

**THE
YORKSHIRE ASSOCIATION
OF
CHANGE RINGERS**



Newsletter
Winter 2011/12

THE RINGING WORLD



The Weekly Journal for Church Bell Ringers since 1911



*'cocooh, I see she's still ringing peals
with wots' is name then, even after
all that to-do' NAST*

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Editorial

Thank you everyone who has sent copy for this edition: there has been a tremendous response. I have tried to include every article, although regretfully I have had to reduce some in length.

I am impressed by the number of different activities which have taken place in towers and in Branches. They have all gone towards developing closer bonds between ringers, helped recruit more ringers and helped teaching. Is there perhaps something you could copy with advantage in your tower or Branch?

The next edition of the Newsletter will be out in Summer 2012. Please send copy to me by the end of May. Many thanks.

Robert Cater

Thank you to everyone who has sent in articles and photographs for this edition of the newsletter. I would like to wish you all a Happy New Year.

Matthew Blurton

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WANTED!

We need more advertisers for the Newsletter to help defray its printing costs. If you know of any organisation willing to help in this respect, please contact one of the editors. It doesn't have to be an organisation connected with ringing. Terms are negotiable and very reasonable. Potential advertisers can be advised that the Newsletter goes out twice a year to 250 churches across the whole of Yorkshire.

Membership Subscriptions 2012

A reminder – at the Association’s AGM last May it was agreed that from 2012 there would no longer be a reduced subscription rate for those aged over 59.

Subscription rates otherwise remain the same, i.e., £8.00 for Qualified and Associate members (and Non-Resident members), and £4.00 for those under 17 or in full-time education. Membership Subscriptions for 2012 become due on January 1st.

General Meeting at Darfield – 17 September

The Association held one of its four-monthly meetings at Darfield, near Barnsley when some 70 members attended. They generously donated £252 to the Bell Repair Fund, allowing for Gift Aid refunds.

At the meeting itself we stood in memory of three recently departed members – Tom Bush (Ilkley), Geoff Cheetham (Todmorden) and Roland Coates (Pateley Bridge).

Gail Cater spoke about the future of the Association’s weekend residential ringing course at Whirlow Grange, near Sheffield. The Course has been organised for the Committee for the past 27 years by Neil Donovan, ably assisted in more recent times by Dinah Rhymer. We were all delighted that Neil and Dinah were married earlier in the year.

Gail explained that following Neil’s desire to hand over the Course’s reins to someone else, coupled with rapidly increasing charges and diminishing numbers staying at the Course residentially, the Committee had decided to let 2012 lie fallow and to resurrect the Course, possibly at another venue, in 2013. The Association’s other weekend residential ringing course at Harrogate will continue however in 2012.

Neil was congratulated and thanked for his long service to the Course by our President, Barrie Dove, who presented him with some tasty beverages on behalf of the Association.

During the morning the Striking Competition for Sunday Service bands was held on the six bells at Cawthorne, with Michael Henshaw, late of the East Riding and a past President of the Central Council, as the judge. The entrants had been the winners of competitions in the Association’s Branches earlier in the year.

Michael declared York Minster (York Branch) to be the winners, closely followed by Wakefield Cathedral (Central Branch) and then Kirkheaton (Western Branch). Bands from Leeds Parish Church (Leeds & District Branch), Eskrick (Selby & District Branch) and Walkley (Sheffield & District Branch) also competed.

Editor

Life Members Gathering

An annual gathering of the Association's life members is a firm date on the calendar now, and this year attracted some 50 members to Hemingbrough, near Selby on Saturday 20 August. Hemingbrough church is a fine ancient building with a very tall slender spire atop its tower. The six bells hang in the central crossing and are rung from the ground in the open body of the church. This arrangement suited the members well, as they could chat and reminisce without a climb to a ringing chamber.

After a very welcoming 'traditional' Evensong using the Book of Common Prayer and led by the Vicar, Revd. Francis Lofthouse, the company retired to a splendid tea prepared by the local company. Barrie Dove, read out messages from other life members regrettably unable to attend.

Seven of the life members who attended are octogenarians, with the oldest being John Hobson (88), who joined the Association in 1944. In his working life as a senior civil servant he has rung at churches across the world. John recalled ringing for the WW2 victory at El Alamein in November 1942 and also rang on VE Day – 8 May 1945 – at the end of the war.

Digby Burton (82) also rang on VE Day in Staffordshire, but Bill Stoker (83) was only allowed to watch at Hemingbrough as he was a learner. David Lockwood (85) however was fighting in the army and described shaking hands with Russian soldiers on the coast of the Baltic Sea on VE Day.

One of the group, Jeffery Cooper (82), remains a very active ringer and had rung 21 peals in 2011 up to the day of the gathering.

Alex Marsh of Pudsey is another octogenarian, but was not able to be with us. His first peal – Plain Bob Major – was on VE Day and his second – Kent TB Major – on VJ (Japan Day 15 August 1945) both at Rothwell, where there is a peal board recording the peals.

The 2011 Snowdon Dinner – 15 October

As a rookie ringer, this was to be my first Snowdon Dinner. I was not quite sure what to expect, and a formal dinner followed by a ceilidh presented a few sartorial dilemmas. Now, coming from an area where, for most of the year, Wellington boots are de rigeur, this was not a problem to be taken lightly, especially as the evening was to take place in the elegant surroundings of Bradford's Midland Hotel. TS Eliot in his great poem 'The Waste Land' spoke rather disparagingly of 'one of the low on whom assurance sits / As a silk hat on a Bradford millionaire'. Well, there was no lack of assurance in evidence on Saturday night as everyone had 'scrubbed up well' – though I didn't actually meet any Bradford millionaires.

After an excellent dinner, our President, Barrie Dove, introduced ringers from All Souls, Haley Hill, Halifax, who in the 1950s and 60s were one of the most proficient bands of ringers in the country, with the late J Henry Fielden often conducting. At the time they rang numerous record breaking peals, both in-hand and in the tower. Six of the band were able to be with us and were introduced by Barrie – Ralph Beaumont, Geoff Bryant, John Bryant, Vivian Copping, Sheila Moulds and Colin Sweeney. Under the splendid classical ceiling of the Ballroom, several of the above rang in a magical and mesmerizing celebration of Plain Bob Major on eight tiny handbells. By now I was thoroughly overawed and wondering what I was doing here among such talented campanologists. Even though I have been drawing my pension for a few years, I felt like the littlest kid in school. And it was only to get worse ...

Introducing the guest speaker, Simon Lindford, Master of the St. Martin's Guild for the Diocese of Birmingham, Barrie outlined some of the highlights of his ringing career. Much of the technical detail was lost on me. Except for the mind-numbing fact of his ringing a peal which lasted 12 hours! No-one had told me that my new hobby was an extreme sport! Mr. Linford, however, chose not to dwell on those feats of endurance and proved to be an engaging and amusing raconteur. He was, he said, envious of Yorkshire's pre-eminence in three areas, bread, beer and bells.

It was at this point that alarm bells began to ring again for me. All of his jokes, and very funny they were too, had a punch line which sang the praises of Yorkshire over the old enemy, the Red Rose County, Lancashire. Fair enough, except that not only was I the least experienced bell ringer in the room, I am also a Lancashire Lass. Even though I have lived in God's Own County for some thirty years, I am still an illegal immigrant! It was my good fortune that I was sitting at the Giggleswick table next to the Vicar, who is also a foreigner, so I eased my conscience by confessing to him that I was not really a Yorkshire girl and he told me not to worry. Not only were these Yorkshire folk good at bread, beer and bells, they were also very hospitable. And so they were. Simon concluded his speech by proposing a toast to the continued success of the YACR and I was more than pleased to raise my glass and join in.

Ethnic differences were forgotten as the band, 'Last Whole Turn', struck up and the ceilidh got under way. In some cases, enthusiasm took precedence over precision but a good time was had by all and one very amused Lancashire Lass drove back to the Dales delighted to have been a guest at the Jasper Whitfield Snowdon Commemorative Dinner 2011.

Pat Harding (Giggleswick)

Education Committee

Whirlow 2011

The Course took place this year from Friday to Sunday, 8 to 11 July. All in all there were over 70 students, tutors and helpers participating – many of the helpers 'part time' – although a large number of those present were non-residential. The Course was enjoyed by all and the students made great progress.

This was the 27th year Neil Donovan, assisted in later years by his now wife, Dinah Rhymer, had organised the Course. An immeasurable amount of their time has gone into the Course and an immeasurable amount of learning has been absorbed by a (not quite, but nearly) immeasurable number of students. It is devotion to a cause like this which helps keep bellringing healthy. The Association owes them both an immeasurable amount of gratitude.

Neil and Dinah have now, regretfully but understandingly, announced their retirement from the Course.

Views from two students

The base for the Course is Whirlow Grange, which is a gorgeous peaceful setting on the south of Sheffield. The weekend caters for all ages from ten to pensioners and all abilities from beginners learning Plain Hunt to far more advanced methods.

As well as the practical tower sessions where you get plenty of practice, there were opportunities to explore new things, or develop existing skills, such as hand bell ringing, how to create methods, calling call changes, conducting and a theory session on the method you are learning.

