village Hall, was attended by over 100 people. It was most ably compered by Steve Rossiter. The meal described as a 'snack', but which was in fact Shepherds' Pie and a choice of dessert, was organised by his wife, June, aided by a gang of helpers. The usual fiendish assortment of questions taxed all of us. Just in case we found ourselves with time to spare a 'ringing crossword' had also been compiled. It was an extremely good evening and we were able to give over £400 to the Shinfield Ringing Centre.

If this gives the impression that ringing is of secondary consideration, the Branch 6-bell Striking Competition this September attracted 12 entries. Heats were held at Streatley and Whitchurch with the final at Purley. The winners were St Mary & St Laurence with Caversham close behind. In the Guild 6-bell competition, the band came third behind High Wycombe. The tables were turned in the 10-bell competition when the Reading band came first and so will go on to represent the Guild in the Tewkesbury Shield next May.

At the Half-Yearly Meeting the proposal to transfer Moulsholme to Reading from ONB was agreed. The matter is now before the Guild.

The Summer School again attracted a full complement of students and this year it was also open to adults. Youngsters from previous years who had now become 'competent' were encouraged to come as helpers. There is obviously a demand for this kind of non-residential course, especially one that is held on weekdays.

A goodly number of towers responded to the Guild Master's request for ringing to celebrate the Queen Mother's 100th Birthday. At least one peal was rung and several quarter peals. A couple of these contained ringers achieving their first quarter: well done.

Nettlebed bells have been rehung and very fine they now sound. By the time that this is published they will have been rededicated. Congratulations are due to Ralph Elmes and all his support team for the huge amount of work that went into this project.

Henley tower now has an aerial on its roof masquerading as a flag pole. The band holding the four supporting metal guys is so close to the top of the mast that the flag corner is already shredded and 'half mast' is impossible. So the aerial is to be changed – sometime. Meanwhile, the contractors have given a new St George's flag which is less than half the area of the original!!! The saga continues – watch this space.

Vivien Bloundelle

South Oxon

After a busy spring, the summer and early autumn have been fairly quiet in South Oxfordshire. It was our turn to host the Guild 6-bell competition on 7th October, which gave those living near three of our towers the chance to hear some top quality ringing. Little Milton, Great Haseley and Brightwell Baldwin were used after much spring cleaning, rope checking and tidying up. In the

run-up to the competition, ringers were seen scurrying around the exterior and interior of each church in search of the perfect spot for judging – sorry if the south porch at Great Haseley was a little dark, we did try to get the light working but hopefully the gaps in the door let in some light! Cups of tea and cake were provided at the heats, boosting Great Milton's fund-raising campaign. The Brightwell Baldwin ringers tackled the mammoth task of feeding 80+ ringers in a hall designed to seat 50 – and again their bell fund benefited.

Our branch outing on 14th October was to the Warwickshire/Northamptonshire region, ringing at some lovely towers. We travelled in cars this year as numbers didn't justify a coach, and all had a pleasant day.

Our monthly news sheet is now sent by e-mail to about two thirds of our towers, thus saving time and enabling the towers to print off as many copies as they wish, or to forward it to their members.

Recent ringing around the branch has included a peal at Great Haseley on 1st July for the Millennium. Kay Tuckwell has rung her first quarter of Bourne Surprise Minor, and Olive Lawrence her first of Grandsire Caters. A quarter was rung at Chinnor on 11th August to celebrate the birth of Luke Peter, son of Teresa and Andrew Davis of Chalgrove. Quarters were rung at Aston Rowant, Dorchester, Ewelme, Great Haseley and Tetsworth for the Queen Mother's hundredth birthday and Jeanette Barrington rang her first Bob Caters inside at Long Crendon for the same occasion.

Hilarie Rogers

Vale of White Horse

At this year's Oxford Diocesan Guild Striking Competition the Vale was represented by Faringdon. Heats took place at Great Haseley and Little Milton, with the final competition being held at Brightwell Baldwin. Faringdon team was delighted to reach the final even though they only came fifth out of six! The event was very well attended and despite the weather it was a very enjoyable day.

For those who record "firsts" Tony Crabtree conducted his first quarter peal of spliced Yorkshire and Cambridge Surprise Major and Jenny Crabtree rang the treble making it her first quarter of treble bob. The Quarter Peal was rung to wish another member of the family, Sarah Crabtree, good luck in her new life in Oxford. The band also included Erica Crabtree, Shirley Haines, Gordon Belcher, and Jon and Kay Chamberlain.

The Branch Annual Outing was held on October 14th and a dozen ringers enjoyed a day amongst some light bells in the Charlton on Otmoor area.

We would like to remind ringers in the area that on the 3rd Sunday each month we have a surprise practice at 5.30pm at one of the eight-bell towers in the branch usually ringing for evensong. If you want to learn Cambridge or even aspire to spliced please come along and join us. Details from Tony Crabtree or Kay Chamberlain (01367 242647).

