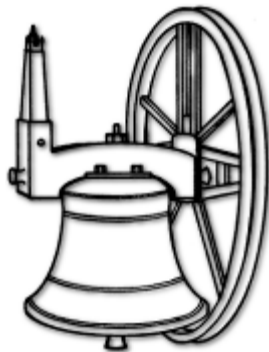


# The Bedfordshire Clanger



**Biggleswade District Newsletter**

The Biggleswade district usually meets for ringing on the second Saturday in each month at 3.30pm. Details of upcoming events are listed on the following pages.

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## District Committee for 2005

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Tower</b>	<b>Telephone</b>
Chairman	Mike Matthews	Eaton Socon	01480 212838
Vice-Chairman	Charlotte Smith	Biggleswade	01462 700676
Secretary	Elizabeth Overfield	Arlesey	01462 815672
Treasurer	Peter Overfield	Arlesey	01462 815672
Tower Secretary	Alan Smith	Biggleswade	01767 313521
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District BRF Treasurer	Sue Spencer	Eaton Socon	01480 476068
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Committee Members	Stephen Channon	Amphill	01525 633538
	John Loveless	Campton	01462 819074
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	John Parsons	Meppershall	01462 813333

### Other Officers

District BRF Auditor	Mrs M Mann
Ronald J Sharp Bell Fund Rep	Mr J Parsons

## Editorial

Welcome to the first issue of the new-look Clanger. Many thanks are due to Beth Overfield for doing such a sterling job producing the Clanger over the last few years.

We hope readers find the added information useful, particularly those ringers in the District who don't yet take advantage of the wide range of events on offer, or know the main protagonists!

A copy of the Clanger is issued free of charge to each Tower in the District four times a year. Extra copies are available for a small fee to cover administration costs. If you would prefer to receive the Clanger by email, or require additional copies, please send a request to [bedfordshire.clanger@ntlworld.com](mailto:bedfordshire.clanger@ntlworld.com). We also look forward to receiving comments, suggestions and submissions for future articles at this address! If you do not have email you can phone Stephen Channon on 01525 633538 or Jackie O'Regan on 01525 630242.

## Dates for your Diary

The second Quarter of 2005 sees a number of events that vary from the standard District Meeting. Differences in timing and arrangements are described below.

9 <sup>th</sup> April	Old Warden	and	Henlow (tea)
14 <sup>th</sup> May	District Outing	-	East Hertfordshire
21 <sup>st</sup> May	Association AGM	-	Maulden
11 <sup>th</sup> June	Striking Competition	-	Meppershall
9 <sup>th</sup> July	Potton	and	Tempsford (tea)

Ringling for the standard two tower District Meetings is from 3.30pm. Tea is generally around 5.00-5.30pm, depending on whether it is served at the first or second Tower and is followed by evening ringling.

### District Meetings - Special Note for Learners

District Meetings are a good opportunity for ringers of all abilities to practice what they are currently learning with a more experienced Band than in individual "home" Towers. Learners are especially encouraged to come along – there is always someone on hand to "keep you right"! The experience of ringling on other bells with other ringers is one of the best ways to progress. It may just be that another ringer will explain how to ring that difficult part of a Method far better than your Tower Captain!

Do come along and see for yourself, you will be made very welcome whatever your standard of ringling.

### District Outing - Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May

The Annual Car Outing has been arranged by Philip Rogers of Henlow. This year we travel to East Hertfordshire:

10.45-11.30	Albury, All Saints	6	13.2.25	TL435247
12.00-12.45	Sawbridgeworth, Gt. St. Mary	8	24.0.12	TL485148
	lunch at Sawbridgeworth			
15.00-15.45	Little Hadham, St. Cecilia	6	11.1.0	TL446228
16.15-17.00	Standon, St. Mary	6	12.2.20	TL397222
17.45-18.30	Little Wymondley, St. Mary	6	2.3.22	TL217273
	evening meal at Shefford (optional)			

If you would like to go for the optional curry in the evening at the Indian Chef in Shefford, please make your own arrangements. It is advisable to book in advance.

### District Striking Competition - Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> June

The striking competition will again be held at Meppershall – entries to Beth Overfield, District Secretary, by Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2005. A fish and chip supper will be available afterwards in John and Ann Parsons' garden, tickets £5 – all welcome!

The bells will be available for ringing between 4pm and 5pm, the draw will take place at 5.15pm and the contest will then start at 5.30pm.

Ringling for the competition will consist of 120 rows of Doubles or Minor, rounds or methods. There is a rounds cup for the best team of rounds ringers. Bands who go forward to the County Striking Competition must ring changes (a method) for that event.

### Summer Social - 13<sup>th</sup> August

Your committee spent some time at the last meeting discussing how a social event could be organised for the younger (and not so young!) ringers as an alternative to the Annual Dinner in March. As the numbers for the August District Meeting are usually lower due to holidays, the committee are exploring a combined meeting with Luton District. This would be a good opportunity for the younger members to get together and socialise, for example going Ten-Pin Bowling. Your local committee representative would welcome any comments on this or suggestions for other ideas!