I have been ringing just under three years so and I am currently learning Bob Doubles on the 2nd. I started the weekend being able to do the first 3-4 down dodge but then got stuck/confused/had no idea what I was supposed to be doing. By the end of the weekend I could have a reasonable stab at the whole thing. This is indeed progress for me as I usually take weeks to get the hang of something new; it has to sink in slowly! I'm quite looking forward to showing my ringing master the improvement.

I find the practical sessions really good as the focus is purely on the students. The instructors are good and it's always good to hear someone else's view as they could say something that makes that one thing you've been struggling with for months fall into place.

There is also a strong social side to the weekend, which I especially enjoyed, there is an air of fellowship and goodwill amongst the group.

All in all, an excellent weekend and good progress made in Bob Doubles.

Clair Godley (Sheffield Cathedral)

On the first day, we went to Ranmoor on the Friday night to meet up with our group, which I was rather excited about, as it was an opportunity to meet some new people and perhaps make some new friends. We decided not to stay at Whirlow Grange because we lived quite nearby, so we went home to go back to Beighton where I did my first bit of Bob Doubles on the inside.

After, we went to Whirlow Grange to have my training session, with Elaine Scott, one of the two group leaders. (The other was Peter Scott.) Later, having eaten our biscuits and drunk our tea/coffee/hot-chocolate, we drove off to Handsworth, where I rang Bob Doubles a lot better after my theory session. We went off to the White Rose pub to have our lunch, I had some nice gammon. Some people went to Whirlow for tea, although it was £20 each so it would have been £80 between us! We went to Greggs!

On the Sunday we rang at Walkley and I was an awful lot better. We went back to Whirlow to ring Plain Hunt on the hand bells, which I enjoyed a lot. For lunch I had gammon again at a Weatherspoons pub, with Andy, who had helped me a lot during the course, Susan and Claire.

Over all I think the course was very beneficial and I can now ring Bob Doubles on an inside bell.

Chloe Marples (Bradfield)

The Future

As is reported elsewhere in this Newsletter, the Association's Education Committee recently confirmed that for a number of educational reasons it is important that the Committee runs another annual Residential Ringing Course in addition to the one at Harrogate. However, following Neil's and Dinah's retirement from organising Whirlow, coupled with significantly increased charges there in recent years and a reduction in the number of students and helpers who stay residentially, it was decided to let 2012 lie fallow and to resurrect the Residential Ringing Course in 2013, possibly at a different venue and possibly with a slightly different format.

Tower Maintenance Day

This Day was 'full to capacity' with five students, led by Brian Sanders assisted by Trevor Iedger, and was held on Saturday 10 October at Darton church.

After a discussion on health and safety in belfries and the general principles of maintenance, illustrated by looking at the installation at Darton, Brian and Trevor took the students to see the much older bells and frame at Ackworth.

Teaching Bell Handling Courses

A one-day Course was held at Tadcaster on Saturday 29 October, led by Gail Cater, who demonstrated one good way to teach bell handling in a systematic way. The students were Gill Plaththopkin (Ranmoor), Duncan Child and Helen Mumby (Rufforth), Emma Coles (York) and Cater Gardner (Tadcaster).

Gail's system closely follows that shown in The Tutors' Handbook (a Central Council Publication) and written by the late Wilfrid Moreton of Wakefield, one of our past Presidents. Wilfrid used it with great success over his ringing career in teaching numerous ringers.

Gail ran the Course again on Saturday 26 November at St Lawrence's in York, for four members of the York Colleges Guild who study at the Universities in York. They were Charlotte Flower, Helen Beaumont, Ryan Mills and James Baxter.

The Snowdon Series Books

Diagrams. The new 2011 Edition of Jasper Whitfield Snowdon's original work, comprising 201 methods showing their blue lines - £12.

Ropesight. The 1987 reprint of Jasper Snowdon's 'Introduction to The Art of Change Ringing', first published in 1879 - £7.

Grandsire. The 1989 reprint of J Armiger Trollope's revision in 1947 of Jasper and William Snowdon's original work, first published in 1888 - £8.

Inspired by Bells. Some 80 articles and poems with some photographs featuring bells, collected by Frank Foden and published in 1991 - £20.

Campanalogia: or the Art of Ringing Improved. Published in 1990 with a new introduction by William T Cook, this book is a facsimile copy of the original written by Fabian Stedman and published in 1677 - £22.

Copies are obtainable from John Mitchell, Manor House, Roecliffe, Boroughbridge, York, YO51 9LY. (*Post and package included in all prices*)

Please make cheques payable to 'YACR Snowdon Books'

Any enquiries to books@jmanorhouse.co.uk
(*Sorry, there are no discounts for multiple purchases*).

All surplus proceeds to the Yorkshire Association's Bell Repair Fund.

National 12-Bell Striking Competition – The Final at Leeds Parish Church

It was a considerable privilege for the Leeds Parish Church band to be invited to host the National 12-Bell Final on Saturday 25 June – and quite a burden, although a pleasurable one!

Heats had been held earlier in the year at churches in other parts of the country and the bands from Stockton on Tees and York Minster had got through to the Final. In addition bands were competing from Birmingham, St Paul's London, the Ancient Society of College Youths, Bristol, Cambridge, Exeter and Melbourne (Derbyshire). The Birmingham band won, yet again.

In recent years several electro-mechanical aids to 'measuring' the striking of the ringing have been tried out, although none has yet been adopted as the definitive system. The print-out from one experimental system for the start of the York band's test ringing is illustrated.

The Organiser's Experience

Brrrrriiiiiing.....I woke up to my alarm on the 25th June. It was 1.30 in the morning! Yep – that's right – it was my turn to go and sit with the beer!! I dragged myself out of bed, pulled on my jeans and jumper and headed out to the car. I was still asleep – pretty much. I trundled round to Ian's and Matt's and picked them up and we headed to Leeds Parish Church. It was cold and wet and National 12-bell final day!!

When we arrived we were greeted by three of our ringers who had done the 11pm – 2am shift. When you have nearly 2000 pints of beer sitting in a marquee in the middle of Leeds the only thing you can do is sit with it to ensure it is safe! The success of the day depends on it.

We had a few jobs to do – setting up the bar etc then we had computer facilities which enabled us to watch some Blackadder while the minutes tick by. We also decided to try out a pint or two. Myself and Ian reminisced about the last time we had sat up at 4 in the morning drinking beer. That was a long time ago! There were a few drunken revelers passed us by but generally it was a quiet night! At 5am we were able to trudge home and try and get a couple more hours sleep!

Brrrrriiiiiing – my alarm goes off again at 8.30. All I can think of now is GRAVY. Five litres of the stuff has to be made before I can head off to church. My sister Hannah knocks at the door armed with stock and gravy browning and we set to work. By 9.30 I know events will be already in full swing at the church. I am confident my trusty ringers will have the BBQs lit and the tea urn bubbling away. We set off to Leeds with 96 frozen Yorkshire puddings, 5 litres of pork gravy, a laptop and some plastic spoons. Could a day be more surreal?

When we arrive then, sure enough, the day is off to a flyer with hundreds of ringers eating bacon butties and drinking tea and coffee. I am handed a walkie talkie which I was not expecting, but I can tell you it was a god send. If you ever have to host an event like this make sure all the organisers have them, as you cannot rely on mobile phones, and you need to be able to speak to each other when things go wrong!

First job was to install the judges and give them a listen to the bells. I was intending to have our Leeds 12-bell team and loudly boasted how this would be the best ringing of the day to the assembled masses – much to their amusement. Could I find the team – NO! We ended up with a right old mix of people and didn't really ring rounds properly! Ho hum.

The teams assembled in the church for the draw. The Rector said a few words of welcome then Barrie Dove conducted the draw. Then it was down to the ringing.

I did not get to hear much of the ringing as I seemed to have a never ending list of tasks needing attending to. However, thanks to excellent planning by my team all aspects of the day were working well. Food, beer, champagne bar, children's entertainment, church activities, treasure hunt, raffle, judges, strikeometer and live web stream were all going ahead as planned. This was no ordinary striking competition!!

Finally it was time for the annual Birmingham presentation (or results). We all congratulated the Brummies on their success. I have no doubt that we could ring Leeds bells better than they did. Whether we would have sustained it for twelve minutes I do not know – and we will never know. My massive disappointment at not qualifying actually subsided by the time the day came. I do not think we could have put on such a good do and taken part in the competition. Everyone I spoke to thought the day was utterly brilliant and I have to agree it was damn good. Not having the pressure of ringing meant we could throw ourselves into the event. I suspect if we had been ringing then both would have suffered. May be God had this in mind! Still we'd like to give it a go sometime. I think Leeds hosted the greatest striking competition ever – will it be beaten? – we'll have to qualify to find out!

Steve Ollerton

MP's visit and Engagement

In mid-afternoon we were delighted to receive an unplanned short visit from our local MP. Apparently his wife had come down earlier on to scope out what was going on at the church and bought a glass of champagne from Rachel Town who promptly filled in the details. Rachel was somewhat shocked when she was later approached by the same lady and a be-suited gentleman who introduced himself as ex-Cabinet Minister Hilary Benn, MP for Leeds Central. Rachel and her fiancé Simon Robinson were quick

to take advantage of the photo opportunity and I've attached the evidence.

