

Issue

ODD BOB

Newsletter of the



July 2002

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Information for Contributors

The next issue of 'Odd Bob' will be distributed at the Guild Committee Meeting on
23 November 2002.

Contributions should be sent to the Newsletter Editor:
Mr A Rex Agg, 25 Wilton Road, Beaconsfield, Bucks HP9 2DE
e-mail: rex.agg@ukgateway.net

not later than **28 October 2002.**

Master's Mutterings

Back in 1973, before I could legally drink alcohol, I was persuaded by Barry Davis the Banbury Branch secretary at that time to attend a new ringing course the Guild was planning. It was called a Potential Leaders Course, and would be held at Easthampstead. Barry said it would "do me a lot of good". I remember the cost of the course was £10 and the Branch paid half the fee.

I attended the course along with Ron Thorne and the lecturers were Fred Sharpe, Jim Diserens, Tim Pett, Bill Butler, Frank Price, Bill Gilks, Bill Birmingham and Wilfred Wilson. I think the course title was very apt – Potential Leaders – as we both served as Branch secretary and Ron went on to become Report Editor, Deputy Master and Master. I went on to become a Steward, Deputy Master and now find myself as Master. I hope the Banbury Branch look back and think the sponsorship they gave us was money well spent. I wonder what happened to the other students who attended the first Easthampstead course?

I am honoured to be elected Master and thank members for the good wishes I have received. I am, however, also aware there was not a lot of competition for the job. Perhaps this is an area we should address in our courses today. It seems a modern-day problem to find people to take on voluntary jobs in all walks of life.

As I indicated when I was nominated as Master I will try and attend as many Branch meetings as I can, but it is unlikely I will be able to attend many midweek funerals of ringers. If Branch Secretaries can give the officers as much notice as possible of meetings we can try and arrange to attend.

Finally I would like to thank John Wells for his time as Master and all the information he has passed on to make the changeover as smooth as possible. Fortunately my son has moved out so his bedroom now houses all the equipment that goes with the job.

Graham Clifton

Obituaries

CATHY MARTIN (7 August 1950 – 6 April 2002)

Cathy learnt to ring in 1961 at St James, Taunton, along with a number of other youngsters. She progressed well, and rang a quarter peal of Grandsire Doubles inside before giving up ringing to concentrate on her studies and swimming.

Having graduated from Leeds University, Cathy moved to Reading to take up a post teaching English and R.E. at Theale Green School, a job that she retained until just a few weeks before she died. She was promoted to the post of Head of House, and made a significant contribution to the school in terms of the pastoral care for the pupils, ensuring their academic progress and providing extra-curricular swimming and life-saving lessons.

It was not until 1985 that Cathy rang again. She had been worshipping at St. Michael's, Tilehurst where she met Eunice Wark, one of the local ringers, who persuaded Cathy to visit

the tower. With the strength of the Tilehurst band around her Cathy soon got back into ringing. Shortly after her return, a quarter peal was arranged for the retirement of the Head Master of Theale Green School, and Cathy was proud to take part in this, ringing the tenor behind to Bob Doubles. The band included four pupils, and John Wells, former head of Maths at the school, conducted the quarter peal.

Cathy's first peal was at Tilehurst in April 1986. Most of her ringing at that time, including three more peals in the following year, was with the Tilehurst band. She enjoyed going with Eunice and her daughter Naomi to practice nights at other towers. It was on such a visit to Slough in February 1987 that Cathy met John whom she married in July 1991. From then on her world of ringing changed. She was soon learning new methods and ringing peals every weekend.

Cathy was particularly active in peal ringing from 1988 to 1991, peaking in 1990 when she rang 72 peals in the year. During the first few years of Cathy's peal ringing career her progress was phenomenal. She soon completed the alphabet to peals of surprise major, rang up to 20 surprise minor methods in a peal, and scored peals in many surprise royal and maximus methods. Perhaps the most impressive footnotes are those indicating that she rang peals of London Royal and Belfast Major as her first blows in the method. Her final peal total was 310, more than half of which were conducted by her husband. She also rang over 260 quarter peals.

In 1990 Cathy transferred from Tilehurst to ring at St. Mary & St. Laurence, Reading. However, much of her early 12-bell ringing, including her first peal on twelve, was at High Wycombe, and her strengths here were demonstrated when she rang for Wycombe in the 12-bell contest final at Newcastle in 1992.

Cathy was a dedicated Sunday service ringer, supported many branch and Guild events and was a regular helper on Guild courses. I was particularly grateful to John and Cathy for their assistance with the Youth Weekends.

Since 1998 Cathy and John have been ringing at St Mark's, Englefield, where John is now Tower Captain, and it was here that Cathy's funeral was held. She planned the details of the service herself. The church was packed with family, ringers, colleagues, parents and pupils from the school, and the service was a fitting tribute to Cathy's enthusiasm for life and her strength of faith. While a quarter peal of Cambridge Minor was being rung by some of her close friends, the congregation were provided with refreshments in the Long Gallery of Englefield House. It was a wonderful setting and a most memorable and inspiring service. Cathy will be sorely missed by her many ringing friends, but our thoughts go out to John and their 8-year old daughter Hannah following their sad loss.

Patricia Newton

ROY GOODWIN (1942 - 2002)

Roy was born in Oxford's Radcliffe Infirmary, and spent all his working and ringing life in the city. He took up ringing at Iffley aged eleven, when Lawrie Busby and Jim Adams were in charge. Iffley had close ties with Cowley (under the legendary captaincy of Walter Holloway), and Roy remained loyal to these two towers for nearly 50 years. He later became

tower captain at Iffley, and ringing master at Cowley. He was also secretary of the Oxford City Branch for 10 years, and latterly was Branch vice-chairman.

Roy was educated at the City of Oxford High School for Boys, and joined the staff of the University in 1958, becoming chief technician in 1987 in the Department of Earth Sciences. He was closely involved with the work of the first laboratory set up in Britain for the accurate measurement of geological time, and was due to receive an M.A. *honoris causa* for his work.

Roy rang few peals, but loved ringing quarters. For his 50th year he set himself the target of 50 quarters, which he was delighted to achieve. In more recent years he joined the National Teachers Guild, and rang many quarters with them, at one time being one of their ringing masters.

In addition to bell ringing, Roy's interests included music and travel. He loved going to the opera, and went on several long journeys abroad. On his return he would entertain family, friends and colleagues with slide shows and tales of his exploits.

About two years ago Roy's health began to give cause for concern, and soon he became unable to continue ringing. Despite a long spell in hospital, he was never again able to ring for any length of time, but in his last weeks he had become more active generally and went on a ringing outing just before his 60th birthday. Alas his recovery did not last, and he died in his sleep a few weeks later.

Iffley church was filled to overflowing for Roy's funeral on 30th April, with more than 40 ringers attending. The service included a piece of music played by the Iffley handbell ringers, with whom Roy had rung. With two of the church bells being re-hung, the four remaining bells were rung before and after the service.

Roy is survived by his father, and two sisters and their families, and our sympathies extend to them, and all those who knew and loved a kind and gentle man. We shall miss him.

The following quarter peals were rung in Roy's memory:

Cowley, Oxford. 21 Apr, 1260 P B Minor: Mary Joseph 1, Paul Lucas 2, Simon Edwards 3, Len Porter 4, Katie Lane 5, David Lane (C) 6.

Marston, Oxford. 21 Apr, 1260 Doubles (4m/4v): Janice Knowles 1, Anthony Hughes (Jt C) 2, Roy Jones (Jt C) 3, Charles Smith 4, Hugh Deam 5, Peter Lloyd 6. Also for service.

Oxford (S Aldate). 22 Apr, P B Minor: Len Porter (C) 1, Katie Lane 2, John Lonsbrough 3, Bernard Masterman 4, David Lane 5, Simon Edwards 6.

Cowley, Oxford. 22 Apr, 1300 Doubles (3m): Susan Reynolds 1, Hugh Deam (Jt C) 2, Keith Godfrey 3, Steve Everett 4, Stephen Davies (Jt C) 5, Mary Joseph 6. Rung by the Iffley ringers while their own bells were unavailable.

Winslow, Bucks. 24 Apr, 1260 Doubles (4m/4v): B Phillips 1, Elaine Koster 2, Roy Jones (C) 3, J Woodcock 4, D Moore 5, M Woodcock 6.