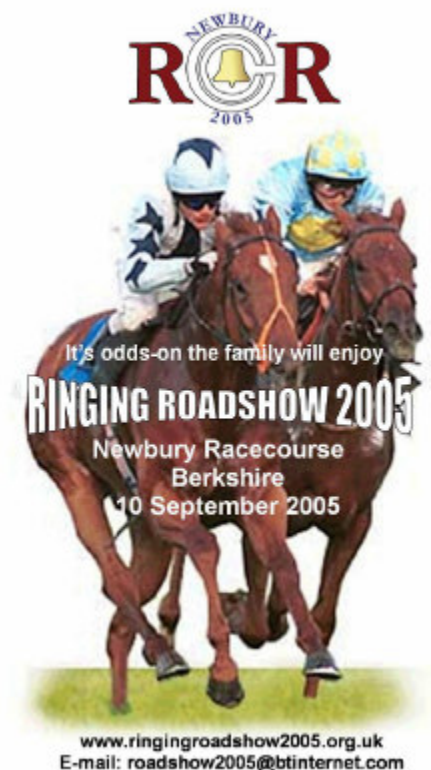
### Newbury Day - 10<sup>th</sup> September

The plan for the September District Meeting is a trip to the Ringing World Roadshow. Transport could be organised (e.g. a coach), however this is only viable if a number of people express interest and commit to going some time in advance. Please talk to your local Committee Member about your interest in this event and possible transport arrangements. As a guide, Newbury Racecourse is between 1½ and 2 hours by car, depending where you are in Mid-Bedfordshire.

Details of the Roadshow are on the website advertised on the next page, but some points are:

- It is a one-day show from 10.00am to 5.00pm on Saturday, September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005.

- Entry fee will be close to that based on the previous Roadshow at Lincoln in 2003 which was £3 for adults and £1 for children.
- Towers will be open along the main routes to Newbury for ringing before and after the Roadshow (to be announced).
- Some of you may be interested to know that at the last Roadshow, approximately 2000 pints of beer were consumed!
- A particular feature of the 2003 Ringing Roadshow was the seminars that ran in a couple of large side rooms throughout the afternoon. Few things provoke more debate than that of recruitment and retention of young ringers, and it was no surprise that the Forum for Young People could have gone on all afternoon!
- Stalls and stands are provided by all the main players in the bell founding and bell hanging fields, representatives of all the Central Council committees, simulator demonstrators, mini rings you can ring on, handbell orchestras for you to listen to and join in, software vendors and ringing associations.



## Recent Events

### Amphill - 8<sup>th</sup> January

Around 50 people attended the ringing at St. Andrew's, and the Biggleswade District AGM that followed.

15 new members were elected at the meeting.

It came as quite a surprise to the Amphill ringers that around 35 people could fit into the Ringing Chamber! The ringing ranged from call changes to Cambridge Surprise Major, hopefully with something to suit everybody.

None of the resident ringers had any previous experience of catering for an ADM and were pleased that sufficient food and refreshments were provided (albeit at the expense of any left-overs remaining for the ringers families!)

### Great Barford and Sandy - 12<sup>th</sup> February

The tea and meeting were held at Sandy. Approximately 30 members attended the meeting and a wide variety of methods were rung, from Plain Bob to Surprise Minor.

### Arlesey and Clifton - 12<sup>th</sup> March

Ringing at Arlesey covered Bob Doubles to Norwich Surprise – and just before tea were two special sets, the Over 50s and Under 50s. Tea was provided by Arlesey ringers and was followed by the meeting. Around 25 people attended, and the evening ringing at Clifton included a variety of methods from Grandsire Triples to Surprise Major.

*The following verse was spotted in the ringing chamber at Arlesey:*

May good ringers flourish may bad ringers mend  
May change ringing last till the world's at an end  
When they meet may they meet in brotherly love  
When we depart hence may we all meet in the Tower above

### Annual District Dinner - 18<sup>th</sup> March

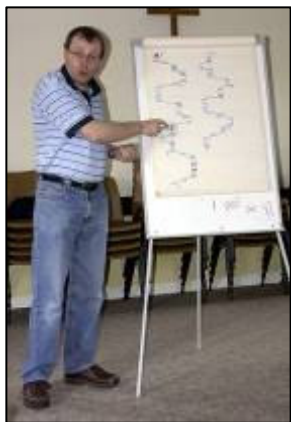
Another excellent event arranged by Charlotte Smith, the annual District Dinner was once again held at Tempsford and very well attended – 58 people booked.

The food was of the usual very high standard, and during the leisurely meal conversation flowed as freely as the wine! Bob Churchill treated everyone to a wonderful monologue (see "Bits and Bobs" for a transcript) and a raffle was held. A few pictures...