The Leeds band were also surprised and delighted that one of our number chose the 12-Bell Final day to make a long-awaited marriage proposal during the evening BBQ. Rosie Benson had worked extremely hard behind the bar serving those thirsty visitors for most of the day and had obviously supplied sufficient Dutch Courage to her other half, Ed Brightman, to enable him to finally pop the question! Having carried an engagement ring round all day he was relieved to be accepted and the Leeds band would like to send their sincere congratulations to Rosie and Ed.

The Stockton Experience

This year we had a very enthusiastic squad of seventeen ringers and we had a lot of fun travelling around the country practising. Having been very pleased to be placed first in our Eliminator, we were determined to do our best in the Final. During our practice at Leeds, we were unfortunate in encountering a malfunction with the electronic equipment, which meant that no teams were able to benefit from analysis pre-competition. This seemed to upset some of them more than others!

We were very fortunate that a grey morning turned into a glorious day and the Leeds team really did work hard to ensure that it was an excellent occasion. We were unfortunate to be drawn first ("the graveyard slot") and nerves definitely showed, although we thought that we had not disgraced ourselves. We then had plenty of time to enjoy the atmosphere, catch up with friends from all over the country, eat, drink and even listen to the ringing.

To be honest, our result was a bit of a shock and I think the idea that the judges had had "sharp pencils" for the first team were not confined to the Stockton gang. However, the judges' decision is final and it didn't prevent most of us from enjoying the rest of the evening. For others, the long day of drinking had taken its toll so it was time to head for home.

Jennie Town

The Spectators' Experience – Our First 12-Bell Final!

'I have a commission for you ladies' – said one of the York Minster team.

'Oh...?' we replied with caution, clutching our pint glasses.

'How about an article for the RW, 'First Impressions of the 12 Final' or something like that, I'm sure you can think of a better title?'

And so, let us tell you about our day of 'celebrity bellringer' spotting and fifteen minutes of studious listening.

We are Louise and Lucy, ringers at St Lawrence's in , and whilst we're not bad, we're certainly not up to 12 bell standard so we thought it would be

interesting to take advantage of a local final to find out what all the fuss was about. It would be fair to say that we had only the vaguest notion of what we were letting ourselves in for when we decided to take the short train ride from to in support of the York Minster team. Previous RW articles suggested a summer fête atmosphere, and that there would be plenty of beer was assured, but it was the question of the ringing that held us most puzzled and enthralled. Does one sit and listen carefully to everything? How would we ever know what was going on, or whether it was a winning piece? Who would we know? What would we do all day?

It really is a most funny business. A minimum of 108 ringers, the 'crème de la crème' from across the country, descend on the chosen tower to put in their best performance, and there must be equally as many guests, enthusiasts, family and the odd curious passer by. Our morning started with quizzing anyone and everyone on the rules, the etiquette, and what to expect from each team. Friends from the Minster were most helpful in briefing us on the basics, explaining how the ringers signal to the judges that they are about to start the test piece (they 1&2 ring alternately) and giving us a good background to how the eliminator days had gone and how the towers are chosen.

So having learnt the basics, our first job was of course to fill in the back page of the excellent and informative programme with the team ringing order. The second job was to get a drink. Commemorative pint glasses simply had to be purchased – with beer in them of course!

And so began a most enjoyable afternoon of chatting and drinking, and all the while listening to the bells ring out above us all. It is interesting to note that there were definite preferred walls against which to lean – there were a lot of appreciatively nodding heads in these areas. What impressed us most though, was how you could be having a jolly conversation with a 'famous' ringer (we managed to get introduced to quite a few!), and suddenly they would wince mid sentence, and then carry on talking! We never did get the hang of what exactly they were listening out for, it all sounded superb to us.

We toured the various tents, we went to the fish & chip bus, we ate delicious hog roast, we sadly missed our chance to bounce on the castle, but we did explore the unusual feature of the upper galleries of the church and once all the ringing was over there was some glorious organ music to listen to. You wouldn't think this would take very long, but when it is interspersed with greeting old friends, eating and drinking, it takes a surprising amount of time to get from one end of a churchyard to the other!

Listening to the test piece was our objective, and we did genuinely put in at least 15 minutes of solid concentration listening to it. What we were listening for, we still have no idea, but it sounded jolly good and we knew it was as soon as they started as the pace and rhythm of the ringing was very familiar. There was the occasional 'ooh' and 'eww' from those in the know sitting around us. For us it was perfect.

The tension of listening to the results was almost too much to bear, and the disappointment in our section of the pews was palpable. However, not to be set back, this merely fortified the celebration of achievement, and the drinks continued to flow (often skyward or groundward!) as the band played.

The most striking thing about the whole day (apart from how perfect the striking was!) was how friendly and goodhearted everyone was. We had such fun we even bought the CD! It really was like an extended family summer party, and we thank for giving us such a brilliant time at our First 12- Bell Final.

PS If anyone found Louise's pint glass, please can she have it back?

Lucy Stewart & Louise Auty

White Rose Shield Contest – Sheffield, 3 September

Saturday 3rd September 2011 saw four intrepid established twelve-bell teams, plus a rather impressive scratch band, descend upon Sheffield Cathedral for the annual White Rose Shield. This is a 12-bell contest for Yorkshire bands only, and provided a great opportunity to try out the newly refurbished bells at the Cathedral.

Undeterred by the "Celebration of Diversity", a march by Sheffield's goth community which finished at the Cathedral at the time the competition was taking place, all five bands successfully completed the test piece, which was two courses of Little Bob Maximus. It was judged by Andrew and Sharon Mills, with assistance from the Loughborough Parrot. A number of comments were made around the perceived odd-struckness of one or two of the bells, with the 3rd and the 6th particularly highlighted (Andrew confirmed that John Taylor & Co would be looking into this on their next visit to finalise the excellent work so far carried out). Certainly the usual home advantage was not there as the Sheffield Cathedral band were still getting used to their newly improved ring of bells!

As usual, the Sheffield Cathedral ringers provided excellent catering on the day, and some superb beer was provided by the Welbeck Abbey Brewery, whose head brewer is Claire Monk, a Sheffield ringer (the youngest female head brewer in the UK, for any fact fans out there). For those interested, the beers were "Henrietta", a 3.6%ABV light golden ale, and 'Ernest George', 4.2%ABV, a very deep brown ale is packed full of chocolate malt, black malt, and roasted barley to give it incredibly intense rich flavours. Needless to say it was all sold!

So, another victory for York Minster with Leeds Parish Church second and the scratch band third. Bands from Bradford and Sheffield Cathedrals also rang. Thanks to all those involved in the organisation of the day, especially

to Simon and Judith Reading and the Sheffield Cathedral band; to Andrew and Sharon for judging; and to all the ringers and supporters for making the event so successful and enjoyable.

Caroline Carter-Smith

Beverley & District Society – Bells Ring Out!

At a B&D Ringing Society Committee Meeting towards the end of 2009, one of the agenda items was “presentation of the B&D”. Little did we know then what the ensuing discussion on promoting ringing and the work of the Society in East Yorkshire would lead to! One of our members was then working for the East Yorkshire Museums Service and mentioned that the Treasure House in Beverley had exhibition space which might be available for our use.

After several meetings with the wonderful Beverley Curator, the Society put on a poster exhibition in the archive corridor of the Treasure House in May and June 2010. This was entitled “Bells & Bellringing in East Yorkshire” and consisted of six large panels written and illustrated by Society members and prepared and printed by Treasure House staff. After the exhibition ended the Society was given the panels, which have since been displayed at several church and tower open days.

This exhibition was so well received and we were invited to put on a larger display in Gallery Two – an exhibition space on the first floor of the Treasure House. The Beverley Town Handbell Ringers, celebrating their 30th anniversary in 2011, joined us for this and provided a lot of material and a set of shiny new tune-ringing handbells. From towers in the area I borrowed anything that wasn’t nailed down – a model bell, a peal board, a bell rope, a clapper (not in use at the time!), photographs, certificates, trophies and peal books.

The Bells Ring Out! exhibition was on display in the Treasure House between June and September 2011, and coincided at the start with the Church and Tower Open Day at St. Mary’s, Beverley. Publicity was arranged by the Treasure House who provided posters and flyers at their expense, put out a press release to local papers and arranged an interview with two of the St. Mary’s ringers on local BBC radio the day before the exhibition opened.

As Bells Ring Out! was being very well received, the Society agreed to provide the funding to hire a mini-ring for a day to enable members of the public to see ringing being done and perhaps have a try themselves. After lots of questions from the powers that be, permission was obtained to site a mini-ring on the paved area in front of the Treasure House, and **The Lichfield Diocesan Mobile Belfry** was booked for 3rd September to

coincide with drop-in handbell workshops being run by the Beverley Town Handbell Ringers in the Treasure House that day.

Saturday 3rd September started early for me as I was at BBC Radio Humberside studios in Hull at 07.00 for a live interview about bellringing. It was an even earlier start for John Daubner, who towed the trailer carrying the mobile belfry from Crewe to Beverley – a 274 mile round trip – and assembled it, assisted by a team of local ringers. By about 10.45 all was in place and the bells were ready. They proved challenging to handle at first because of their light weight but, after a bit of practice, most of the ringers got the hang of them and we went on to ring some good touches in several methods and lots of Rounds and Call Changes. We attracted a steady stream of visitors during the day.