Sunningwell, Oxon. 27 Apr, 1260 Doubles (3m): Peter Lloyd 1, Brenda Thomas 2, Roy Jones (C) 3, Hugh Deam 5, B Thomas 5, Paul Morley 6.

Horspath, Oxford. 28 Apr, 1260 Doubles (7m/2v): Susan King 1, Charles Smith 2, Roy Jones (Jt C) 3, Simon Edwards (Jt C) 4, Hugh Deam (Jt C) 5. The band wish to associate Brian Lowe with this quarter.

Middleton Stoney, Oxon. 28 Apr, 1260 Doubles (3m/6v): Janice Knowles 1, Charles Smith 2, Roy Jones (C) 3, Hugh Deam 4, Paul Morley 5. At one of Roy's favourite towers.

Headington, Oxford. 28 Apr, 1344 P B Major: Mary Joseph 1, Len Porter (C) 2, Katie Lane 3, David Andrews 4, David Lane 5, Simon Edwards 6, Bernard Masterman 7, Jonathan Cresshull 8.

Basford, Notts. 28 Apr, 1264 P B Major: Anna L Webb 1, Brian Hinchliffe 2, Elizabeth Dunford 3, Sarah E Stonehouse 4, Ian Stonehouse 5, Jane E Woolley 6, Alec Humphrey 7, Robin E H Woolley (C) 8. Specially arranged by some of his friends in the East Midlands.

North Hinksey, Oxford. 30 Apr, 1260 Doubles (1p/lm): Janet Farrow 1, Roy Jones 2, Hugh Deam 3, Bernard Masterman 4, Ray Rooke (C) 5, Dawn McNulty 6.

Woodeaton, Oxon. 5 May, 1260 Doubles (10m): Susan King 1, Simon Edwards (Jt C) 2, Roy Jones 3, Richard Verrall 4, Hugh Deam (Jt C) 5. Ten of Roy's favourite more advanced methods in the tower where it all began.

Len Porter

Librarian's Report

The conversion of the library catalogue to MS Excel format, reported on in *Odd Bob* 64, is now finished. The errors which were identified in proof-reading have been corrected, and so it is now ready for use as a working document. I hope that it will be possible for the catalogue to be added to the Guild's web site within the next couple of months.

The books acquired by the library during 2001 have been added to the catalogue. The newsletters received from branches have also been added to the catalogue, and also placed in their respective locations within the library collection. This has at last started to make the catalogue appear more up to date – the technical difficulties experienced after the catalogue was drawn up have meant that nothing has been added to it since 1997.

I ordered and have received approximately 20 Central Council publications, and intend to order other publications as they are advertised in *The Ringing World*. There is still some catching up to do on publications advertised during the last couple of years.

As reported in *Odd Bob* 64, I took a set of 2001 Ringing Worlds to the bookbinders. I have now received the finished product, completed as specified, and it has taken its rightful place in the library. The next binding project which I intend to address is that of getting the Guild Annual Reports and the *Odd Bob* Newsletters bound.

Doug Beaumont

Bell Fund 'Shop'

Guild sweatshirts, t-shirts, ties and other ringing-related merchandise are normally available at all Guild functions and meetings. Enquiries regarding availability at other times may be made to Derek and Wenda Fowles on 01628 629538 or e-mail: derek.fowles@virgin.net

Oxford Diocesan Guild A.G.M.



Graham Clifton accepting the Master's badge of office

This year's meeting took place following a service at Shinfield Church/ Ringing Centre. Ringing took place beforehand at Purley, whose bells were recently restored after over 30 years' silence, Swallowfield and Shinfield. A peal was rung in the morning at Binfield in honour of the retiring Master and Deputy Master who both took part in it. Further open ringing at Shinfield ended a successful day.

After a fairly brisk and business-like meeting the Master stood down and was thanked for all his work by Barry Cowper, Trustee and past Hon. General Secretary. The Master's work with Education, the Millennium project and implementing the change of Guild rules and Child Protection Policy were mentioned as well as his other contributions to the Guild in the role of General Secretary and Report Editor. June Wells was thanked for her stalwart support of John and was presented with a bouquet. Ken Davenport, retiring Deputy Master, was also thanked for his loyal contribution to the Guild's work.



Peal band at Binfield: (L-R Tim Pett (C) 6, June Wells 2, John Wells 4, Diana Bridle 3, Ken Davenport 5 – photographed by Bobbie May 1)

John has been succeeded by Graham Clifton, a former Deputy Master and sterling member of the Towers & Belfries Sub-Committee, but probably best known to ringers through his work with Whites of Appleton. Ken has been followed as Deputy Master by Jon Chamberlain of Faringdon. Jon was previously chairman of Old North Berks branch before his move to the Vale of the White Horse.



June Wells with her bouquet

No other change of officer took place apart from the addition of Simon Cole as an ordinary members' representative. It is good that the new officers are geographically more representative of the Guild as a whole.

Bobbie May

Child Protection

A poster summarising procedure has been sent to every tower, and it is reproduced elsewhere in this *Odd Bob* [see following page].

It is encouraging to hear that many towers now have a Child Protection Policy, and in a lot of cases the ringers have been instrumental in the implementation of policy in the church as a whole. I have attended a briefing session on the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks, which will hopefully be implemented by the Diocese in the autumn. The onus of checking will fall on individual PCCs, initially for people registering to work with young people for the first time, although eventually CRB checks will be made on those already working with young people.

For young people who regularly travel to other towers without a parent, I have produced a credit-card sized document which has space for contact numbers, medical details and parental signature. Tower Captains should get in touch if they are interested. These would normally be in addition to the form kept by the Tower Captain.

Please don't hesitate to contact me at 4 High Street, Drayton St Leonard, Wallingford, Oxon, OX10 7BA (01865 890163) hilarie@Srogers.fsnet.co.uk for any information, forms, copy of Guild Policy, etc. I also have copies of the *Better Safe Than Sorry* books, which include a Declaration Form that I can e-mail if required.

Hilarie Rogers

Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers

Child Protection

The following is a summary of advice given to towers following the production of the Guild's policy on Child Protection. An updated sheet will be sent from time to time *[last updated May 2002]*.

- ❖ Each PCC has been asked to produce a policy, and as part of this to identify those working with young people (i.e. under 18) in all areas of church life, which should include the ringers. These adults are then invited to fill in a Declaration Form, which their incumbent (or appointed representative) keeps.
- ❖ The parent/guardian of each young ringer should fill in a Child Registration Record, which the Tower Captain should keep for ready use at each ringing session. There is a separate form for outings.

- ❖ The Central Council recommendations on working with young people should be applied.

CENTRAL COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Always have two adults present when young people are being taught.
2. Invite parents of any trainees to come and watch a training session before allowing their child to start to learn, and ensure that the parent fully understands what is involved in learning to ring.
3. Make sure a parent is responsible for delivering the child to and collecting the child from the tower.

- ❖ In addition, parental consent should be obtained for a young ringer to be taken to another tower. If travelling by car, the driver should ensure that the car insurance covers the activity. Every effort should be made to ensure that there are at least two young people in each car; and it is advisable for there to be at least two adults. If older teenagers are travelling alone, they should take some form of parental permission with them if possible.
- ❖ Every effort should be made to ensure that First Aid help can be quickly obtained either from a member of the band or from someone living near the church and that rapid contact can be made with the emergency services e.g. having a mobile 'phone in the ringing chamber.
- ❖ Every effort should be made to ensure that Health and Safety matters are considered and reasonable steps taken to remedy any deficiencies. At a minimum there should be Emergency Lighting, Fire Extinguishers and a First Aid Kit available.

More detailed information can be found in the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers policy statement, or from the Guild Children's Officer, Mrs Hilarie Rogers, 4 High Street, Drayton St Leonard, Wallingford, Oxon, OX10 7BA, (01865 890163), hilarie@5rogers.fsnet.co.uk.

Tower Maintenance Award Scheme

For some time now, the Towers & Belfries Committee have been concerned that the Best Kept Tower competition has not been attracting sufficient interest to allow it to meet its primary objective, that of improving the standard of tower maintenance throughout the Guild, because:

1. Out of nearly 400 towers in the Guild, in recent years the event has attracted only an average entry of about eight.
2. In the six competitions only three towers have ever won:
Chalfont St Giles (three times), Bray (twice) and Chalfont St Peter.
3. All the winners have been from the EBSB branch.