Kay Chamberlain

Witney and Woodstock

There has been plenty of activity in our branch during the past four months. In June, the newly formed Patching Handbell Ringers took part in a successful concert at Ditchley Park in aid of Bridewell Organic Gardens, a new charity which provides gardening experience and therapy for people with a variety of special needs in a beautiful walled garden near Wilcote. In July, North Leigh hosted a well-attended Aunt Sally and Barbecue at the Woodman. Our thanks to Neil and Alison Merryweather-Clarke for organising this enjoyable event.

On August 5th the sun shone and the Ducklington bells rang merrily to celebrate the marriage of Anthony Cole and Sarah Dale. A peal was rung at Witney in the morning of the same day, and a quarter peal on the following day at Stonesfield, in honour of the happy occasion. We are sorry to lose Anthony and Sarah who have moved to Bicester, but I'm sure we'll continue to see plenty of them.

In September, to celebrate their Harvest Festival service, the Stonesfield band went to Eynsham and rang a quarter peal of Eynsham Doubles, the first time this method has been rung for many years. October and Stonesfield were disappointed that they did not do better in their heat of the Guild 6-bell Striking Competition at Little Milton, in spite of fairly easy bells and lots of delicious cake! It was some consolation that we were ringing against some expert bands who rang almost faultlessly.

Also this month we were most grateful to Pat and Robert Newton and John and June Wells, who came to Witney to hold an afternoon course on Teaching Bell-handling. Some of our towers have bands consisting almost entirely of learners, so this was much needed. The novice teachers, from South Leigh, North Leigh and Clanfield, their brave guinea-pigs and a few interested observers, all came away feeling that they had not only learned a lot, but enjoyed it as well.

Congratulations to David Thornton who conducted his first quarter peal at Middleton Stoney, and to Mary Clarke-Maxwell who rang her first quarter peal at Church Hanborough.

Rachael Sherlaw-Johnson

A Practice with a Difference

It was not the usual hands on sallies and 'go Grandsire', but hands on ropes by the local fire service and ambulance paramedics on June 28th when two fire engines and an ambulance turned up for the weekly practice at Chipping Norton.

Following an earlier incident when a ringer was taken ill in Hook Norton tower and had to be rescued by local firemen, the local emergency services arranged an exercise to rescue an eleven stone dummy ringer from the belfry and lower him to the floor.

After this incident and practice it would be advisable if other towers liaised with their local rescue services about the difficulties of removing casualties from church towers.

Barry Andrews

Towers and Belfries Committee

The main news for the committee is that there has been a change of officers for the coming year.

Richard Stevens is Chairman once again, and Ralph Elmes has found himself in the Secretary's slot. Thanks are due to Len Palfrey and Nick Balshaw for four years' hard work and we trust they will remain on the back benches where their expertise will be available for all to use.

The line-up of the committee is given elsewhere in this edition of *Odd Bob*. Please remember that we are available to help you with your bell installations. We are always willing to visit your tower or to run courses in your area, so that you can look after your bells adequately.

After the millennium rush, things have quietened down for a while. There are some inspections outstanding and no doubt we shall be able to report further on them in due course. Meantime, the non-participating members will be doing their bit for the Best Kept Towers Competition, the results of which will be announced later.

Richard Stevens

Jim Diserens – 1000 peals

Jim Diserens achieved his 1000th peal in ringing Plain Bob Maximus on handbells at Thatcham on 15th May this year. It consisted of 5016 changes and was conducted by Bill Butler. The band is pictured at Bill's home in Thatcham.

- 1-2 Noel J. Diserens
- 3-4 James E. Daniels
- 5-6 Bernard F.L. Groves
- 7-8 N. David Lane
(700th peal)
- 9-10 Philip A.F. Chalk
- 11-12 William Butler (C)



Jim's first peal was rung in November 1945, so it has taken him nearly 55 years to complete a thousand. Of these, 536 were for the Oxford Diocesan Guild; 829 have been on tower bells and 171 in hand; and he has conducted 177.

He says he considers himself fortunate to have had talented ringers around him who were keen to 'push back the frontiers of ringing'. This enabled him to ring in a number of 'firsts': Bristol Maximus at St. Paul's Cathedral; Spliced Surprise Maximus in the City of London at St Mary-le Bow, in which he rang the tenor; and the first non-conducted peals of Bristol and Spliced Surprise Maximus. He took part in the first peals of Newgate Surprise Maximus and Bristol Surprise Maximus rung in hand, both for the ODG.

He adds that he still enjoys a peal of Stedman on any number of bells, in the tower or in-hand, and the most important aspect of ringing is to get accurate striking!

Bobbie May

Ringling Centres - So What?

We have 'centres' for everything these days - sports centres, leisure centres, health centres, craft centres - the world seems to be awash with them. Now we have ringing centres too. What are

they? Should you care? Will it change things?

The concept of a ringing centre is less than a decade old. The first to be set up was at Pimlico, followed by a slow trickle over the next few years. There was an open meeting on the subject at the 1993 Central Council meeting, following which Council set up a Ringing Centres Committee with the role of promoting ringing centres, providing advice, setting standards and administering any grants available.