Society members came and went during the day, many of them fitting ringing on the mobile belfry around wedding ringing at their own towers. There was ringing for one wedding at Beverly St. Mary and two weddings at Beverley Minster that day, so members of the public had the chance to hear church bells being rung as well as to see and hear the bells of the mobile belfry. It was quite an experience for some of the ringers to go from rings of ten with 34cwt or 42cwt tenors to a ring of six with a 76.5lb tenor.

Bells Ring Out! has certainly raised the profile of bellringing in the East Yorkshire area. The support we received from the Treasure House staff, in particular the Beverley Curator, Alison Brice, was fantastic. The Museums Service is now planning to take the panels on tour, to be exhibited at various places such as stately homes and churches in East Yorkshire. Following that, they will be available for the Society to use.

If other Societies or YACR Branches are looking to put on exhibitions to promote bellringing, we recommend contacting your local Library and Museums Service to see what they can offer.

Rosina Baxter, Beverley & District Ringing Society

Yorkshire Ringers in the Pyrenees

Seven Yorkshire ringers rang in a peal and in a quarter in July on a portable mini-ring (tenor 10 pounds in G) at Verney-les-Bains, on the French side of the Pyrenees. The circumstances were the celebrations for the rededication of the Anglican church there and the installation of the new Priest in Charge, Revd. David Phillips from Elloughton near Hull.

Catherine and Jeff Ladd of Leeds have a holiday home in the town and the mini-ring is owned by an expatriate, Alsitair Moon from Hertfordshire, about 100 miles away near Toulouse. Jeff organised its transport down to 'their' town and invited ringers to the celebrations.

Verney was a resort popular with the English and minor royalty in late Victorian and Edwardian times, but the Anglican church they built had fallen into disuse and decay. Restoration is under way through the resurgence of English visitors in recent years.

In addition to the band (shown elsewhere) who rang the peal of Grandsire Triples, Susan Green (Ilkley) rang in the quarter of Plain Bob Triples. Katharine Thorley and Jeff Ladd also rang a handbell peal of Yorkshire S Major along with two 'visitors' – Roger Bailey (London) and Mike Trimm (London and Germany).

The mini-ring had been first experienced earlier in the year by a small party of ringers, some of which were on a car tour to Julia Cater's, who at the time was living in Provence for a year with her family. On that occasion, the bells were rung by a band including Catherine and Jeff, Gail and Bob Cater and Ian Boocock (Giggleswick). A quarter peal of Plain Bob Doubles was also achieved.

News from the Branches

Cleveland & North Yorkshire Branch

Young Ringer joins the Association

On Saturday October 16 two ringers qualified for membership of the Association by ringing in their first quarter peal covering to Plain Bob Doubles. The first quarter was for Sandra Shoyer who rings at Felixkirk, but who has been taught at Northallerton and regularly attends practices at both Northallerton and Brompton.

The second quarter was a family affair, with young Northallerton recruit, James Town (aged 9), ringing with his parents, uncle and auntie (Peter Town, Elizabeth Barrett, David Town and Jennifer Town), assisted by Martin Kirk. Congratulations to both of them for what were very polished

Cleveland & North Yorkshire Branch Towel

Linen tea towels – price £5 – showing the towers in the Branch are on sale from the Branch Secretary, Christine Parsons. All profits to the Bell Repair Fund.

For purchasing arrangements please contact Christine at 01642 790655 or gerry.parsons@btinternet.com

performances, celebrated in the traditional manner in the pub (but James had to settle for a soft drink)!

Jennie Town

Striking Competition

The Competition was held at Pickhill on Saturday July 2, followed by a barbeque BBQ at Sinderby. The results were 1st Richmond 88%, 2nd Ripon 81%, 3rd Kirklington 78%, two 'fun team' based on Masham/Pateley Bridge/Ripon and Richmond/Catterick/Bedale both 75%.

Central Branch

Stedman Day

For many years, the Central branch has not held a meeting in October – our normal third Saturday nearly always conflicts with the Snowdon Dinner – and we've held a quarter peal month instead. Support for this has dwindled, so this year we decided to try something new. We hold a training course in February, which concentrates on the early stages, so what about something a bit more advanced? The Stedman Day was born!

The chosen date was the first Saturday in October. When the committee selected this date on a cold December evening in 2010, we could not have predicted the heat wave that made this one of the hottest days of year. The abnormally warm weather meant that shorts and sandals put away for the year had to be pressed into service once more.

The day started with Stedman Doubles in the morning – two groups met at , one at Wragby for beginners, and another at Cawthorne for improvers. The aim of the two groups to meet at a lunchtime pub had to be abandoned when the original venue for the improving group became unavailable. In the early afternoon the improvers and more advanced met to ring Triples at Rothwell, the beginners resting after their exertions in the morning. Later, we travelled to Knottingley (thanks to Alison for rescuing the key!) for refreshments and to ring more Triples and try some Caters – one touch on the ten was completed, the tenor ringer declaring afterwards that it was the first time he'd rung on more than eight!

The general consensus after the event was that it was a welcome addition to the calendar. More than one participant commented that it was good that some training was provided for the more advanced. Thanks to Adrian and Brian for running the groups, to Gill for the refreshments and to Mark for organising the day.

Adrian Moreton

Leeds & District Branch

On Saturday 10 September, we held our annual outing in Cleveland, (which sounds a lot more posh than saying we went to Middlesborough!). Due to other events happening on the same day, we were a bit short of ringers, but were pleased to welcome some ringing friends from York and Ripon to help boost numbers. This also meant that we could concentrate more on helping our learners improve, whilst also focusing on good striking.

We started off at the pleasant 6 at Guisborough, then onto the big 8 at Skelton in Cleveland, before going to the very light 8 at Marske by the Sea – quite a contrast! Lunchtime was left to people to spend how they wished: some of us went to a pub in Redcar, whilst others chose to have fish and chips by the seaside. By this stage the cloud had lifted, and an enjoyable time was spent on Saltburn sea front in the sunshine. After lunch, we rang on the lovely 8 at Saltburn. Following this, we headed towards Middlesborough to ring at Thornaby on Tees, the church where one of our group attended as a child.

Then came the highlight of the day: a chance to ring on the fine 12 at Stockton-on-Tees. Being short of ringers, two people had to ring two bells each so we could grab the 12 properly, and some nice call changes on 12 were rung, followed by Standard 8-Spliced Surprise Major on the back 8, amongst other things. We finished the day at Darlington, St. John, the 10cwt 8 next to the railway station. It wouldn't be a ringing outing without a pub, so we all headed to a local hostelry to end the day in style!

Once again, we are thankful to everyone who made the effort to join us for the day, and look forward to even more people coming next year.

Adam Crocker, Leeds & District Branch Ringing Master

Leeds & District Branch Calendar

The Branch's calendar for 2012 shows pictures of all the Branch's 44 towers. It comprises 13 A4 card sheets in portrait (12 months and a front sheet) with a pvc cover attached to a ring binder. The cost is £5: If postage is required, it's an additional £1.30 (envelope will hold two calendars) – otherwise pickup can be arranged. All profits to Branch funds.

Cheques payable to 'P S Oldfield'. Address – 23 Oakwood Green, Oakwood, Leeds, LS8 2QU.

Scarborough & District Branch

Sartorial fantasies

It's not often I fantasise about wearing women's clothing, much less admit it in public. But while turning the tenor in to a Quarter at Wykeham last

Sunday evening (unseasonably hot and humid weather, no opening windows, door barred against inebriated locals), I found myself envying the two ladies sensibly dressed in skirt and bare legs, as my sweat-soaked jeans clung to my thighs like wet cardboard!

Perhaps there is a gap in the market for the Gentleman's Ringing Skirt – elasticated waistband, breathable fabric, A line, no pockets for smooth contours – you get the picture. Two immediate concerns sprang to mind – what (if anything) does the well-dressed Englishman wear under a skirt, and is he required to shave his legs to wear one?

At that moment one of the ladies in question gave me the sort of look that said 'you're supposed to be dodging 3/4 down with me', and I was instantly back to concentrating on how many extents we had rung. Fortunately, with temperatures forecast to plummet, and talk of snow later this month, my fellow

ringers are likely to be spared this scene – there are, after all, certain areas where one is particularly keen to avoid frostbite! Although, come to think of it, winter opens a whole new range of possibilities – stockings or tights, sheer or woollen, black or navy.....Mmmmm!

[Has anyone any help, advice or suggestions for this gentleman, writing in the Branch newsletter, please – Ed?]

Quarter Peal Day, Saturday 3rd September

An absence of many experienced ringers, and more weddings than usual, made this event more of a nightmare to organise than ever, but in the end we scored a creditable six from nine, with a number of new or less experienced ringers taking part for the first time. all who took part. The successful Quarters were as follows:

Norton – 1260 Grandsire Triples, 45 mins

Filey – 1260 Plain Bob, Reverse Canterbury, Grandsire Doubles, 42 mins

Flamborough – 1260 Plain Bob Doubles, 40 mins

Kirkbymoorside – 1272 Kent Treble Bob Minor,

Scarborough- Plain Bob Triples

Wykeham 1260 Plain Bob Doubles, 42 mins.