Having tried (without success) to increase the level of interest, the committee proposed that the Competition be replaced by a "Tower Maintenance Award" scheme. This has the advantage that, instead of one winner and some runners up, there is no limit to the towers that could, if they reach the required standard, qualify for an award. Another advantage, we feel, is that the process is ongoing (towers can apply at their convenience) rather than requiring significant effort towards a deadline every two years. This proposal was approved by the Guild at the AGM earlier this year and we are now ready to start.

The main features of the proposed award scheme are as follows:

1. There will be three award grades (Gold, Silver, and Bronze) based on the results of an inspection using a marking sheet that will be made available to participating towers to enable them to prepare for the inspection. The grades will be based on the percentage of the "perfect" mark, as follows:

Gold	85% +
Silver	70 - 84%
Bronze	55 - 69%
2. The award takes the form of a certificate that is current for two years from the date of inspection and can be displayed in the tower.
3. Towers holding current awards will be listed in *Odd Bob* and the Guild Report.
4. Inspections will be carried out by judges from the Towers & Belfries Committee and the detailed results of the inspection will be made available to the tower.
5. Inspections can be requested at any time, via the secretary of the Towers & Belfries Committee (listed in *Odd Bob*), irrespective of whether the request is for an initial inspection or to try and improve an existing grade.

To start the scheme off, the towers that entered the last Best Kept Tower Competition have had the marking sheets prepared at that time "re-marked" using the marking scheme prepared for the award and have been given certificates, based on the results, which will remain current until the end of the year. These are listed under Tower Maintenance Awards below.

Why not have a go? Even if, on the first occasion, you don't make an award grade, there will still be the benefit of having a tower inspection (and it's free!). If you make the grade there will be an attractive certificate to display in the tower, and if you don't, you will be given useful details of where improvements could be made. These improvements could well make your tower a safer, easier or more attractive place in which to ring. We, on the committee, look forward to hearing from you soon.

John Davidge (Chairman, T&B committee)

Tower Maintenance Awards

Silver Grade

Bray (St. Michael)	Expires 31.12.02
Chalfont St Giles (St. Giles)	Expires 31.12.02
Shiplake (St. Peter & St. Paul)	Expires 31.12.02

Bronze Grade

Wokingham (All Saints)	Expires 31.12.02
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Oxford Guild Handbell Day

Ringing a handbell quarter must come very high up the list of the most stressful things you can do; that is, after divorce and moving house. Organizing such a day is always hard work, even more so when numbers are down and the available conductors have to be shared around. However, June and John Wells managed this with their usual aplomb and the venue was Viv Bloundele's home in Henley as it wasn't cost-effective to use the school. We reduced the number of sessions to three and knocked off early for a welcome and convivial pub lunch.



*Practice session in the conservatory
(L-R Joan Bennett, John Harrison, Adam Carlill, Marcia Dieppe and Guy Darvill)*

The following handbell quarter peals were scored:

1344 Little Bob Major in 42 mins: *1-2 Bobbie May, 2-3 June Wells, 5-6 John Wells (C), *7-8 John Harrison. * First in the method on handbells.

1260 Plain Bob Royal in 51 mins: 1-2 Bobbie May, 3-4 June Wells, 5-6 Jim Diserens, 7-8 John Wells (C), 9-10 Ralph Elmes.

1344 Plain Bob Major in 42 mins: 1-2 John Lonsbrough, *3-4 Marcia Dieppe, 5-6 Robert Newton (C), 7-8 John Harrison. * First on an inside pair.

1280 Kent Treble Bob Major in 41 mins: 1-2 Patricia Newton (C), 3-4 Jenny Page, 5-6 Ken Darvill, 7-8 Guy Darvill.

1280 Cambridge S. Major in 41 mins: 1-2 Patricia Newton, 3-4 Angela Darvill, 5-6 Ken Darvill, 7-8 Jim Diserens (C).

At the same time, the Scottish breakaway group rang at Rannoch School in Perthshire:

1260 Plain Bob Minor: 1-2 June Saint, 3-4 Helen McGregor, 5-6 Steve Rossiter (C).

It was particularly pleasing that we had the last contribution, since Helen first started the handbell group in Reading and put much time and energy into dragging us through plain courses of simple things. I hope she's reasonably proud of us!

Many thanks to Viv and Brian Bloundele for opening their home to us, especially Brian as he isn't a ringer and there was hardly a chair left to sit in when we had all arrived. I hope he made up for it in the pub afterwards!

Bobbie May

CAMBRIDGE MAJOR COURSE

Saturday 12th October 2002 (a.m.)
at Wallingford and Cuddington

Please contact Patricia Newton
(tel: 01844 352926 e-mail: newtons2@tinyworld.co.uk)
for further information or to book a place.

2002 Guild Ringing Day and Eight-bell Competition

Despite the uncertainty of the weather, business was brisk at the towers when they were opened, but tailed off later. The weather could have contributed to the lower turnout compared to recent years, but there was also a rival open day in Ilchester area of the Bath & Wells Association. Nevertheless many ringers travelled considerable distances to support us and hopefully a reasonable amount was made for the Bell Fund

The heats of the eight-bell competition took place at Steeple Aston and Kirtlington. Reading branch, EBSB branch, High Wycombe, Witney & Woodstock branch, Reading (St. Mary

with St. Laurence) and Abingdon took part in the final which was judged by Ken Davenport, Alan Griffin and Graham Clifton - all from within the Guild.

The results were:

1. Reading, St. Mary with St. Laurence (8 faults)
2. High Wycombe (14)
3. Reading branch (18)
4. East Berks & South Bucks branch (25)
5. Witney & Woodstock branch (33)
6. Abingdon (57)

Bobbie May



Reading (St Mary with St Laurence)

*(L-R June Saint, Mungo Stacy, Matthew Turner, Stephen Rossiter,
Alison Leach, John Manley, Debbie Barnes and Alex Byrne)*

News from the Branches

Banbury Branch

One of the outcomes of our AGM in April was that I have taken over from Graham Clifton as Branch Secretary as he has moved on to greater things! We wish him well in his post as Guild Master and thank him for all he has done as Branch Secretary. My life has changed somewhat since then: large envelopes mysteriously arrive on my doorstep, my e-mail has a constantly full In-box and I never seem to go ringing without a large number of notices to distribute!

The Branch Dinner seems a long time ago now but I remember that we had an excellent evening, good food, good company and after dinner we were much entertained by Rev. Tony Ellis, the ringing vicar of Kidlington.

The AGM was hosted by Duns Tew, with ringing there beforehand and at Great Tew afterwards. The service was led by Revd Graeme Arthur who gave a particularly interesting address incorporating bell ringing in Australia (!) and an excellent tea was provided by Myrtle Stranks and helpers.

The highlight of the year so far must be the re-dedication of Rousham bells in March. The small church was packed with ringers, Rousham residents and their families, and the many people who had supported Rousham in their fundraising. The Revd Noel James led the service, the hymn singing was roof-raising and two members of the choir sang a duet they had composed about the bells sung to the tune of *Ding, dong, merrily on high!* The Cottrell-Dormers then hosted the reception in the House! The wine flowed freely, the food was superb and all this was under the watchful gaze of ancestral portraits! Rousham is very special and with Dave Tuckey and his team everything always runs so smoothly and effortlessly.

Courses seem to feature quite prominently at the moment. The Grandsire Doubles and Stedman Triples courses were well supported and everyone who attended felt they were very worthwhile. In the pipeline at the moment are Stedman Doubles and Bob Doubles, a day course for young ringers in the summer holidays and the Guild course at Steeple Aston in November.

Steeple Aston was impressive at the death of the Queen Mother: within half an hour of the announcement they had their bells muffled and all eight ringing! Quarter peals were rung at Bloxham, Great Tew, Mollington and also Steeple Aston. There was a great variety of ringing for the Jubilee: many towers rang on the Tuesday either before or after the service at St Pauls, quarter peals were rung at Banbury, Mollington and Steeple Aston, a peal of Grandsire Triples was rung at Great Tew, and Adderbury and Somerton rang to mark the start of their village celebrations.