At first the committee's main role was giving advice and recognising those centres that met their criteria. This might seem bureaucratic, but many people expressed the concern that once the idea caught on, anyone wanting to be 'with it' could declare their tower to be a ringing centre and there would be much confusion throughout the land.

In 1999 the Central Council announced that the Worshipful Company of Founders had offered a grant of £50 000 for the training of ringers, and that this would be put towards the development of ringing centres. This impetus encouraged more people to set up ringing centres. The Council invited proposals and early in 2000 announced the first 4 out of an anticipated 24 awards over the next two years. The grant contributes towards the cost of equipment (sound control, simulators, etc) and also provides some training in how to manage a ringing centre.

What is a ringing centre?

What marks a ringing centre out from an ordinary tower? The primary purpose of a ringing centre is teaching. In that respect it differs from 'ordinary' church towers whose primary purpose is service ringing (that is why they are attached to churches). We all recognise the need to teach if bands are to be available for service ringing, and we manage pretty well despite the limitations of what we have inherited from former generations. If we started with a clean sheet of paper to design the best environment for teaching ringing, cost effectively and to a high standard, we would produce something rather different from the average tower.

That is what a ringing centre aspires to be - a place equipped for good teaching, and where exemplary teaching will be carried out, with trickle-down benefits for the standard of the teaching in local towers. Most ringing centres are in fact based on existing church towers, and in that sense they are dual purpose - the 'ringing centre' aspect is optimised for teaching while the 'church tower' aspect still retains its primary role of ringing for services.

For CC recognition a ringing centre should have support from local ringers and from the church where it is based, with a workable and clearly defined management structure to allow it to be available to all comers. Access should be suitable and the facilities should include: bells, a simulator and a teaching room. Video facilities are highly desirable and have featured prominently in many grants awarded. Some ringing centres will act as a public relations focus for bellringing.

How does a ringing centre work?

Different ones will operate in different ways. Typically they will offer a mix of:

- Facilities only (for use by bands or other trainers)
- Courses on request (facilities plus trainers)
- Advertised courses or programmes of training.

How each ringing centre operates will depend on the resources, particularly tutors, available. Centres will normally charge a fee appropriate to what is provided.

Even where a centre has tutors attached to it, simple arithmetic indicates that the way the ringing community will benefit most from the investment made on our behalf is through tower captains, branch ringing masters and others taking the initiative and using the centre facilities themselves.

What difference will ringing centres make?

The presence of a ringing centre opens up new training possibilities in the area around it. The wide range of teaching aids available will permit different types of teaching, not possible in most towers. Availability for extended periods will permit longer practices, or all day courses without the need to spend time travelling between towers to reduce the impact on local populations. Availability of more than one room will permit individual coaching or theory sessions to run in parallel with ringing. The provision of basic amenities (heat, toilets, refreshment) will be an improvement over many towers. Networks and personal contacts connected with training are likely to build up around the ringing centre.

All of this should enhance the training that can be provided in an area, and help to draw on the locally available teaching talent to benefit more ringers. But it will only happen if we all start to think of ringing centres as a natural part of the training opportunities available to us, complementary to, and supporting, what we do in our own towers, and on conventional courses.

Where is my nearest ringing centre?

Twelve ringing centres are either already in operation or in the process of being set up around the country. Those in or around the Oxford Diocese are at:

- Braunston (Northants) - operational
- Docklands (London) - operational
- Pimlico (London) - operational
- Shinfield (Berks) - being set up
- Towcester (Northants) - operational.

Twenty more will appear nationwide over two years, and probably as many again in the next five years or so. In a decade, we might all take it for granted that we can use our local ringing centre when we need it, just as we can use our local sports centre.

John Harrison

Points from Peals

By ringing a handbell peal of Plain Bob Maximus, Jim Diserens has rung 1,000 peals.

Bernard Groves has conducted 1,000 towerbell peals.

David Lane has rung 700 peals, Ken Davenport 600, Bill Butler 1900, Barry Care 900, Beryl Norris 500, David Livingston 250, Brian Bladon 3,400, Richard Thumwood 600, Christina Fleckney 450 and Helen Piper 1,100.

Peals rung "for the Guild": Bernard Groves 2,000, Richard Stevens 400 and Jim Daniels 400.

David Lane has rung 500 peals on handbells and Alan Ainsworth has rung 1,500 peals on a tenor.

Bill Butler and Peter Bridle have rung 700 peals together and Colin Turner and Donald Carter

have rung 500 peals together.

A handbell peal of 14-Spliced Surprise Royal rung on 3rd May was the most all the work royal yet rung on handbells.

The first peal on the bells since augmentation was rung at Charlton-on-Otmoor.

Our Guild Master, John Wells, has rung his first peal of Maximus on handbells.

Bobbie May and Valerie Simmonds have both completed the Surprise Major alphabet.