Treasure Hunt & BBQ

A vast amount of work from Cath Simpson and her team, and super weather, combined to make this a hugely enjoyable afternoon. Seven carloads gathered in Eastgate car park, to be issued with a rigorous quiz sheet, together with emergency instructions (fortunately not required). Healthy competition ensued, with some taking it more seriously than others, though no one quite stooped to Wacky Races tactics of turning signposts round, or spreading oil on the road!

We counted horizontal bars on benches, perambulated Cawthorne fort looking for names and dates, and raided pubs for beer mats, as we made our way round the beautiful villages of the Vale of Pickering. Everyone arrived at the destination in Ebberston more or less on time (some via the pub), where we were treated to wonderful hospitality – drinks, BBQ and delicious puds. When the eagerly awaited results were announced, Team Chairman came out ahead by a single point over the Brompton team led by Janet Batee

Sheffield & District Branch

Outing – 1 October

On one of the hottest October days on record 15 members of the Sheffield Branch met up at the first tower of the day, Deeping St. James, arguably the best bells of the day. Luckily coffee and cakes were on sale in the church hall to refresh us after quite a long drive. Crowland Abbey then lived up to expectations with a 90ft draft and four lots of guiders. There were a lot of nerves but the bells were rung well.

Lunch was had in a pub in Crowland, an attractive small town, before moving on to Baston an anticlockwise ring of six. Bourne was next with a tricky 4th but Bourne S. Minor and Double Dunkirk Minor were rung successfully here, the new version of Diagrams coming in useful!

We then had a tea break when people either went to a local café or had a picnic at the next church, Edenham. This 10-bell tower stretched our resources somewhat, especially when two of the ringers had left to visit relatives, but we still managed to ring Plain Bob Royal, Little Bob Royal and a touch of Grandsire Caters to round off a very enjoyable day.

Western Branch

Outing to Newcastle upon Tyne by train

My Dad, sister and I woke up at 7:15; to great panic we got washed, dressed, fed and out the door within fifteen minutes. It seemed like all the traffic lights were against us and, indeed, we saw the our train go over the

Meeting at Darfield – Neil Donovan receiving his gift from Barrie Dove for his long service to The Whirlow Ringing Course.



Life Members Gathering



YACR Octogenarians – left to right: Ronald Sanderson (Huntington), Digby Burton (Skipton), Doreen Sanderson (Huntington), David Lockwood (Ossett), Jeffery Cooper (Guiseley), John Hobson (Howden), Bill Stoker (Hemingbrough).

The 2011 Snowdon Dinner



'The Last Whole Turn' – band l to r – Judith Reading (flute) Sheffield Cathedral, Mark Sheridan (melodian) Shelley, Alison Moreton (whistle) Wakefield Cathedral, Barbara Owers (fiddle) – not a ringer, Dave Sissons (guitar) – not a ringer. Unfortunately not shown: Sue Sheridan (caller) Shelley.



The Assembled Throng – with some of the Haley Hill ringers in the foreground.

Whirlow 2011



Some of the students, helpers and tutors at Whirlow, taken just before Sunday lunch.

Teaching Bell Handling Course



L to r: Charlotte Flower, Helen Beaumont, Ryan Mills and James Baxter enjoying Lottie's iced cup cakes in the Waggon & Horses at lunchtime.

National 12-Bell Striking Competition

MP visits the 12-Bell Final



L to r Rachel Town, Hilary Benn MP, Simon Robinson.

A Proposal at the 12-Bell Final



Rosie Benson and her fiancé Ed Brightman.

National 12-Bell Striking Competition

The Stockton Band in the Leeds 12-Bell Final



L to r: Duncan Walker, Matt Hetherington, Christine Richardson, Graham Blackburn, Wendy Belsey, Martin Davies, David Town, Kris King, Jennie Town, David Craggs, Matthew Jones, David Hull.

The York Minster Band in the Leeds 12-Bell Final



L to r: David Leese, Peter Hughes, Chris Young, Johnny Stokoe, David Mitchell, Peter Sanderson, David Potter, Christine Potter, Rob Lee, Eleanor Carr, Tim Bradley and Rachel Storr.

Cleveland & North Yorkshire Branch

James Town (aged 9) receiving his Association membership Certificate from C&NY Branch Chairman, Gerry Parsons.



Leeds & District Branch



Leeds & District Branch at Chapel Allerton

The Branch held a Minor practice at Chapel Allerton on Saturday 23 July, when 20 Branch members attended.

Back row, l to r: John Burnup, John Leech, Paul Brook, Sue Hucknall & Penny Thorley. Front row Jeff Ladd, Pete Oldfield, Kathy Thorley, Katharine O'Carroll, Emily Bloom, Wendy Bloom & Graham Bloom.

Selby & District Branch



Numbers at our monthly meetings have been down a little through the Summer months which we assume and hope is due to holidays etc., although we have had some enjoyable meetings with some good ringing at all levels. We have continued our 10 and 12-bell practices on a monthly basis and good progress is being made. In October we had an outing to West Yorkshire, ringing at Otley, Guiseley, Ilkley, Addingham and Silsden finishing up with supper at the 'Cow & Calf' at Ilkley. We had a splendid day and would like to thank Charlie Bird who organised the day and to all of the towers who allowed us to ring.

Stuart Raggett

Members of the Selby branch after ringing at Addingham.

Back Row Left to Right: David Hull, Liza Hull, Alison Hull, Luke Riley, Ewan Hull, Alex Riley, Peter Bird, Cate Gardner. Front Row: Stuart Raggett, George Hull, Liz Hull, Marian Thomas, Catherine Riley, Charlie Bird, Roger Riley.

Bolsterstone and Bradfield – Golden Wedding Quarters



On 25 August a quarter of Plain Bob Triples was rung at Bolsterstone to mark two Golden Weddings – that of Brian and Margaret Heppenstall (June 1961) and that of Edwin and Yvonne King. Brian and Edwin were in the band.

Earlier that day the same band but with Brian Sanders substituting for Brian Heppenstall rang a quarter of PB Major at Bradfield, where Edwin and Yvonne were married on 19 August 1961.

Jean Doman

[Congratulations! – Ed]

L to r John Barden, Brian Heppenstall, Jean Doman, Edwin King, Mike Sheeran, Andrew King, Mike King (C), Geoff Littlewood.

Sheffield Branch Outing



L to r: David Rushby, Ann Todd, Helen Turner, Stuart Armeson, Chris Bennett, Helen Boyes, Ben Newsam, Rosanna Boyes, Malcolm Turner, Jennifer Armeson, Lynn Beevers, Andrew Beevers, June Hawley. (Missing – Pete and Judith McCoy, Ian Hudson and Ian Lloyd.)

Monk Bretton bells off to Taylor's.



Eric Lord at Stanley Cathedral, Falkland Islands



Dedication at Dent



L to r Colin Brown (tower captain), David Burgess (President Lancashire Association), Lord Hope of Thornes, Barrie Dove, Alan Hughes (MD Whitechapel Bell Foundry).

The In-Memoriam Peal at Fewston



L to r Jeffrey Ladd, Daryl Watkins, Adam Crocker, Paul Brook, Margaret Perrott and Barrie Dove.

The Haworth Peal Band



L to r: Jo Herbert, Simon Burnett, Miles Lawson, Fiona Tiley, Sue Burnett and Peter Tiley.

Hutton Buscell – Recruiting Potential Ringers



L to r: Harry Bastiman, Neil Gardner, David Knowelden, Helen Stack, Doug. Jewitt, Martin Tubbs.

The Tadcaster band and friends on their Autumn Outing



Back Row Left to Right: Stuart Raggett, Rita Raggett, Margaret Dawson, Clive Whiteley, Antony Dawson, Martin Hardgrave, David Pygott, Lynda Lambert, Charlotte West, Thomas Raggett. Front Row: Angela Gibb, James Gibb with Elliot Gibb (3 weeks old), Matthew Pygott, Eleanor Pygott, Andrea Pygott, Tricia West , Emily Adsett.

Leeds Parish Church – Open Day



Steve Ollerton is pleased with the progress made on the Wombel by the Lord Mayor of Leeds, Councillor Reverend Alan Taylor (photo courtesy of Ollievision Photography).



L to r: Helen Kemp, Ellie Flack, Louise Flower, Ben Johnson, Mia Johnson, Daryl Watkins, James Ramsbottom and visitors watch as Graham Bloom rings the 10th as visible on the monitor on the right (photo courtesy of Ollievision Photography).



The Tankard presented to Aston-under-Lyne by the Sheffield ringers in 1786.

The St Martin-le-Grand, York Dinner



L to r: James Holdsworth, David Hull, Martin Kirk, David Maynard.

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bridge whilst we were waiting at a red light. This meant that we would have to wait a whole hour before we could get on another train.

After an hour of foot tapping and mindless nattering, we saw the train slowly pulling into the station – we made sure that we were to board this time!

We arrived at the second tower during the ringing (we had to miss out the first tower due to being so late) and when we got there we were informed that we were to be ringing by candlelight, which is definitely not as romantic as it sounds. With great thanks to Jane for holding a torch up the majority of the ringing, we were able to see what we were ringing.

Then we proceeded on to lunch at Tilley's Bar and four of us went and had a picnic on the grass, in the sunshine; in our opinion, much more exciting than the inside of a pub...