Joan Warren

Bicester Branch

The Branch hosted the 2002 Ringing Day on 6th May with 18 towers open for ringing during the day. At the same time the 8-bell striking competition was held in the branch with heats at Kirtlington and Steeple Aston and the final at Islip where tea was provided by the Charlton-on-Otmoor WI. Events such as this are only possible with the help of many, and the branch ringers who stewarded the towers or helped with the preparations are warmly thanked.

Simon Cole organised our annual branch outing again this year to Warwickshire on 6th April where 24 ringers and friends went in our now traditional style (driven by Kevin Vickers in a Charlton coach). Everyone enjoyed the ringing in Warwick, Wootton Wawen, Alveston and Wellesbourne, plus the pub lunch at the appropriately named Bluebell in Henley in Arden. Our next half-day outing will be on 19th October.

The branch striking competition was held on 18th May when four teams took part at Kirtlington – Bicester, Islip, Ludgershall and Kirtlington. The competition was won by Islip, and the friendly banter continued in the Oxford Arms.

Many towers have been ringing for the National events – the deaths of HM Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother and Princess Margaret, as well as for the Jubilee.

Kathryn Grant

Central Bucks Branch

The ringers in the branch are all recovering from all the additional ringing for the Jubilee. There were a lot of extra services to ring for as well as ringing arranged specially for the

Jubilee. We also seem to have had a lot of weddings, for which towers have been struggling to find sufficient ringers.

We have held branch practices at Aylesbury, East Claydon, Steeple Claydon and Hillesden. Attendance at these has been disappointingly low, however those who have turned out have benefited by being able to get a lot of ringing practice – sometimes on methods they would not normally get a chance to ring.

We are holding our Branch striking competition in July this year instead of June as it was felt that it would be difficult for teams to fit in the striking competition whilst all the Jubilee ringing was going on.

Peter Fay and Mike Dodd are busy organising this year's Branch Outing in September. This year we are going to Southend.

Anne Pedley

Chiltern Branch

Having a friendly brewery within your parish has its many benefits, not least for Ellesborough's ringers and their restoration plans. The special brew 'Old Rope', created by Chiltern Brewery (still some left!), made a tidy sum for the appeal and the fund-raising part of the project is well in hand.

Two good training mornings took place at Cheddington (9th February) and Weston Turville (11th May); these were much enjoyed by all and appreciated by the students. The four-per-year training mornings are now well established and we hope they will continue to serve the needs of the Branch in the future.

There were six entries for the Branch striking competition at Little Missenden. Aston Clinton goes forward to the Guild competition, and Little Missenden came second. Great Missenden and Wendover shared third position, and great admiration was earned by Weston Turville and Mentmore/Cheddington for their gutsy fights through to the finish.

Our commiserations go to Val Willard who sustained a broken leg recently and had to spend some time in Stoke Mandeville hospital. We hope she is back 'on the ropes' again soon.

Finally, best wishes to two new tower captains; Brian Coates took over at Great Kimble and Amanda Johnston at Mentmore in February.

Mike Davis

Chipping Norton Branch

The peal that was planned at Hook Norton on 9th February for the Jubilee was a non-event, as it was the day that Princess Margaret died so we decided to ring a half-muffled quarter instead, which went well and was well received in the village. Let us hope that there will be another opportunity to go for the peal! Spelsbury and Chadlington bells were rung on the evening of 6th February, for the anniversary of the Accession of Her Majesty.

The Branch Annual Meeting was held at Chipping Norton on April 6th, when there were only 14 members present: what is it about business meetings? Both the Chairman (Revd J.

Acreman) and Vice Chairman (Nigel Harrison) were re-elected, Claire Tarrant was elected as Secretary (a touch of been there before!). Ken Wakefield was re-elected as Treasurer; our thanks must go to him for keeping the branch on such an even keel. At the time of writing, we have no Ringing Master, but Christine Seers from Chadlington was elected to the post of Deputy Ringing Master and the Branch Representative is David Hopewell. We decided at the meeting to try three afternoon practices in the New Year in the hope that it will attract some different faces. It was also decided to try and establish a branch web site: Les Waller from Chipping Norton is hoping to get this underway.

Unfortunately the branch outing to the Andover district was not very well supported on 20th April, there being only 14 people (not the same 14 as at the A.G.M!): was it the distance?

The practices at Wigginton and Chastleton respectively have had completely different attendances; at Wigginton there was hardly room to move, whilst at Chastleton we could have done with a few more people! We will wait and see what Taynton brings in July!

As far as I know, all towers were rung in over the Jubilee weekend. As there were not enough of us to ring in all towers on 4th June, ringing was spread out over the three days. At Chipping Norton a quarter peal of Grandsire Doubles, with 7,6,8 covering, was scored, with at least three people ringing their first quarter. Congratulations go to them! One fairly new recruit rang in his first new tower over the weekend, congratulations Jamie!

Unfortunately the quarter planned at Hook Norton was lost, but on Sunday 10th June a quarter of Plain Bob Doubles was rung, with 4,6,8 covering, for the Jubilee and also to celebrate 10 years as Rector for John Acreman and a visit from the Bishop of Dorchester. At Wigginton, a quarter peal of Grandsire Doubles was rung for the 75th birthday of Jim Wiggins; Sue Checkley was ringing her first quarter, well done Sue!

Claire Tarrant

East Berks and South Bucks Branch

Our AGM was held in April at Burnham, and it must be the first time for many years that all officers were re-elected. Fifteen new members were elected, as well as six honorary members – Arthur Newton, Kath Horne, Neil Belson, Cliff Blundell, Angela Blundell and Alan Ainsworth – all worthy contenders with well over the required number of years of Guild service, as much as 65 years for Arthur and over 50 for Kath and Neil.

The Six Bell Striking Competition took place at Hambleden with the all too familiar outcome of High Wycombe in first place, followed by Beaconsfield (2nd) and Bray (3rd). Beaconsfield managed to field a second team that came a very creditable fourth (out of 33 as our judge, Ian Judd, suggested it could be considered!). Ian's general comments on the ringing were welcomed for their positive and encouraging nature.

Branch practices have been going from strength to strength. The surprise major practices at Hughenden and Bray attracted particularly huge crowds and thanks to the organizational skills of our ringing masters enabled many of our members to widen their experience of ringing different methods, from Cambridge to 8-spliced. The ordinary practices have featured a variety of non-surprise methods including Gainsborough Little Major as a special method in May. The latest in our programme of 'workshop' sessions was Raising and Lowering in Peal. This was tutored by former branch member Dave Struckett who spent three hours putting the

students (and the helpers) through their paces before sending them back to their towers to put all they had learnt into practice.

The first peal on the refurbished bells at Farnham Royal was rung in March – Grandsire Triples, of course, as J J Parker is buried in the churchyard there – the band comprising current and past EBSB branch officers.

Many towers in the branch seem to have been able to mark the Jubilee in some way. Probably the most apt performances were a peal of Jubilee Surprise Maximus and a quarter of Jubilee Major, both at High Wycombe. Quarters were also rung at Bray (Grandsire Triples) and Beaconsfield (Cambridge Major). Chalfont St Giles scored a peal of Plain Bob Major in which Siegfried Bonhomme rang his first peal. We are quite interested in trying to establish how many other Frenchmen have rung peals!

Katharine Firman

Newbury Branch

In March, the Branch enjoyed an excellent day's outing to Bath, with 29 ringers and seven non-ringers. We were really grateful to Mark Robins for organising the trip so efficiently and making it so interesting for everyone. The city of Bath is a splendid place for non-ringers to visit and the bells in the Abbey provided challenges for the ringers.

Throughout the Branch, the Queen Mother's death was commemorated with full or quarter peals by all our towers. Although this was a sad time, we were pleased to be able to make our tribute to the best of our ability.

We are very sad to record the death of Freda Wilcox, a lifelong ringer and long-time organist at Aldermaston. Her memorial service will be held there on 6th July.

For the Queen's Golden Jubilee, all our towers made their contribution, varying between full peals, quarters and queens, whilst Newbury tower was pleased to start the town's jubilee celebrations with open ringing.

We now look forward to our six-bell striking contest on 6th July – hopefully a record number of towers will enter and everyone will enjoy a summer evening of fun and fellowship afterwards.