## Bedfordshire Association Training Day - 19<sup>th</sup> March 2005

The Cambridge Surprise Minor training day arranged by the Bedfordshire Association was so popular that all available spaces were taken when it was announced at the ADM. It should definitely be run again, perhaps Biggleswade District could organise a Cambridge Surprise Minor Training Day?!



The initial target was ten learners, but in the end twelve attended.

All the ringing was at Maulden, and a buffet lunch was provided. It was a very good and successful training day – our Treasurer succeeded on his fourth attempt!

### Featured Towers

This is a new regular feature about towers in the District. We would like each tower to submit an article – feel free to include anything you think might be of interest to local ringers.

#### Ampthill

St. Andrew's, 8 bells, 13-3-06  
Practice Night: Wednesdays 7.30-9.00pm  
Service Ringing: Sundays 9.00-9.30am

#### A Brief History of the Bells:

There have been bells at St. Andrew's since medieval times, but whether any of these were melted down and used in the existing bells we don't know. There were 5 bells when they were recast by Taylors of Loughborough in 1898, the oldest inscription being "Christopher



Grave made me 1665" on what is now bell 6. The old wooden frame was also replaced at this time by the existing metal frame, and a sixth bell was added in 1899 (now bell 3). Numbers 1 and 2 were added in 1980 – only one of the current Ampthill ringers was in the band at that time.

#### The Current Band:

Ringing at Ampthill has changed beyond recognition in the last three years, since we were struggling to manage a Doubles Method from a band of some 6-8 ringers.

At the moment we have a membership of some 18 people, and practice night usually sees around 12-14 ringers. The group is very mixed, with 8/9 adults and 7 teenagers, from learners to experienced ringers. We have been very successful in attracting new recruits through family, siblings and friends, and people moving into the area, as well as gaining new ringers through the Duke of Edinburgh scheme and "quiet" advertising through enthusiastic discussions within other organisations with which ringers are involved.

Today we ring from rounds with raw beginners to plain courses of Grandsire Triples. The Ringing Master likes to set challenges for every ringer, be it Plain Hunt, Touches of Doubles or Minor or new Methods for the first time.

The Ringing Master's philosophy is that first and foremost ringing should be fun – although teenagers and technology can challenge traditional ringing etiquette, and ringing discipline needs to be maintained. Mobile phones must be kept on silent, and when ringers are sitting out they need to watch quietly and learn or study new methods, rather than chatting or playing electronic games.

We have some ringers who are keen to develop their skills and find new challenges, while others just enjoy the ringing and don't "push" to do more. Ampthill was very pleased to participate in the District Striking Competition last year and to represent the District at County – this year we hope to improve!

### Bits and Bobs

*Our local Poet Laureate, Bob Churchill, showed at the Annual District Dinner in March that his talents run to more than just poetry...*

## Our Lad Bell Ringing

I had a letter from my brother the other day, he's not quite as old as me but his hearing isn't too good, so sometimes he doesn't get things quite right.

Dear Bob

Our lad's taken up bell ringing, it seems a funny old thing to me. He talks about it when he comes home but I don't always catch what he says on account of me being a bit deaf nowadays.

Anyway, he says that when they go into the ringing room the first thing they have to do is to take the ropes away from the spider. Well! That must be a big old spider if he can hold onto eight bell ropes. And they have a boss, but he's on the ceiling, that sounds a bit rum to me, but perhaps the spider's the boss.

Next week they must be going to Luton, to the airport, because he says that they're going plane hunting, how the heck can you hunt a plane, and there must be some hares there too because he says they have a coursing order.

One ringer must be a vet, I think his name's Stedman, he's always on about cats' ears and dogs' teeth, and he says he has slow sex and quick sex. (Oh sorry, that's six, I'll have to change my glasses.)

And there's a Grand sire, he's got doubles and triplets, and someone has to cover his behind.

Then there's one there called Sally, he said that she's a bit flighty. I reckon she must be, more than a bit. Well! He says they all have to catch her and pull her, and they have to keep a firm hold on her tail end. And they have to be sure to pull her hard enough or she'll drop on them. One evening our lad pulled a bit too hard on her tail, missed catching her, and he turned her over and busted her stays. I didn't know they wore them nowadays. The boss said not to worry, and he'd soon fit her some new ones. That's all for now.

Your brother, Jack

P.S. Come to think of it this bell ringing sounds quite interesting, I might go along and try it for myself.

## Useful Websites



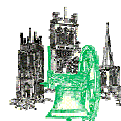
Bedfordshire Association of Church Bell Ringers

<http://www.bacr.co.uk/>



The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers

<http://www.cccbr.org.uk/>



Doves Guide

<http://www.cccbr.org.uk/dove/dove.php>



Ringing World

<http://www.ringingworld.co.uk/>



The Ringing Roadshow

<http://www.ringingroadshow2005.org.uk/>

Please let us know of any other ringing-related websites you find useful – send the links to us at [bedfordshire.clanger@ntlworld.com](mailto:bedfordshire.clanger@ntlworld.com) to be included in future issues.