The third tower was situated directly across the road from the field where we had picnicked, and it was fun and games getting to the ringing chamber, having to climb across the roof on a walkway at one point, but all in all I think we were delighted to not have to rely on eating carrots and have the use of electricity – we don't know we're born these days! These bells were quite a bit heavier than the last tower, but rang very nicely and I think we all agreed that we'd worked our dinners off!

We all then walked to the fourth tower, which was small, but very pleasurable bells to ring; being a small tower there wasn't much room in the ringing chamber, but that didn't put us eager beavers (erm... bellringers) off!

Lastly we all walked to the fifth and final tower, a Cathedral (aren't we lucky?!) and did rounds – that is rounds of the Cathedral to try to find an open door! After a short wait, someone came to let us in. We did some actual rounds (not the alcoholic sort!) and then stood. The second time we rang, someone (and I'm not naming names...) managed to break a stay, thus slipping the wheel, but the rope was put back onto the wheel and ringing continued as normal – though of course somebody had to keep the bell on the balance at all times.

So yes, all in all a fantastic day out (and the weather was superb) to Newcastle as I'm confident that the 34 ringers I counted (I could be wrong) who attended the trip – yes it was WELL attended – will surely agree.

Hannah Jones, Longwood, Huddersfield

[The towers rung at were Heworth (6), Hebburn (6), St. Matthew's Newcastle (8), St John's Newcastle (8), Newcastle Cathedral (12) – Ed]

York Branch Outing

On Saturday 9 July, the York Branch ringing outing took place in North Nottinghamshire. The first tower was SS Mary and Martin in Blyth where tuneful ringing was followed by morning coffee at a nearby service station.

After refuelling, we made our next stop at St John the Evangelist at Scofton, which is surrounded by gorgeous parkland. I thoroughly enjoyed ringing here and we worked hard to achieve Stedman Triples and some respectable Rounds and Call Changes on this 3cwt eight. We had a close encounter with our bovine audience outside; James played matador and jumped a ha-ha to retrieve an errant page of evening menu choices from a very indignant cow.

We then journeyed to Clumber Park for a tasty picnic and a few rounds of frisbee. After lunch, we rang at All Saints in Babwith and our ringing was well received by a local churchgoer who was listening from the churchyard. Attempts at ringing Cambridge, Beverley and Surfleet were rewarded by a cup of tea and a cake from a lovely tearoom in East Retford.

Fully rested, we climbed the tower of East Retford and produced some enjoyable Plain and Little Bob Caters. Our final tower of the day was St Nicholas, Tuxford. We received a warm welcome at the Queen's Hotel, East Markham and good conversation was encouraged by a square table that seated all twelve of us. Thank you to James for organising a very enjoyable tour and to Gareth for driving the mini bus.

Sophie Palmer

Tower News

Bradford Cathedral

A major recruiting event was held in the Cathedral on Sunday 27 November immediately following the Morning Service. The Association's Wombel had been borrowed and snippets about ringing had been broadcast on BBC TV Look North and on BBC radio a few days previously. There will be a full report in Newsletter's next edition.

Brighouse and Antipodean Bells

On a recent visit to Christ Church Cathedral in Stanley, Falkland Islands, I could not resist paying a second visit to the ringing chamber. The first time was over 24 years ago when a former Brighouse ringer, Diane Lord, was married there. Actually, her 'wedding bells' were a recording of a

quarter-peal rung on the Brighthouse bells played on a Ghetto-blaster operated by a former ringer at Bradshaw! (West Yorkshire was well represented in East Falkland then – and still is).

The five bells are hung 'dead', so they are struck by rope and bell crank. The ropes come into the ringing chamber from above in a straight line, i.e. there is no possibility of rope-sight. To complicate matters further, they hang in the order : 2,3,5,1,4 ! Counting is thus the order of the day!! This is made somewhat easier by the changes of different methods being written on blackboards – and easier still if some-one points to each row as the ringing progresses.

Of course, it is possible to ring all the bells with only three people present. Two-in-hand by two of them, with the tenor handled by the third. Very interesting!!

Eric Lord

Brompton by Sawdon

Congratulations to Brompton ringer Leonard Jackson and his wife Jesse, who celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary at the end of September. A Quarter rung at Wykeham for Evensong on 2nd October was dedicated to them.

Cawthorne – 50th Anniversary Peal

On 4 November Roger Tarbatt (Shelley) and Roger Clarke (now of Sussex) rang in a peal at Cawthorne which was fifty years to the day since their first peal, which was on the same bells.

The methods they rang were also the same – Capel, London Scholars, Kingston, Sandal, Woodbine, Kent and Oxford. Both peals were rung in the same style – cartwheel, with closed leads. The only difference was that the 1961 peal took 2 hours 58 minutes, whilst the 2011 one took 2 hours 40 minutes.

The other ringers in 1961 were Christopher Moxon, Trevor Tarbatt, Eric Stainrod and Noel Moxon (C). In 2011 the other ringers were Treacy Jones, Michael Sheeran, Adrian Moreton and Brian Sanders (C).

Chapel Allerton

During afternoon ringing at a local meeting some local residents phoned the Vicar's wife complaining about the bells. Some of the callers were most abusive. It was decided therefore at the business meeting to curtail ringing

at 8pm, but that apparently was not enough to satisfy the complainants and the Vicar stopped the ringing at 7pm.

Ed – Don't be alarmed about the current state of ringing at the tower. This was at a Leeds & District Amalgamated Society meeting in 1961 and reported in The Ringing World. Jack Gibson and Irvin Slack are mentioned as well as Mr L Clarke of the local company.

Dent – Dedication of the Restored Bells

Dent was part of the old West Riding of Yorkshire but in 1974 was placed in the newly created county of Cumbria. It is however still part of the Diocese of Bradford.

The Service of re-dedication of the comprehensive restoration of the church, delightfully situated in perhaps the most pretty of all the Yorkshire Dales, was held on Sunday 19 June, presided over by the Rt. Revd. and Rt. Hon. Lord Hope of Thornes. The restoration works have covered numerous parts of the fabric of the church, including the whole of the roof, the organ and the bells.

Lord Hope (David Hope), formerly the Archbishop of York, hails from Wakefield and had previously blessed and anointed the bells when they were returned from the Whitechapel Bell Foundry around Easter.

The bells were all cast at Whitechapel in 1787 and had been out of action for nearly a century. They are now a fine easy-going ring of six. As the church (along with nearby Sedbergh – 8) had been part of Yorkshire, the works were eligible for a grant from the Association. The Lancashire Association is active in this part of south Cumbria and also gave a generous grant.

Editor

Fewston – an In-Memoriam Peal

The first peal on the augmented and restored bells was rung on 10 November in memory of Roland Coates, a member of the local band, who died on 13 August. (*See Obituaries*). Several parishioners came to listen and much appreciated the ringing in Roland's memory: Roland's widow sent a message of appreciation to the ringers, although she did not feel able to be present. The ringers and others then partook of refreshments in the award-winning, new Church Hall, which has been built partly underground.

The peal was one of 5040 Doubles, comprising 1 Principle/ 11 Methods/ 30 Variations. (*See photographs for the band*).

Haworth – Brontë Ringing Revival

The recent peal at Haworth was a significant milestone in the resurgence of ringing in the village. After many years of disuse, the bells in the Parish Church, which had been installed by Revd. Patrick Brontë in 1846, were restored in 1988. Under the leadership of Simon and Sue Burnett, new ringers were trained and the bells once again rang out. Over the years the fortunes of the band waxed and waned and reached a low after several departures when it was barely possible to ring rounds and there was a real danger of the bells falling silent again. The Rector at the time, Jenny Savage, introduced a policy of promoting ringing to all couples about to be married in St Michael's. Thankfully, this brought in three volunteers, and they in turn persuaded two of their friends to try ringing. This was a real boost for the band, just the sort of recruits that are most valuable, young adults, settled in or near the parish. All took to ringing readily and rapid progress was made despite two members emigrating.

Things took a further turn for the better when an experienced ringer, Miles Lawson, who lived in the neighbouring parish of Oakworth, joined us. Soon, basic change ringing was mastered, and the marriage of one of the Rector's recruits presented the ideal opportunity for a quarter peal. To the delight of all concerned, 1280 Plain Bob Doubles was rung at Burnsall, the venue for the reception, by the Haworth ringers in October 2008. At last the dream of a local band peal at Haworth began to look like a real possibility.

Visits to the Oxenhope practice further improved standards and gave everyone valuable experience. Although the success of the first attempt was not always repeated, a steady stream of quarter peals followed and the band began looking for a suitable occasion for a peal attempt. The new Rector, Peter Mayo-Smith, was very supportive, and when the Royal Wedding date was announced this seemed the ideal opportunity. As a final practice, a long quarter of two extents was rung for the Palm Sunday Service, this went very well and all was set for the peal attempt on 29 April. On the day the bells went into changes at 3.05 pm and a peal of Plain Bob Minor was successful at the first attempt.

Haworth now has a small thriving band, the Sunday Service ringers are capable of a variety of plain minor methods and Kent Treble Bob and Stedman regularly feature at practice night. With the relatively low numbers, keeping this standard up during the summer can be a challenge but steady progress is being made. Future plans include more advanced quarters and peals along with the possibility of holding some practices at Keighley to venture into eight bell ringing. With Haworth now firmly back on the ringing map, it is the ambition that the Worth Valley becomes a centre for ringing in the district.