Rosemary Maslen

North Bucks Branch

At the branch AGM in March we had a number of changes of officers. Doug Hird stood down as Chairman after five years in the post during which time he guided us through the millennium activities. Barry Eglesfield takes over as Chairman again, returning to active ringing after a break. Leigh Head stood down as Newsletter Editor but we were unable to find a successor at the AGM. At a special meeting following the branch practice at Simpson, Doug Hird agreed to take on the editorship. It was agreed that a new post of Training Officer be created but there was reluctance for anyone to take on this new role. In the absence of anyone else, Simon Head volunteered to fill the post. He has since found that he does not have enough time to devote to the role and Christine Ryan, who recently moved into the area,

has taken over as Training Officer. Her first job was to organise the training session already planned for the end of June.

Our calendar has seen a number of last minute changes. At the beginning of April we postponed the beginners' striking competition following the death of the Queen Mother, as we did not think it appropriate to hold this at that time. The original venue of Lavendon was not available for the re-arranged date at the beginning of May, so it was moved to Calverton. The attendance was rather poor but two teams were made up representing Stowe and Newton Longville. Malcolm Hooton was persuaded to act as judge and he placed Stowe first. The June practice, which was originally to have been at Buckingham, was moved to Wicken as we could not be sure that the work on the church would be finished in time.

The Branch Striking Competition was a week later this year than normal because of the Golden Jubilee. This was held at Maids Moreton with four bands entering. Our thanks go to Richard Yates for judging the competition. It was very close but he adjudged Hanslope the winners with a joint Shenley/Loughton band only half a fault behind.

We were saddened to learn of the death of Jim Lambert at the end of May. Although Jim had not been fit enough to ring for some years he was always a keen supporter of the branch, and regularly attended our meetings along with his wife Audrey. Our thoughts go out to her. We shall miss his lively presence at the meetings.

Helen Stanworth

Old North Berks Branch

The Branch Striking Competition was held on 16th March prior to the AGM. Appleton won the competition, with Abingdon second and Blewbury third. Appleton will represent the Branch in the Guild six-bell competition.

At the AGM Shirley Haines resigned as Branch Secretary and Nicola Turner was elected to try to replace her. The entire Branch is very grateful to Shirley for the enormous amount of work she has done for us over the last six years. There were also two new Branch Representatives for the Guild General Committee: Helen Diserens and Shirley Haines were elected in place of Jack Berry and Nicola Turner. A very positive aspect of the Branch AGM was the large number of new members elected, 16 in all from nine different towers. We hope they have many years of happy ringing with the Branch and look forward to seeing them at Branch practices and social events.

Fund raising for the Branch Millennium project, the Branch bell at Milton, has been continuing well. It was agreed that fund raising would continue until the half-yearly meeting in September and the outstanding balance would be paid from Branch funds. The old bells and frame at Milton were removed in early March and the meeting was shown some frightening pictures of the terrible state of the main supporting beams. Several Branch members have seen the new Branch bell at Whites of Appleton and a photograph was available for the meeting. The new bells will be hung in June and will hopefully be ringing in July.

There has been lots of ringing in the Branch both for the sad occasion of the death of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother and for the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. Most towers in the branch rang for the Golden Jubilee. Abingdon even got a mention on

the local news advertising the fact they would be ringing at St Nicolas for the Abingdon Mayor's Bun throwing. This is a local tradition for Royal occasions, 4000 buns were thrown from the roof of the Old Town Hall in the centre of Abingdon.

Nicola Turner

Reading Branch

Our AGM this year was held at St Mary, Shinfield where the Ringing Centre is based. Only one change was made in the Branch Committee: Stephanie May stood down after a number of years as a Ringing Master and has been replaced by John Manley. Shinfield also hosted the Guild AGM in May. We are most grateful to Bobbie May and all of her stalwart band of helpers for making both occasions so successful.

Reading was unable to reproduce the form and success of last year in the National 12-bell Competition. They were by no means disgraced coming third to the Cumberlands and St Pauls. First place in the Tewkesbury Shield again eluded the Reading Band representing the Oxford Guild. The St Mary and St Laurence band won the Guild 8-bell competition, with a band drawn from seven different towers coming a creditable third.

Towers throughout the Branch rang quarter peals to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Accession of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth. Some rang half-muffled quarter peals in memoriam for Princess Margaret, and even more rang half-muffled quarter peals in memoriam for Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother.

Nina Byrne organised a 'firsts' quarter peal day in April. The 'first' could be a first ever quarter, a first in method or even a first conducting a quarter. Eight successful quarters were rung in methods ranging from Plain Bob Doubles through Plain Bob Major to Bristol Surprise Major. Our thanks go to Nina and all of the ringers and conductors who gave up so much of their time so that the 'firsters' could achieve their objectives.

Our Branch outing in June was to the Oxford Cotswolds. Is this Branch alone in having ringers reluctant to commit themselves to events? So few people said that they were coming that thought was given to cancelling the day. This 'thought' persuaded a number of people to say that they were definitely coming. In the end some 20 people enjoyed a good day's ringing. The weather was kind (i.e. no rain), and the pub at Ducklington provided excellent fare for lunch. We must thank Joyce Vernon for her organisation.

The Monday afternoon practices continue to have good support but the monthly Branch practices have not been so well attended.

I have been told that it is very likely that St Peter's, Ufton Nervet (4) is to be returned to the community. This means that the bells should become available for ringing again.

I am delighted to report that Kaye and Chris Mundy have a baby son, James Christopher, born on Friday, 19th May and weighing in at 8lb 5oz. (3.78kg).

As many of you know Cathy Martin (Englefield) sadly lost her battle against cancer and died on April 6th. Englefield church was absolutely packed for her funeral. Our deepest sympathies go to John and Hannah.

Vivien Bloundele

South Oxfordshire Branch

At the Branch AGM at Drayton St Leonard in April, there were one or two changes of officer. Tina Ruff and Andrew Davis swapped jobs so Andrew is now Ringing Master with Tina as Deputy. John Aspley stood down as Branch Representative and was replaced by Kay Bartholomew. Otherwise, we go on as before! The new Fred Keen Trophy for the 6-bell competition was presented for the first time to the winners, Drayton St Leonard, who also won the Holloway Shield competition.

The Branch lost one of its longest serving members with the death of George Messenger in April; George was elected to the Guild in 1946. A few days later, the Branch was further saddened to hear of the death of Beverley Keen at the age of 31, after a brave fight against illness. The presence of the Guild Banner and many ringers at the funeral was a great tribute. A quarter of Grandsire Triples was rung at Watlington on the evening of the funeral.

Many towers rang to mark the death of the Queen Mother; and to celebrate the Golden Jubilee. At Great Haseley, a quarter of Grandsire Doubles was rung at the end of the street party on 3rd June, which was a first quarter for Daniel Rogers aged 10. It was conducted by mum, Hilarie Rogers, who last conducted a quarter of Grandsire on the same bell 20 years ago, for the birth of Prince William. To keep it in the family, dad, Christopher, also rang in the quarter, which was his 75th. Sue Jones of Aston Rowant has also rung her first quarter; and Claire Armit of Brightwell Baldwin has rung her first inside (to Grandsire). The Tuesday quarters at Chinnor continue – they rang one which included “Old”, and was Kay Bartholomew’s 150th quarter; and one earlier quarter was Tina Ruff’s 150th with Gordon Smith, 80th with Sue Dyke, 40th with Shirley Smith and 75th as conductor.

Hilarie Rogers

Witney and Woodstock Branch

Much ceremonial and commemorative ringing has taken place in the Branch to mark the recent Royal Happenings. It was interesting that at Easter the rival claims of the Queen Mother and the Resurrection (to muffle or not to muffle) had to be tactfully balanced. For the Jubilee two peals were rung, at Combe and Stonesfield, both conducted by Adrian Malton. The Stonesfield peal included four members of the regular Sunday band.

Two enjoyable outings took place: in March a party of Bampton and Clanfield ringers went to Whitechapel Bell Foundry and the City of London for a most interesting day, while in May we travelled to Northamptonshire for the Branch Outing. We enjoyed beautiful weather and some well-contrasted and sometimes challenging bells, though the steep ladder to the ringing chamber in the historic tower at Earls Barton caused several panic attacks. More drama at Wellingborough.....a breaking treble rope at the end of ringing down sent our gallant Ringing Master crashing to the purple-carpeted floor in spectacular fashion, thankfully not too badly damaged. Two members had their bottles of Rescue Remedy out of their handbags in less time than it takes to say “Stand!”. Thanks to Brian and Lorna for an exciting day.