A peal of Stedman Triples was rung after one hundred years to the very day at Aldermaston to commemorate the first peal of Stedman on the bells conducted by the Rev F E Robinson on 30th June 1900.

Fifty years ago Jim Diserens conducted a peal of Stedman Triples at St Mary, Reading. This year on 13th August he called the same composition and rang the same bell to another peal of Stedman. The only other surviving member of the original band is Jim's sister Audrey, who no longer rings peals.

A peal at Thatcham was rung as a thanksgiving for the life of John Rendle and peals at Bilston and on handbells were rung in memory of Jenny Butler.

At Great Milton a peal was rung in memory of Geoffrey Tyler (Long Crendon) and Fredrick Keen (Chinnor).

By ringing a peal of London Surprise Minor, Bill Butler has completed all Surprise alphabets from Minor to Maximus.

Gill Gilby has rung her first peal, Plain Bob Major at High Wycombe. Freddie Daniel rung his first peal at Cookham and Lucy Knight and Eleanor Brooks rung their first at Beenham Valence. Danielle Brotherston rang her first at Stoke Poges, and Faith Newall and Michael Lilley their first at Cuddington.

A peal was rung at Ashcott of Spliced Surprise Minor as a compliment to the Great Britain coxless four at the Sydney Olympics winning the Gold Medal.

The first peal on the bells since 1974 was rung at St Aldate, Oxford.

Information for the Millennium report

Millennium quarters rung at the end of December do not normally appear in The Ringing World until end Feb beginning of March even if they are sent off promptly. John Wells would like all details of the information to go in the Millennium report by January 7th. If you ring a quarter, with any Millennium connections in November or December, please will you send the details to me as well, just to be sure that it will be included in the report. We have received almost 700 quarters so far and it would be good to be able to print as much detail as possible. It could take some sorting out!!

Bobbie May

THE OXFORD DIOCESAN BELL FUND
(Registered Charity No. 268390)

Tax Free Giving with Gift Aid

Would you like to add 28 pence to every pound you give to the Bell Fund – without it costing you a penny more?

Thanks to the Gift Aid scheme announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in this year's budget, the Bell Fund can reclaim the tax you have already paid on any donation you give from 6 April 2000 onwards. In effect, it means the taxman will add another 28 pence to every pound you have given, at no extra cost to you.

All you need to do to allow the Bell Fund to reclaim the tax is to complete and return the form below. Of course you are able to cancel this arrangement at any time you choose, simply by writing to the Honorary Treasurer, Oxford Diocesan Bell Fund. If you have any queries about this then please let me know.
Brian J Gatward – Honorary Treasurer

THE OXFORD DIOCESAN BELL FUND
(Registered Charity No. 268390)

TO: The Honorary Treasurer,
Mr.B.J.Gatward,
Grangewood,
Mill Lane,
Calcot, Reading, RG31 7RS (01189 413097).

Please complete your details and tick the declaration box below. Thank you.

Title: _____ First name: _____

Surname: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Tel No: _____

E-Mail: _____

I would like the Oxford Diocesan Bell Fund to treat all my donations from 6th April 2000 until further

notice as Gift Aid donations (please tick here)

☐

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please remember to tell the honorary treasurer if:

- *You no longer pay enough income or capital gains tax to cover the money that the fund can claim back from the inland revenue*
- *You change your name or address*
- *You wish to cancel your declaration*

Guild Directory and Information

The OBJECTS of the Guild as set out in the Rules are as follows:

- (a) the encouragement of the attendance of its members both at service ringing and at public worship;
- (b) the recognition of the position of ringers as Church workers;
- (c) the recruitment and training of new ringers, so that there may be regular service ringing in all the towers within the Diocese where the bells are ringable;
- (d) the promotion of interest in the care of all the bells within the Diocese; and
- (e) the promotion of the art of change ringing.

In order to help carry out these objects the Guild provides a variety of services as follows:

Education

In addition to the Easthampstead ringing course held in September, ringing courses will be arranged both at branch and tower level. These can be one-day courses or a series of evening sessions. Help or advice is also offered on recruitment or teaching bell handling. Contact Mr Mike K Till (*see Education Sub-committee listing*).

Library

The Guild maintains a comprehensive Library from which books may be borrowed. For details contact Mr Douglas G Beaumont (*see Guild Officers - Librarian*).

Books for sale

A travelling bookstall will be found at General Committee meetings and the main Guild meetings; it may also be available at some branch meetings. Books cover a popular range from elementary change ringing to the history of change ringing, tower maintenance and the history of bells.

Exhibition display material

Display material, together with the necessary stands, is available for tower open days, public libraries etc. A full list of the material can be found in 'Odd Bob', July 1991, page 36. Contact Mrs Bobbie May (*see Guild Officers - Public Relations Officer*).

Towers and belfries

The Towers and Belfries Sub-committee exists to help your tower with any problems which you might have with your bells, their fittings, sound control or the tower itself. We can - with the help of the Education Committee - arrange a maintenance course for your area or, on a smaller scale, show you what you should be doing to maintain your own tower. Contact Mr Richard C Stevens (*see Towers and Belfries Sub-committee listing*).