Simon Burnett

[Our congratulations go to Sue and Simon for their Ruby Wedding Anniversary on 23 October 1971. A celebratory wedding peal of 7 Minor Methods was rung at Bramham the following day conducted by Barrie Dove. The other ringers were Peter Carbutt, Ron and Margaret Warford and Gail and me. Sue and Simon were married there by the Archbishop of York, Simon's father being the Vicar of Bramham – Ed]

Helmsley

Alex Magson, a stalwart at Helmsley, celebrated his 80th birthday on 7 September. On the preceding practice night the ringers held a party in the tower to mark the event, presenting him with a 'fantasy Peal board and bell-shaped cake

Congratulations! Ed

Hutton Buscell – Restoration Works

The three bells at Hutton Buscell, near Scarborough, have been out of action for some years as they have been considered unringable, primarily through frame movement. However after a thorough service the bells are in action again, although there is currently no local band.

On Thursday 16 June an Open Evening was held by the church authorities and local people invited to come along to see what ringing was all about. Quite a few responded and an explanation of ringing was given by Martin Tubbs, one of the band at nearby Wykeham and who is also the Scarborough Branch Chairman. Ringers who had come along to the Open Evening demonstrated the practical side.

The last major restoration of the bells was carried out by Taylor's of Loughborough in 1902, when a new wooden oak bell frame was installed and traditional ringing fittings including wooden headstocks. Over the years everything had loosened up. The recent works included tightening all tie rods etc., removing considerable quantities of jackdaw nesting materials from the belfry and repairing the louvre netting to prevent further bird ingress..

Kirk Deighton – The Guides visit the bell ringers

On Tuesday 18 October, 3rd Wetherby Guides visited the bell ringers! After many questions on a Church Parade... 'what do you do up there?' and 'can we go up?' we agreed that they could visit. Organised with lots of help from the ringers by Vicky and Rachael, who are both Young Leaders in the pack, the evening was a great success!

We started off ringing the bells 'up' for one group, something which they found amazing and to them very noisy! Followed by a short chat on what bell ringing is. We then had time for a quick ring of Plain Bob Doubles and some Call Changes much to the delight of the Guides (and the ringers!!) Another group enjoyed hearing the bells being rung 'down'. A few Guides had the opportunity have a ring which they all enjoyed.

Due to the numbers we couldn't have them all in the tower at the same time, so we had some of the Guides downstairs completing an All Saints Church Kirk Deighton Quiz, with the winner receiving a bar of chocolate! During the evening refreshments were provided, included hot chocolate, homemade cakes and cookies. A fantastic evening which the Guides thoroughly enjoyed!

Vicky Sanderson

[Something to copy for your tower? – Ed]

Leeds Parish Church – Open Day

On 9 July Leeds Parish Church threw open its doors to showcase the beauty and variety of what goes on before, during and after its Services and especially to welcome families in to the church. Games, beer and barbecue were also put on, so as you'd expect the LPC ringers were fully involved, opening the event with a quarter-peal of Plain Bob Caters.

Fifteen members of the LPC band were involved throughout the day in hourly ringing demonstrations in the belfry, change-ringing on handbells in church, manning our displays and most importantly, giving as many visitors as possible a chance to try their hand at ringing on the YACR's Wombel. This was a very popular exhibit, especially once the public had seen our four year-olds Samuel Ollerton and Alex Johnson happily ringing it. It is an excellent way to show exactly how ringing's done. Never one to miss a good opportunity, Tower Captain Steve Ollerton even managed to persuade the Lord Mayor of Leeds, Councillor Reverend Alan Taylor, to catch hold during his official visit.

Our LPC techies, Paul Brook and Ben Johnson, set up a webcam in the belfry which fed down to a PC in the ringing room, allowing us to show exactly what full circle ringing actually means. We used it with a single bell and the visitors were fascinated and strangely amused by the 2-3 second delay.

We were especially delighted to successfully close the day with a quarter-peal of Plain Bob Doubles as it was a first quarter at her first attempt for Ellie Flack, our Australian ringer. She and her husband Josh are leaving us

to return home at the end of August and will be sadly missed by the Leeds band.

Special thanks must go to Jeff Ladd who made virtually all the arrangements beforehand but was otherwise engaged ringing in France at the time. [*See separate article – Ed*].

Wendy Bloom

Monk Bretton

There is no change to the appearance of the church, but a passer-by might be thinking “I haven’t heard the clock striking the hour for some time. And what’s happened to the bellringers – they are not to be seen in ‘The Norman’ on a Monday night chatting about running out from somewhere and long work behind”.

Since 1979 when the late Mr Paul Taylor clambered up the tower and advised a re-hang of the six Mears and Stainbank bells, the local band have endeavoured to ring for Services by patching, and in some cases replacing, the fragile wheels, and coaxing the timber frame and headstocks to carry on whilst hoping for better things to come. At long last, in the name of The Selman Project, our hopes were realised following a bequest from Miss Selman, a benefactor of the church. This enabled the PCC to fund a re-hang of the bells, which is generously assisted by a grant from our Association. And now, hopefully for a short time, we have a silent empty belfry and the ringing chamber looks forlorn without its coloured sallies.

Messrs. Paul Mason and Nathan Coleman from John Taylor & Co with the assistance of local ringers whipped out the tired looking, much loved, (by some) installation in quick time, and we were saddened to see it go. Not part of the plan when thinking of having the bells “done up”, but if you have never seen your bells being lowered slowly DOWN the tower, it’s very difficult to explain the mixed emotions, even though you know they will eventually be coming back.

It was clear when the old timber frame was being dismantled that we were lucky to be ringing the bells at all; some of the supporting members just fell apart, not due to wood rot but to constant movement loosening the aging joints. There were some tricky moments due to the cramped conditions in the small tower, not least because the bells were on two levels. The gales starting on the 12th of September didn’t help either; the noise of the wind whistling through the louvres was off-putting when trying to think what to do next.

So what part did the Association play in our good fortune? Apart from the Selman Project, the Bell Repair Fund was our good fortune. The £5000 grant was the likely lever that swayed some members of the PCC to proceed with the project; YOU may not have considered it, but as a member of the Yorkshire Association your contributions are helping to restore another ring of bells.

Before Taylor's men came knocking on our door, we rang the bells for a wedding on the 10th and for Mass on Sunday morning, the 11th of September, when our thoughts were with the original benefactor, Miss Bright, who donated the ring in memory of her departed sisters Mary and Alice. On reflection it looks like we owe a great deal to the ladies of the Parish.

Mike Sheeran

Northowram – Wombeling at the Piece Hall, Halifax

Instead of a parade followed by a church service this year for St George's Day a "Celebration" was held in the Piece Hall, Halifax. All families were invited to see what the Scouts get up to.

Some of our Northowram scouts have been learning to ring since November (two leaders and five scouts) so we decided to borrow the YACR Wombel to demonstrate ringing. Also we got the Western Branch display boards which have a lot of ringing information on them. We added some words about the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme.

Considering we had competition from abseiling, a climbing wall, a cave containing an obstacle course, a spinning and weaving stall and demonstrations of marching, gymnastics etc. we did well to have interest throughout the day, but mainly from young children and their grandparents.

I am afraid the teenagers and parents did not seem interested and regretfully I don't think we have found any new recruits. But it was a good public relations exercise for bellringing. It was lucky that the Royal wedding was so soon after and I was able to tell people to listen to the Westminster Abbey bells. Maybe we have educated a few more people in Halifax!

Margaret Perrott

[For hiring the Wombel please contact Brian Sanders on 01226 230405 or briansanders@blueyonder.co.uk]

Roos

Primarily through the good offices of the Beverley and District Ringing Society, already £35,000 has been raised to restore and augment the five bells at Roos. The Roos ringers have been delighted and encouraged by the huge amount of support they have received. Generous grants have been awarded by the Beverley Society and the Yorkshire Association, but another £10,000 is needed.

In July there was a sponsored 25-mile walk along the Wolds Way, which raised £2100 including gift aid tax credits. Helen and Gary Audley, Gill Dickinson, Diane Lavender, Sarah Dawson, John Atkinson, Nick Soanes, Wendy Stabler and Roxy (a canine friend) took part, with practical support – unlimited tea, sandwiches and encouragement – provided by a back-room team.

[Ed – Copied from the original article by Helen Audley published in The Ringing World.]

Sheffield Cathedral – A Tale of Two Tankards

In the ringing chamber at Sheffield Cathedral, we have a fine pewter tankard bearing the inscription 'Presented To The Sheffield St Peters Amalgamated Society of Ringers by the Ringers of Ashton-under-Lyne as a token of esteem and friendship 1886'.

On asking whether they had any record of this at Ashton-under-Lyne, Jeff Brannan told me that they have a tankard presented to the Ashton ringers by the Sheffield ringers a hundred years previously in 1786. Jeff goes on to say 'I suspect the tankard related to a striking competition. There are 8 bells (with wheels) "down" on the higher section and a further 8 bells (with wheels) in the lower section – this time bells 1 to 5 are "up" bell 6 "down" and 7 & 8 "up". We had always assumed it related to a competition where the ringer of the 6th let the side down!'