Attendance at our AGM this year was at an all time low, so representatives from most of the towers met at Rose’s house in Bampton to swap ideas and think of ways to persuade more members to come. Many constructive ideas were put forward and a new format agreed upon which we hope will be successful. How do other branches deal with this, I wonder?

Our Ringing Master held another of his successful Saturday morning courses at Yarnton, the

method this time being Bob Doubles. With a team of efficient helpers, the novices coped well with the heavy Yarnton bells and made good progress. Thanks to Yarnton tower and all who helped.

The Branch did better this year than last in the Guild 8-bell Striking Competition, gaining second place in their heat and fifth in the final. The Branch Striking Competition was held this year at Aston. Our old Call Changes trophy, the Langford Shield, which was donated many years ago by the Queen's dressmaker, Hardy Amies, had run out of space so we now have a superb new trophy donated by Andrew Salmon. This was won by Aston, with Bampton carrying off the Method Ringing Shield.

A final note: I often notice when visiting towers that the signatures, place names and dates on old competition certificates hung on the wall have faded, often into complete invisibility. Ordinary ink and ball pens are not (unless otherwise stated) light fast and will fade when exposed to light. Light and damp-proof pens such as Edding can be bought at good stationers and art shops.

Rachael Sherlaw-Johnson

Points from Peals

The year 2002 has so far been a year of notable coincidences. Firstly, on 22nd March, Kath Baldwin rang her 2002nd tower bell peal. Additionally, although rung for the Amersham Guild, it should also be mentioned that Alan Ainsworth conducted his 1000th peal which surprisingly turned out to be on the 50th anniversary of his first peal as conductor.

Congratulations to Celia Luzar who rang her first peal at Bicester on 2nd February. Well done to Catherine Lane who rang her 200th peal and Tim Pett who rang his 2000th tower bell peal. Congratulations also to Peter Ellis who rang his 3000th peal and by doing so becoming the youngest person to reach this total. Peter has now also rung 2000 peals with Colin Turner.

On 29th March 1972 members of the Oxford Diocesan Guild rang the first peal of Bristol Surprise Maximus on handbells. Thirty years on two peals of Bristol Surprise Maximus were rung in hand to commemorate this event. The peals included some of the original band and the original composition was used.

On the subject of hand bell peals, the 400th peal was rung in Bernard Groves' house. Does this mean that Bernard has collected enough steepleage to buy a new set of dining chairs?

A band of present and past members of the EBSB branch of the Guild rang the first peal on the recently refurbished bells at Farnham Royal. This was also Robert Newton's 1500th peal for the Guild. The first peal was also rung on the bells at Brightwell Baldwin since rehangings.

A number of peals were rung for the 50th anniversary of the Queens Accession. A peal of Malta G C Surprise Royal was rung to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the awarding of the George Cross to the people of Malta.

Geoff Dodd celebrated his 70th Birthday recently and a number of peals were rung to compliment him on this event. A peal at Little Missenden was rung as a 95th birthday compliment to Mrs Edith Millham, mother of Ruth Groves. An engagement compliment to Anne Payne and John Peverett was marked by a peal of Cambridge Surprise Maximus at Amersham on 2nd March.

On St. Patrick's Day, members of the Guild travelled to Dublin to ring a peal of Yorkshire Surprise Sixteen at Christ Church Cathedral. Most of the band did the round trip, which took about 20 hours from start to finish, in a day.

Both half-muffled and open peals were rung in memory of HRH The Princess Margaret and HM Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother. Additionally the Guild lost several members and friends in recent months and peals were rung in thanksgiving for the lives of Alan Edens, Mrs N Moffatt, May Newton, Barry Took, Ray Turner, Cathy Martin and Maureen Matthews. A peal was also rung in memory of Audrey Butler.

Finally, on 18th May 2002, a peal was specially arranged and rung as a retirement compliment to John Wells and Ken Davenport from the posts of Guild Master and Deputy Master and in recognition of their hard work for the Guild.

Claire Edwards, Peal Secretary

All change at the Central Council

When you read this in *Odd Bob*, you might have seen official reports in *The Ringing World*, so I will try to give some personal impressions rather than just bare facts.

This was the end of a triennium (three-year stretch) and there were many fresh faces from new members - many of them 'ordinary ringers', not the super-beings people might tell you.

The venue

Different member societies host the meeting each year, and this year it was in Norwich - an interesting city. As well as the 'work', I went to an opera on the Saturday evening and toured the castle on Sunday morning after morning ringing in the city. At the first tower, many of the tower grabbers left after the first couple of touches, and it was clear if we all went there would be too few to ring up to the service, so I persuaded enough people to stay. Afterwards, the tower captain said how wonderful it was to have all their bells rung - without us there were only three of them.

The welcome meeting in the afternoon is a new feature to introduce fresh members to the Council in an informal atmosphere. They had had a welcome pack explaining how the Council works, and at the meeting they could talk to committee chairmen and officers over tea (which was most of the 'meeting').

Round the corner was the annual service at St Peter Mancroft - a splendid, light, airy building. The singing had the vigour you would expect from a church full of ringers. The address, by a ringing bishop, was among the best I have heard.

Back at the hotel there was just time to hand over a computer with a quick demonstration of *!Strike* to Heather Peachey, who will use it for a listening course, and then the reception dinner with more opportunity for *ad hoc* discussions with people about everything from running courses to advice on bell tuning, and all in between.

Monday is an early start for those who attend the corporate communion. My wife dropped me at 8.30 before driving home to a silver wedding party without me. (We CC members are a dedicated lot!) An hour later the meeting began with forebodings of contentious business

ahead, as well as all the committee elections – a recipe for a long hard day. Thankfully, after the overnight thunderstorm, it was cooler or the room would have been unbearable.

Contentious methods

The problem of method definitions is a long running saga. You might have read Simon Linford's excellent series in *The Ringing World* explaining things in layman's language. The immediate problems concern methods most of us are unlikely to ring, but there are important underlying issues of more general concern.

Despite caustic comments people sometimes make, we would all be far worse off if method definitions did not exist. We take for granted that everyone knows what Plain Bob, Grandsire, Stedman, Cambridge, etc. are, but it wasn't always so. Standardisation of methods is a significant achievement of the last century or so, but standardisation should not mean fossilisation. Standards must adapt to the needs of ringers. How they do so is at the heart of the current controversy.

The current rules seek to define what is currently being rung in fair detail. Extending the boundary as the art progresses keeps adding extra rules, special cases and exceptions, so the rules get progressively more unwieldy. Also, anyone wishing to innovate must first break the rules before persuading the powers that be to change them. The alternative now being proposed is for the rules to define only what is essential to cover the essence of what change ringing is about. Innovations would then be filling in gaps rather than breaking bounds.

The two sides of the debate are far from reconciled, but there was give and take in the debate, and Stephanie Warboys, spokesman for the new approach, was elected to the Methods Committee to work alongside the traditionalists. Let us hope that this approach works.

The Ringing World

This problem was less comfortably resolved. The Ringing World Ltd, the company owned by the Central Council that produces our weekly newspaper, has gone through a few troubled years. Some problems have been more public than others. Throughout this period of change, much has been achieved and many problems overcome, thanks to the efforts of the board of directors, all of whom are unpaid volunteers, as well as the staff. Yet despite these improvements there has been a trickle of worrying signals that perhaps all was not quite right. It is hard for outsiders to judge such matters, and many of us hoped things would be resolved without revolution.

After three years of skirmishes, the balloon finally went up. The board made a very creditable presentation of recent achievements and, in a statesmanlike move, two directors offered to stand down after a period of handover. But the drama continued to unfold like a Greek tragedy. Steve Coleman voiced concerns that, despite all the good news, something somewhere was not quite right. Speaking as moderately as he could, albeit in florid language, he gave credit to the achievements of the current board but felt that change was needed. He and others emphasised that they were not questioning the integrity of board members, and there were a couple of moving tributes to Andrew Stubbs, the outgoing chairman.

Experience has taught me that the world is not neatly divided into goodies and baddies, but sadly people often react as if it is. The board felt that their integrity was under attack and all resigned, putting paid to any hopes of injecting new blood while retaining some

continuity. A chill realisation went round the room that, in a few short minutes, the fortunes of a quarter-of-a-million pound business, providing a crucial service to the Exercise, had been tossed into the air with no certainty about where or how things would land.