The Oxford Diocesan Bell Fund

The Bell Fund provides grants towards bell restoration. Any donations or assistance in fund-raising will help this objective. Contact Mr Brian J Gatward (*see Guild Officers - General Treasurer*).

The Oxford Diocesan Restoration Fund

The Restoration Fund is separate from the Bell Fund and may provide grants in support of augmentation schemes. Any donations or assistance in fund-raising will help this objective. Contact Mr Brian J Gatward (*see Guild Officers - General Treasurer*).

Guild Officers for 2000 - 2001

Master	Mr E John Wells	15 Lytham End, Tilehurst, Reading, Berks RG31 6FG (0118 941 0061)
Deputy Master	Mr Ken R Davenport	47 Brookside, Wokingham, Berks RG41 2ST (0118 978 6554)
General Secretary	Mr Barry W M Cowper	Avondale, 45 Longfield Drive, Amersham, Bucks HP6
SHE (01494 725566)		
General Treasurer	Mr Brian J Gatward	Grangewood, Mill Lane, Calcot, Reading, Berks RG31 7RS (0118 941 3097)
Assistant Treasurer	Mr Terry Wagstaff	6 Firs Close, Whitchurch, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 4LH (01296 641755)
Librarian	Mr Douglas G Beaumont	184 Kidmore Road, Caversham, Reading, Berks RG4 7ND (0118 946 1714)
Report Editor	Mr John F Payne	53 Walker Road, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 2QU (01628 624490)
Newsletter Editor	Mr A Rex Agg	25 Wilton Road, Beaconsfield, Bucks HP9 2DE (01494 675517)
Peal Secretary	Mr Graham G Firman	7 Laburnham Road, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 4DB (01628 636484)
Public Relations Officer	Mrs Bobbie May	4 Halfacre Close, Spencers Wood, Reading, Berks RG7 1DZ (0118 988 4172)
Membership Secretary	Mr John F Payne	53 Walker Road, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 2QU (01628 624490)
Website Manager	Dr Tim G Pett	20 St Amand Drive, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 5RQ (01235 526033)
Guild web site		http://oxfodioc01.uuhost.uk.uu.net/odg/
Guild Stewards	Mrs Sally Austin	16 Austins Way, Hook Norton, Oxon OX15 5LQ (<i>Banbury, Chipping Norton, Witney & Woodstock</i>)
	Mr N Jim Diserens	10 Queens Avenue, Wallingford, Oxon (<i>Old North Berks, Reading, South Oxon</i>) OX10 0NB (01491 824504)
	Mr Mark Walker	29 Villeboys Close, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 3XR (<i>Bicester, Newbury, Oxford City</i>) (01235 536159)
	Mr David M Joyce	4 Woad Lane, Great Linford Village, Milton Keynes, Bucks MK14 5HE (01908 667025) (<i>North Bucks, Central Bucks, Chiltern</i>)
	Mr Colin Fowles	127 Meadfield Road, Langley, Slough, Berks (ESR) <i>Sonning, V of the W H</i> SL3 8HY (01753 671507)

Six General Committe members

Mr Graham Clifton	Mr A (Tony) Crabtree	Mrs Wenda Fowles
Mr W (Willy) Haynes	Mr Brian Newman	Mrs June Wells

Central Council Representatives

Mr W (Bill) Butler	8 The Waverleys, Thatcham, Newbury, Berks RG18 3EZ (01635 826799)
Mr Mike K Till	53 Bath Road, Thatcham, Berks RG18 3GF (01635 827957)
Mr John A Harrison	2 Murdoch Road, Wokingham, Berks RG40 2DA (0118 978 5520)
Dr Tim G Pett	20 St Amand Drive, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 5RQ (01235 526033)

Mrs Patricia M Newton

The White House, Plowden Park, Aston Rowant, Watlington,
Oxon OX9 5SX (01844 352926)

Mr Ken R Davenport

(see Guild Deputy Master)

Guild Trustees

Mr W (Bill) Butler

(see Central Council Representatives)

Mr Derek Fowles

10 Lynden Close, Holyport, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 2LB
(01628 629538)

Mr T Geoff Holden

Crispins, East End, North Leigh, Witney, Oxon OX8 6PX
(01993 881 624)

Financial information

Subscriptions

Resident members £5.50 per annum

Non-resident life members £5.50

Peal fees

30p per person per peal

Annual report

£2.50 + 50p packing and postage

Badges

£1.50 each

Guild History

£3.00 per copy

Branch Secretaries

Banbury Dr Ian Rodrick

Silverdale, Weeping Cross, Bodicote, Oxon OX1 5
4ED (01295 253817)

Bicester Mr Richard C Stevens

Dellow, Blackthorn Road, Launton, Bicester, Oxon
OX26 0DA (01869 243920)