The elections duly produced a new board, with a fair mix of the requisite skills, but a lot of catching up to do. They have taken on an extremely difficult task, and it is in everyone's interest for them to succeed.

The rest

The afternoon was now well spent, and we returned to the main Council business with the meat of the agenda – reports and election of 15 working committees – barely begun. Wary of argument, and conscious of the time, members were reluctant to stir up many issues. We sped through the business with almost indecent haste.

One casualty of all this was the Education Committee, which I chair. We needed several new members to replace long-serving ones standing down. In the event, many interested candidates either went to other committees that they felt needed their skills more than we did, or they had become *Ringin' World* directors and had enough on their hands, so we now have six members instead of twelve. We will all have to work harder!

Thus my most eventful Council meeting finally ended at 7pm. It has opened some new opportunities which we hope will be productive. It also showed some weaknesses in the way we do things, and I am confident this will stimulate reforms over coming years. To an outsider, the Council might seem slow to change (no bad thing in a large organisation) but it does change, and most of the changes I have seen in 13 years have been for the better.

John Harrison

Display Boards

Both sets of display boards are busily doing sterling work already this summer and there has been quite a lot of demand for them particularly during the Jubilee celebrations.

Recently we have had to buy a new carrying case at the cost of just over £100 because of wear and tear and, I suspect, it hasn't always been treated with respect. We do not charge for the use of the boards and display material but would always welcome a donation towards its upkeep.

The incoming Master has suggested that the information would benefit from an update of material, perhaps to include Millennium restorations. This will be an additional cost to the Guild (colour copying and lamination of display sheets). If you have any good quality photos of restoration work over the last couple of years, and would be prepared to lend them for copying and add a few words of explanation, I would be pleased to hear from you.

To obtain either set of the display material please contact Bobbie May on 01 18-988-4172 or by email Bobbie@bmay.freemove.co.uk

Bobbie May

Group Personal Accident Insurance

For a number of years, the Guild has arranged Group Personal Accident Insurance cover via Ecclesiastical Insurance Group for Guild members. With effect from 1 May 2001, this cover has been placed with another insurer and increased benefits obtained for 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 practise 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 and the level of temporary total disablement is increased to £300 per week.

Benefits payable in the event of a claim

Age Range (years)	Temporary Total Disablement	Permanent Disablement or Permanent Partial Disablement	Death
16-70	£200 per week for up to 104 weeks	£25,000	£25,000
9 - 15	Nil	£2,500	£2,500
71-75	Nil	£2,500	£2,500
76-80	Nil	Nil	£2,500

Medical expenses up to £1,250 are payable for those aged 16 - 70 years and up to £125 for the other age groups.

Claims And Queries Concerning The Operation Of The Insurance

Claims and queries should be directed in the first instance to -
The Honorary General Treasurer, Mr.B.J.Gatward,
Grangewood, Mill Lane, Calcot, Reading, RG31 7RS (01189 413097).

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.

Guild Directory and Information

The Guild provides a variety of services including:

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 C J Davis (*see Education Sub-committee listing*).

Library

See report on page 6.

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

See article on page 24.

Towers and belfries

See article on new Tower Maintenance Award Scheme on page 10.

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

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 (Registered Charity No. 284053)

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 2002 - 2003

Master	Mr Graham J Clifton	Stedman Cottage, Middle Aston, Bicester, Oxon OX25 5PZ (01869 347273)
Deputy Master	Mr Jon Chamberlain	24 Nursery View, Faringdon, Oxon SN7 8SJ (01367 242647)
General Secretary	Mr Nigel G P Harrison	Easter House, Taynton, Burford, Oxon OX18 4UH (01993 823149)
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 J Beaumont	184 Kidmore Road, Caversham, Reading, Berks RG4 7ND (0118 946 1714)
Report Editor	Mrs Heather Browning	38 Carolina Place, Finchampstead, Wokingham, Berks RG40 4PQ (0118 932 8321)
Newsletter Editor	Mr A Rex Agg	25 Wilton Road, Beaconsfield, Bucks HP9 2DE (01494 675517)
Peal Secretary	Miss Claire F Edwards	9 Thornbury Green, Wargrave Road, Twyford, Berks RG10 9RH (0118 934 0804)

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)
Minute Secretary	Mrs Hilarie Rogers	4 High Street, Drayton St Leonard, Wallingford, Oxon OX10 7BA (01865 890163)
Website Manager	Dr Timothy G Pett	20 St Amand Drive, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 5RQ (01235 526033)
Guild web site		http://www.parishes.oxford.anglican.org/odg/
Children's Officer	Mrs Hilarie Rogers	4 High Street, Drayton St Leonard, Wallingford, Oxon OX10 7BA (01865 890163)
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 OX10 0NB (01491 824504)
	<i>(Old North Berks, Reading, South Oxon)</i>	
	Mr Anthony Cole	6 Isis Avenue, Bicester, Oxfordshire OX2 8DR (01869 243236)
	<i>(Bicester, Newbury, Oxford City)</i>	
	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 (EBSB, Sonning, V of the W H) SL3 8HY (01753 671507)

Six General Committee members

Mr Simon Cole	Mr A (Tony) Crabtree	Mrs Wenda Fowles
Mr W (Willy) Haynes	Mr David Lane	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 Timothy 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 OX49 5SX (01844 352926)
Mr Ken R Davenport	47 Brookside, Wokingham, Berks RG41 2ST (0118 978 6554)

Guild Trustees

Mr W (Bill) Butler	<i>(see Central Council Representatives)</i>
Mr Barry W M Cowper	Avondale, 45 Longfield Drive, Amersham, Bucks HP6 5HE (01494 725566)
Mr Derek Fowles	10 Lynden Close, Holyport, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 2LB (01628 629538)

Financial information

Subscriptions	Resident members	£5.50 per annum
	Non-resident life members	£5.50
Peal fees	35p per person per peal (from 1st January 2002)	
Annual report	£2.50 + 50p packing and postage	
Badges	£1.50 each	
Guild History	£3.00 per copy	

Branch Secretaries

Banbury	Mrs Joan Warren	Grove House, Little Tew, Chipping Norton OX7 4JB (01608 638643)
Bicester	Miss Kathryn Grant	Church Key Cottage, The Walk, Islip, Oxon OX5 2SD (01865 373972)
Central Bucks	Miss Ann Pedley	18 Rochester Place, Aylesbury, Bucks HP19 7QZ (01296 586316)
Chiltern	Mr Mike C J Davis	1 Rookwood Way, Great Missenden, Bucks HP16 0DF (01494 891312)
Chipping Norton	Mrs Claire Tarrant	6 Marlborough Place, Charlbury, Oxon OX7 3HB (01608 811290)
East Berks & South Bucks	Mrs Katharine J Firman	7 Laburnham Road, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 4DB (01628 636484)
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 Nicola Turner	Puddleduck Cottage, 35 High Street, Milton, Abingdon OX14 4ER (01235 833938)
Oxford City	Mrs Katie Lane	Catchmole Cottage, 12 High Street, Wheatley, Oxon OX33 1XX (01865 874026)
Reading	Mrs Vivien Bloundele	71 St Mark's Road, Henley-on-Thames, Oxon RG9 1LP (01491 573 489)
Sonning Deanery	Mr Rob Needham	15 Bodmin Road, Woodley, Reading, Berks RG5 3RZ (0118 926 7724)
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 784393)
Witney & Woodstock	Mrs Rachael Sherlaw-Johnson	Malton Croft, Woodlands Rise, Stonesfield, Nr. Witney, Oxon OX29 8PL (01993 891318)

Education sub-committee

Chairman	<i>Vacant</i>	
Secretary	Mr Mike C J Davis	1 Rookwood Way, Great Missenden, Bucks HP16 0DF (01494 891312)
Members	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 E John 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 Graham J Clifton	(see Guild Master)
*	Mr Nigel G P Harrison	(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)
12. Surprise Minor: Cambridge to London, Part 2 (Building on Cambridge) and Part 3 (London)
- *Parts 2 & 3 form a single leaflet*
13. Plain, Little and Double Bob Minor and Plain Bob Major

Price: 50p per copy (plus postage and packaging) from Mrs Patricia M Newton, The White House, Plowden Park, Aston Rowant, Watlington, Oxon OX49 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 John C Davidge	Rowallan, Back Lane, Chalfont St Giles, Bucks HP8 4PD (01494 873325)
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 A (Tony) J Crabtree	4 Stallpits Road, Shrivenham, Swindon, Wilts SN6 8BG (01793 784064)
	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 Mark Walker	29 Villeboys Close, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 3XR (01235 536159)
*	Mr Graham J Clifton	(see <i>Guild Master</i>)
*	Mr Nigel G P Harrison	(see <i>Guild Secretary</i>)
*	Mr Brian J Gatward	(see <i>General Treasurer</i>)

* denotes *ex-officio* member.

Diary of Events for 2002

*	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

JULY

Sat 13	Guild		Guild Festival - Drayton	
Sat 13	Central Bucks	SC	Wotton Underwood	5.30 draw
Sat 13	Witney & Woodst.	BP	Wootton	7.30
Thur 18	Banbury	EP	Rousham - ringing up and down	7.30
Fri 19	North Bucks	BP	Stoke Goldington	7.30
Sat 20	Chiltern	BP	Great Kimble	7.00 - 9.00
Sat 20	Oxford City	BP	St Giles, Oxford	7.00 - 8.30
Sat 20	Sonning Deanery	BP	Sandhurst (C of E)	10.00am
Wed 24	Witney & Woodst.	AP	Clanfield	7.30
Sat 27	EBSB	BP	Langley	7.00 - 9.00
Sat 27	North Bucks	SC	Newport Pagnell (Inter-branch comp.)*	6.00
Sat 27	South Oxon	BP	Warborough	7.00 - 9.00

AUGUST

Thur 1	Bicester	BP	Stratton Audley	
Wed 7	Chiltern	AP	Great Missenden	8.00
Sat 10	Central Bucks	BP	Whitchurch	6.30 - 8.30
Sat 10	EBSB	SP	Stoke Poges	7.00 - 9.00
Sat 10	Oxford City	BP	North Hinksey	7.00 - 8.30
Sat 10	Reading	BP	Shiplake	7.00 - 9.00
Sat 10	Witney & Woodst.	BP	Tackley	7.30
Fri 16	North Bucks	BP	Lockhampstead	7.30
Sat 17	Chiltern	BP	Marsworth	7.00 - 9.00
Sat 17	Sonning Deanery	BP	White Waltham	7.30
Mon 19	Banbury	BP	Bodicote	7.30
Wed 22	Witney & Woodst.	AP	Woodstock	7.30
Sat 24	EBSB	BP	Chalfont St Peter	7.00 - 9.00
Sat 24	South Oxon	BP	Berrick	7.00 - 9.00

SEPTEMBER

Tues 3	Chiltern	AP	Stoke Mandeville	7.30
Fri 6	Bicester	BP	Kirtlington	
Sat 7	North Bucks	QM	Stony Stratford*	3.30
Sat 7	Reading	HY	Nettlebed (with six-bell SC)	
Fri 13	Guild		Easthampstead Course (to 15th Sept.)	
Sat 14	Central Bucks		Branch outing to Southend	
Sat 14	EBSB	SP	Hitcham	7.00 - 9.00
Sat 14	Witney & Woodst.	BP	Church Hanborough	7.30
Tues 17	Banbury	BP	Steeple Aston	7.30
Fri 20	North Bucks	BP	Chicheley*	7.30
Sat 21	Chiltern	BP	Ellesborough	7.00 - 9.00
Sat 21	Old North Berks	HY	Childrey	tba
Sat 21	Oxford City	BP	Wheatley	7.00 - 8.30
Sat 21	Sonning Deanery	SC	Twyford (eight-bell SC)	10.00am
Wed 25	Witney & Woodst.	AP	South Leigh	7.30
Sat 28	EBSB	BP	Cookham	7.00 - 9.00
Sat 28	South Oxon	BP	Great Milton	7.00 - 9.00

OCTOBER

Thur 3	Bicester	HY	tba	
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Fri	4	Chiltern	AP	Aston Clinton	7.30
Sat	5	Guild	SC	Six-bell Striking Competition - Witney/Woodstock	
Mon	7	Bicester	BP	Brill	
Fri	11	Old North Berks	BP	Blewbury	8.00 - 9.30
Sat	12	Guild		Cambridge Major Course	
Sat	12	EBSB	HY	Winkfield (with Lorna Newton SC final)	
Sat	12	Oxford City		Branch outing	
Sat	12	Reading	BP	Reading, St Laurence	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	12	South Oxon		Branch outing	
Sat	12	Witney & Woodst.	BP	Bicester	7.30
Fri	18	North Bucks	BP	Lillingstone Lovell*	7.30
Sat	19	Banbury	HY	Rousham	3.00
Sat	19	Chiltern/C. Bucks	HY	Weston Turville (with Orchard Cup SC)	
Sat	19	Sonning Deanery	BP	Sonning	10.00am
Sat	26	EBSB	BP	High Wycombe	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	26	South Oxon	HY	Brightwell Baldwin	7.00 - 9.00
Mon	28	Witney & Woodst.	AP	Bampton	7.30

NOVEMBER

Sat	2	Guild		Steeple Aston Course	
Mon	4	Chiltern	AP	Bledlow	7.30
Tues	5	Bicester	BP	Islip	
Sat	9	Central Bucks	BP	Stewkley	6.30 - 8.30
Sat	9	EBSB	SP	Bray	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	9	Reading	BP	Streatley	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	9	Witney & Woodst.	BP	Langford	7.30
Thur	14	Old North Berks	BP	Radley	7.30 - 9.00
Fri	15	North Bucks	BP	Lavendon*	7.30
Sat	16	Banbury		Branch outing	
Sat	16	Chiltern	BP	Cheddington	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	16	Oxford City	AG	Cowley	
Sat	16	Sonning Deanery	BP	St Paul's, Wokingham (+committee mtg)	5.00/7.30
Mon	18	Banbury	BP	Cropredy	7.30
Sat	23	Guild	SC	Ten-bell Striking Competition - Banbury a.m.	
Sat	23	Guild		General Committee Meeting - N. Bucks Branch	
Sat	23	EBSB	BP	Penn	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	23	South Oxon	BP	Watlington	7.00 - 9.00
Tues	26	Witney & Woodst.	AP	Witney	7.30

DECEMBER

Wed	4	Bicester	BP	Charlton-on-Otmoor	
Wed	4	Chiltern	AP	Great Missenden	8.00
Sat	7	North Bucks	QM	Fenny Stratford*	3.30
Wed	11	Old North Berks	BP	West Hanneý	7.30 - 9.00
Sat	14	Central Bucks	BP	Wing (with Christmas social)	5.30 - 7.00
Sat	14	Chiltern	BP	Great Missenden	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	14	EBSB	BP	Beaconsfield (with Christmas social)	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	14	Oxford City	BP	St Aldate, Oxford	7.00 - 8.30
Sat	14	Reading		Carol service, Henley	6.00 - 9.00
Sat	14	South Oxon	BP	Great Haseley	7.00 - 9.00
Sat	14	Witney & Woodst.	BP	Witney	7.30
Mon	16	Banbury	BP	Great Tew	7.30
Fri	20	North Bucks	BP	Bletchley*	7.30
Sat	21	Sonning Deanery	BP	Hurst	10.00am
Thur	26	Banbury	BP	Deddington	10.30-noon
Fri	27	EBSB		Post-Christmas outing	

Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers

Established: 17th January 1881

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

**STEEPLE ASTON
ONE-DAY COURSE**

Based at Steeple Aston Village Hall

Saturday 2nd November 2002

Methods offered: Doubles, Minor, Triples and Major
from Plain Hunt to Grandsire Triples and Plain Bob Major

Plus evening options

Cost: £20 (Evening Meal included in the price)

For details and an application form please *either*.

- A) Send 9" x 4" stamped addressed envelope to:
Simon Cole, 83 Bristol Road, Bicester, Oxfordshire, OX26 4TH.
(Telephone: 01869 247525)

or

- B) Apply by e-mail to simoncole@bicestertower.fsnet.co.uk and an application form will be e-mailed to you which you can then complete and return by e-mail.

Closing date for applications: 31st August 2002