Central Bucks Miss Ann Pedley

18 Rochester Place, Aylesbury, Bucks HP21 8QZ
(01296 488132)

Chiltern Mr Mike C J Davis

1 Rookwood Way, Great Missenden, Bucks H16
0DF (01494 891312)

Chipping Norton Mr Barry Andrews

26 Little Lees, Charlbury, Chipping Norton, Oxon
OX7 3HB (01608 810933)

East Berks &
South Bucks Mrs Patricia Moore

1 Elmwood Park, Gerrards Cross, Bucks SL9 7EP
(01753 890477)

Newbury Mrs Rosemary Maslen

18 The Strouds, Beenham, Reading, Berks, RG7 5NW
(0118 971 3824)

North Bucks Mrs Helen Stanworth

11 Valley Road, Linden Village, Buckingham,
Bucks MK18 7BW (01280 814172)

Old North Berks Mrs Shirley Haines

26 Chapel Way, Childrey, Wantage, Oxon, OX12 9UU
(01235 751624)

Oxford City Mrs Katie Lane

Catchmole Cottage, 12 High Street, Wheatley,
Oxon OX33 1XX (01865 874026)

Reading Mrs Vivien Bloudele

71 St Mark's Road, Henley-on-Thames, Oxon
RG9 1LP (01491 573 489)

Sonning Deanery Mrs Pearl Larkins

13 Frensham Road, Crowthorne, Berks
RG45 6QJ (01344 774506)

South Oxon Mrs Hilarie Rogers

4 High Street, Drayton St Leonard, Wallingford,

Oxon

OX10 7BA (01865 890163)

Vale of the White
Horse Dr Clare Knock

17 Damson Trees, Shrivenham, nr Swindon. Wilts
SN6 8BB (01793 782152)

Witney & Mrs Rachael

Malton Croft, Woodlands Rise, Stonesfield,

Woodstock Sherlaw-Johnson

Nr. Witney, Oxon OX8 8PL (01993 891318)

Education sub-committee

Chairman Mr Mike K Till

53 Bath Road, Thatcham, Berks RG18 3GF (01635 827957)

Secretary	Mr Mike C J Davis	1 Rookwood Way, Great Missenden, Bucks HP16 0DF (01494 891312)
Members	Miss Marie R Cross	6 Radley Road, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 3PQ (01235 520868)
	Mr Alan J Griffin	Rosebank, Bloxham, Banbury, Oxon (01295 720359)
	Mr John A Harrison	(see Central Council Representatives)
	Mrs Patricia M Newton	(see Central Council Representatives)
	Mrs June Wells	15 Lytham End, Tilehurst, Reading Berks RG31 6FG (0118 941 0061)
#	Mr Peter Day	Polgraines, Faringdon Road, Cumnor, Oxford OX2 9QY (01865 862671)
#	Miss Barbara Payne	Polgraines, Faringdon Road, Cumnor, Oxford OX2 9QY (01865 862671)
*	Mr E John Wells	(see Guild Master)
*	Mr Barry W M Cowper	(see Guild Secretary)

denotes co-opted member; * denotes *ex officio* member

Guild educational leaflets

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Rope splicing | 2. Bibliography | 3. Plain Hunt to Bob Doubles |
| 4. Maintenance | 5. Running a one-day course | 6. Sound control |
| 7. Stedman | 8. Grandsire | 9. Bob calling for beginners |
| 10. Handbell ringing | 11. Eight Doubles methods | |
| 12. Surprise Minor: Cambridge to London, Part 1 (Cambridge) | | |
| 13. Surprise Minor: Cambridge to London, Part 2 (Building on Cambridge) | | |
| 13. Surprise Minor: Cambridge to London, Part 3 (London) <i>Parts 2 & 3 form a single leaflet</i> | | |
| 14. Plain, Little and Double Bob Minor and Plain Bob Major | | |

Price: 50p per copy or £5.00 per set of 14 titles (all plus postage and packaging) from Mrs Patricia M Newton, The White House, Plowden Park, Aston Rowant, Watlington, Oxon OX9 5SX (01844 352926). Cheques payable to *Oxford Diocesan Guild* please.

Education committee - course titles

Plain Hunt	10-bell methods
Plain Bob Doubles	Towards better conducting
Grandsire Doubles	Towards better striking
Stedman Doubles	Raising and lowering in peal
Doubles and Minor	Tower leadership (seminar)
Plain Bob Minor	Computers and simulators in ringing
Cambridge Minor	Rope splicing
Triples methods	Tower maintenance (by T&B committee)
Stedman Triples	Handbell ringing (methods)
Plain Major methods	Listening
Surprise Major methods	Bell handling on video

Towers and belfries sub-committee

Chairman	Mr Richard C Stevens	Dellow, Blackthorn Road, Launton, Bicester, Oxon OX26 0DA (01869 243920)
Secretary	Mr Ralph A Elmes	Phoenix Cottage, Nuffield, Oxon RG9 5TE (01491 641874)
Members	Mr Nick Balshaw	3 The Crescent, East Hagbourne, Didcot, Oxon OX11 9JY (01235 815452)
	Mr John Blackall	2 Aplin Road, Bedgrove, Aylesbury, Bucks HP21 9BT (01296 27930)
	Mr Graham J Clifton	Stedman Cottage, Middle Aston, Oxford OX6 3PZ (01869 347273)
	Mr A (Tony) J Crabtree	4 Stallpits Road, Shrivenham, Swindon, Wilts SN6 8BG

	Mr John C Davidge	(01793 784064) Rowallan, Back Lane, Chalfont St Giles, Bucks HP8 4PD (01494 873325)
	Mr Peter G Davies	Narrogin, Longworth Road, Charney Bassett, Wantage, Oxon OX12 0ET (01235 868646)
	Mr W (Willy) Haynes	2 Brinsmore House, Oddington, Kidlington, Oxon OX5 2QZ (01865 331303)
	Mr Alan J Marchbank	6 Broadway Avenue, Giffard Park, Milton Keynes, Bucks MK14 5QF (01908 611434)
	Mr Len Palfrey	62 Horseshoe Road, Pangbourne, Reading, Berks RG8 7JL (0118 984 2698)
	Mr Mike Shakespeare	19 Park Close, Kirtlington, Bicester, Oxon OX5 3HR (01869 350180)
	Mr Bernard J Stone	3 Bell Close, Grove, Wantage, Oxon OX12 7NH (01235 766673)
*	Mr E John Wells	(see <i>Guild Master</i>)
*	Mr Barry W M Cowper	(see <i>Guild Secretary</i>)
*	Mr Brian J Gatward	(see <i>General Treasurer</i>)
		* denotes <i>ex-officio</i> member.

Diary of Events for 2000-2001

*	Subject to confirmation	SC	Striking Competition
BP	Branch Practice	HY	Half Yearly Meeting
SP	Surprise Practice	QM	Quarterly Meeting
EP	Elementary Practice	AP	Advanced Practice
SM	Surprise Major	AG	Annual General Meeting

NOVEMBER

Sat	25	Guild		General Committee Meeting - Wokingham	
Sat	25	EBSB	BP	Chenies	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	25	South Oxon	BP	Drayton St Leonard	7.00 - 9.00

DECEMBER

Fri	1	Newbury	BP	Shaw	
Sat	2	Chipping Norton	BP	Burford	7.30 - 9.00
Sat	2	North Bucks	QM	Fenny Stratford	3.30
Wed	6	Banbury	BP	Banbury	7.30 - 9.00
Wed	6	Chiltern	AP	Great Missenden	
Thur	7	Bicester	BP	Stratton Audley	7.30
Fri	8	Banbury	BP	Tadmorton	7.30 - 9.00
Sat	9	Central Bucks	BP	Soulbury	6.30 - 8.30
Sat	9	EBSB	BP	Amersham (Christmas social)	
Sat	9	Oxford City	BP	Cowley	7.00 - 8.30
Sat	9	Reading	BP	St Giles, Reading (with Advent Carols)	6.00 - 9.00
Sat	9	Witney & Woodst.	BP	Bampton	
Tues	12	Old North Berks	BP	Sunningwell	7.30 - 9.00
Fri	15	North Bucks	BP	Milton Keynes Village	7.30
Sat	16	Chiltern	BP	Aston Clinton	
Sat	16	Sonning Deanery	BP	Binfield	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	16	South Oxon	BP	Ewelme	7.00 - 9.00
Tues	26	Banbury	BP	Deddington	10.30 - noon
Fri	29	EBSB		Post-Christmas outing	
Sat	30	Reading	AP	Reading, St Laurence	7.00 - 9.00

2001

JANUARY

Mon	1	Old North Berks	BP	Chilton	10.00 - noon
Wed	3	Banbury	BP	Banbury	7.30 - 9.00
Sat	13	Central Bucks	BP	Long Crendon	6.30 - 8.30
Sat	13	EBSB	SP	Chalfont St Giles	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	13	Oxford City	BP	Kidlington	7.00 - 8.30
Sat	13	Reading	BP	Goring	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	13	Witney & Woodst.	BP	Tackley	
Tues	16	Banbury	BP	Steeple Aston	7.30 - 9.00
Tues	16	Old North Berks	BP	Wantage	7.30 - 9.00
Fri	19	North Bucks	BP	Downs Barn*	7.30
Sat	20	Sonning Deanery	BP	Warfield	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	27	EBSB	BP	Burnham	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	27	North Bucks	BP	Bletchley (Joint with Luton branch)*	7.30
Sat	27	South Oxon	BP	Tetsworth	7.00 - 9.00

FEBRUARY

Wed	7	Banbury	BP	Banbury	7.30 - 9.00
Sat	10	Central Bucks	AG	Dinton/Cuddington	
Sat	10	EBSB	SP	Dorney*	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	10	Oxford City	BP	Oxford, St Aldate	7.00 - 8.30
Sat	10	Reading	AG	Stratfield Mortimer (St John/SMV)	2.00 tbc
Sat	10	Witney & Woodst.	AG	Wootton	
Tues	13	Old North Berks	BP	Abingdon, St Nicholas	7.30 - 9.00
Wed	14	Banbury	BP	Mollington	7.30 - 9.00
Fri	16	North Bucks	BP	North Crawley	7.30
Sat	17	Sonning Deanery	AG	Sonning	
Sat	24	EBSB	BP	Cookham	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	24	South Oxon	BP	Long Crendon	7.00 - 9.00

MARCH

Sat	3	North Bucks	AG	Whaddon/Bletchley	3.00/4.00
Wed	7	Banbury	BP	Banbury	7.30 - 9.00
Sat 10		Guild		General Committee Meeting - Chiltern Branch	
Sat	10	Central Bucks	BP	Padbury	6.30 - 8.30
Sat	10	EBSB	SP	Beaconsfield	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	10	Oxford City	BP	Oxford, St Giles	7.00 - 8.30
Sat	10	Witney & Woodst.	BP	South Leigh	
Fri	16	North Bucks	BP	Thornborough*	7.30
Sat	17	Old North Berks	AG	Drayton (with SC)	
Mon	19	Banbury	BP	Deddington	7.30 - 9.00
Sat	24	EBSB	BP	Stoke Poges*	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	24	South Oxon	SC	Chinnor	
Fri	30	North Bucks	AP	Kempston*	7.30
Sat 31				Ringling Roadshow - Keele University	
Sat	31	EBSB	BP	Wraybury*	7.00 - 9.00

APRIL

Wed	4	Banbury	BP	Banbury	7.30 - 9.00
Sat 14		Guild		Handbell Day - Reading	
Thur	19	Old North Berks	BP	Letcombe Regis	7.30 - 9.00
Fri	20	North Bucks	BP	Bradwell*	7.30
Sat	21	Banbury	AG	tbc	
Sat	21	Central Bucks	BP	Swanbourne	6.30 - 8.30
Sat	21	Witney & Woodst.	BP	Stonesfield	
Fri	27	North Bucks	SC	Beginners competition - Emberton	7.30

Sat	28	EBSB	AG	Bray	
Sat	28	South Oxon	AG	Berrick Salome	2.30
MAY					
Wed	2	Banbury	BP	Banbury	7.30 - 9.00
Mon	7	Guild		Ringin Day/Eight-bell SC - Newbury Branch	
Sat	12	Central Bucks	BP	Granborough/North Marston	6.30 - 8.30
Sat	12	EBSB	SP	Iver	7.00 - 9.00
Wed	16	Old North Berks	BP	Aston Tirrold	7.30 - 9.00
Thur	17	Banbury	BP	Adderbury	7.30 - 9.00
Fri	18	North Bucks	BP	Stowe *	7.30
Sat	19	Guild	AG	AGM - Oxford City Branch	
Sat	26	EBSB	BP	Chesham	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	26	South Oxon	BP	Great Haseley	7.00 - 9.00
JUNE					
Sat	2	North Bucks	SC	Great Linford *	3.30
Sat	9	Central Bucks	SC	Aston Abbots	5.30
Sat	9	EBSB	SC	Lane End*	
Mon	11	Old North Berks	BP	Long Wittenham	7.30 - 9.00
Sat	23	EBSB	AP	Slough	7.00 - 9.00
Fri	15	North Bucks	BP	Wavendon *	7.30
Sat	23	South Oxon	BP	Great Milton	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	30	EBSB	BP	Hughenden	7.00 - 9.00
JULY					
Tues	10	Old North Berks	BP	East Hendred	7.30 - 9.00
Sat	14	Guild		Guild Festival	
Sat	14	EBSB	SP	Winkfield	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	28	EBSB	BP	Old Windsor	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	28	South Oxon	BP	Towersey *	7.00 - 9.00
AUGUST					
Wed	8	Old North Berks	BP	Letcombe Bassett/Sparsholt	7.30 - 9.00
Sat	11	EBSB	AP	Amersham	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	25	EBSB	BP	Turville/Hambleden*	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	25	South Oxon	BP	Aston Rowant *	7.00 - 9.00
SEPTEMBER					
Sat	8	EBSB	SP	Penn	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	15	Old North Berks	HY	Sutton Courtenay	
Sat	22	EBSB	BP	West Wycombe*	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	22	South Oxon	BP	Watlington	7.00 - 9.00
OCTOBER					
Mon	8	Old North Berks	BP	Steventon	7.30 - 9.00
Sat	13	EBSB	HY	Fulmer* (with SC final)	
Sat	27	EBSB	BP	Boyne Hill	7.00 - 9.00
NOVEMBER					
Thur	8	Old North Berks	BP	Harwell	7.30 - 9.00
Sat	10	EBSB	SP	Great Marlow*	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	24	EBSB	BP	Horton	7.00 - 9.00
DECEMBER					
Sat	8	EBSB	BP	High Wycombe (with Christmas social)	
Fri	14	Old North Berks	BP	Appleton	7.30 - 9.00
Fri	28	EBSB		Post-Christmas outing	