He also included details of an article in The Manchester Mercury of 4 October 1785 "We hear from Ashton-Under-Lyne that the Society of Change Ringers of that place made a journey of pleasure the first of this instant to Sheffield where they stayed two days; in which time they rung various peals of changes upon the bells at the old church, in such a manner as procured them general respect and courteous behaviour from all around them. Their performances upon the handbells gave universal delight and excited the admiration of all who were lovers of ringing.

They had the honour of being invited to and participating of a sumptuous dinner in Cutlers Hall (it being the Cutlers Feast) and afterwards regaled

with plenty of good liquor and on leaving the Feast had a handsome present made them of some silver. During their stay they were severally presented with different sets of articles of cutlery ware from the ringers and their friends as tokens of affection and satisfaction of their visit which was kindly received, not for the value of the gift, but the benevolent givers.

The same Youths also on Monday last (3rd October, 1785) rang upon their own bells 5120 changes of Union (or Treble Bob) in three hours 20 minutes with great exactness of time, and we believe is the first treble peal ever rung upon 8 bells in this county."

There was clearly much interaction and mutual respect between the two bands over a long period of time.

Judith Reading

Silkstone

It was decided to hold a barbecue at Broad Close Farm to raise money towards the refurbishment of the church bells. Everything was organised, food, teas and coffees, music, pets corner and competitions: the only thing that could not be arranged was the weather.

On the day of the barbecue we were all worried that we might get rained off, but the Sunday evening in August came round fine, dry and surprisingly quite warm. From five o'clock a steady low of people started to arrive – eventually 60 to 70! There was plenty for them to do and the children were soon entertaining themselves with the pets and the different quizzes provided by Carolyn. The adults seemed content to sit and talk and listen to live music.

From about 5.50 pm food was provided and what food! Burgers, chops and sausages all expertly barbecued by Jonathan. There were a couple of times when it looked like we might run out of bread and salad but a quick visit to the local shop soon put that right. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves and no one was in a hurry to leave.

A big thank-you must go to Carolyn, Jonathan, Nicola and other members of the Charlesworth family for organising the event and to anyone else who helped in any way. Thanks to everyone who supported the event, which raised £800 towards the Bell Fund for the repair of All Saints Silkstone Bells.

Skipton visits York

It came as a bit of a shock – moving from Skipton’s 22 cwt eight to the 3 cwt six at Rufforth, but the bells went beautifully and the Holy Trinity 2011 tour was off to a good start. We then parked at St. Lawrence’s in York and rang there before embarking on a walking tour of five more towers.

We cleared ladders from All Saints, North Street, Christmas cards from St Martin le Grand and café tables from Spurriergate. We tackled the ten bells of St. Wilfrid’s and several of the band gave up a post-prandial zizz to ring the nice bells of St Olave’s.

It was a great day out and a quite tired group took an eccentric route back to the cars where they dispersed, either homeward or to enjoy a fine lasagne supper chez Cater.

Chris Wright



The ringers l to r: Keith Mollon, Macolm Harker, Chris Wright, Bob Cater, Gill Daker, Digby Burton, Barbara Payne, Simon Hopwell, William Hopwell (not yet a ringer), Chris Enzor, Anthea Enzor, Kevin Haseldine and Stephen Phillip.

York – St Martin-le-Grand Dinner

The tenth annual Dinner was held in the splendid rooms in the York Masonic Lodge on Saturday 19 November. The Dinner was started by Rev Darren Moore, the tower captain there, when he left York to train for the ministry and has been organised by David Hull of St Wilfrid’s York for some years. He was Master of Ceremonies for the event. Over 60 ringers and friends attended.

The Chairman of the Dinner was Martin Kirk (Northallerton), who proposed an entertaining toast to the Church. Another speaker was David Maynard, who only a few years ago learned to ring at Clifton, York and is presently Master of the Ancient Society of College Youths, based in London. James Holdsworth (Western Branch) also spoke as the 2010 receiver of the 'Dipstick Award' and passed the (un)coveted baton on to another until the next Dinner.

A breath-stopping performance of change ringing on 16 handbells – 64 changes of Littleport Little Surprise Sixteen – was given by a band of 8 ringers including Jonathan Stokoe (York Minster & St Wilfrid's), Jennifer Town (Northallerton), Robert Lee (ex-York Minster & St Wilfrid's), David Maynard (ex-Clifton & St Wilfrid's), James Holdsworth and David Hull.

Tadcaster – Tower Outing

For a number of years now members of the Tadcaster Tower and friends have had two outings a year. In the Spring they have a day outing and then in the Autumn a long weekend away. Unfortunately things did not work out so well in the Spring this year and the day outing had to be cancelled but the Autumn outing went ahead as usual.

This year's outing took the band to Leicestershire and Rutland, staying at the "Old Wisteria Hotel" in Oakham. On Saturday we rang at Saltby, Sproxton, Waltham in the Wolds, Wymondham and Cottesmore. On Sunday we did a circuit of Rutland Water starting with Service ringing, joining the local band at Oakham, ringing an excellent course of Yorkshire Major for the Service touch. We then went on to ring at Empingham, Edith Weston where we rang a course of Stamford (being close to Stamford) before stopping for lunch by the side of Rutland Water followed by North Luffenham and Uppingham. On the Monday we were at Melton Mowbray, Barrow upon Soar, Mountsorrel and finally at Shepshed before heading North on the M1 for a meal at The British Oak at Denby Dale.

The drive home was eventful as the M1 had been closed due to a fatal accident. I am pleased to report that although delayed our party all returned safely and in good heart. We were blessed with excellent weather and the standard of ringing over the weekend was extremely good. All member of the band had a good time and progress was made at all levels. The pinnacle for most was achieving a touch of eight spliced.

Stuart Raggett

Looking Back

Halifax – All Souls, Haley Hill

For some years following the end of WW2 the bells at All Souls Church, Haley Hill (8, tenor 25cwt) were usually silent. One Friday evening in 1948 the Vicar visited his Youth Club and enquired whether any of the members might be willing to try to revive ringing on a regular basis. An initial group of six youths aged around 14 years took up the challenge and after spending some time swinging Tarzan-fashion on the ropes set about following tutor Roy Mann's instructions.

Quite quickly a modest Sunday Service band emerged and set about learning Plain Bob Minor and Major (never Doubles or Triples), Kent, Double Norwich and then Surprise. Along the way new members were recruited including a new leader, Vernon Bottomley, and Spliced Surprise Major was regularly rung at the Friday night practice – which attracted visitors from far and wide – and for Sunday Service.



Some of the Haley Hill, Halifax, band in the late 1950s.

Back row l to r: Colin Sweeney, J Henry Fielden, Geoff Bryant, John Harrison, David Hollas and Ralph Beaumont. Front row l to r: Sheila Taylor (later Moulds), Pat Reeve (later Knight), Vernon Bottomley, Robert Moulds, Vivien Copping, Jill Henderson and Freda Scott.

A group of local ringers began to explore the delights of handbell ringing and after being joined by Wilf. Moreton of Wakefield five All Souls ringers were included in the first ever peals of Stedman Cinques in hand rung by a resident Yorkshire band. Two All Souls ringers, John and Geoff Bryant, are the only surviving members who took part in both of the first resident band peals of Stedman Cinques – in hand and on tower bells.

Between 1954 and 1962 thirteen Surprise Major peals were rung by the local band, up to 9-Spliced (Pitman ATW). This latter peal was rung on 11 March 1961 at Heptonstall by Neville Parkin, Sheila Moulds, Pat Reeve, Vivian Copping, Geoffrey Bryant, J Henry Fielden (C), John Bryant and Robert Moulds.

Nine peals in hand were rung in 1961 and 1962 with the first peal of Stedman Cinques by a resident Yorkshire band on 2 July 1962. The band was John Bryant, Robert Moulds, J Henry Fielden, Wilfrid Moreton (C), Geoffrey Bryant and Neville Parkin. The same band rang two more peals of Stedman Cinques in 1963, conducted by Wilfrid Moreton and J Henry Fielden.

All Souls ringers taking part in the above peals were Ralph Beaumont, Vernon Bottomley, Geoff Bryant, Vivien Copping, J Henry Fielden, Martin Fielden, Robert Moulds, Neville Parkin, Patricia Reeve – later Knight, Colin Sweeney, Sheila Taylor – later Moulds. Other All Souls ringers who rang peals were Arlene Flather – later Smith, Pat Lord, Roy Mann, Kenneth Palmer and Anne Reynolds – later Parkin.

On Saturday 30 October 1965 the first tower bell peal of Stedman Cinques by a resident Yorkshire band was rung at York Minster by Eric Critchley, Geoffrey Bryant, John Bryant, John Gilbert, Jeanne Bottomley, J Henry Fielden, Vernon Bottomley, John Chaddock, Fred Ross, Norman Chaddock, Wilfrid Moreton (C) and Richard Price.

All Souls Church, a Halifax landmark, is one of most magnificent buildings designed by the famous architect Sir George Gilbert Scott and was paid for by Edward Akroyd, a Halifax manufacturer. Scott thought it his best church but he still lamented it was not grander still. Completed in 1859, it has a 72-metre (230 feet) high spire and dazzling stained glass created by Victorian master craftsmen. It is now regretfully a Redundant Church, although the bells are rung occasionally.

Geoff Bryant

The Selby & District Society

The Society was founded at Selby on 3 November 1945 on acceptance of the following proposition – “That a district Society to be known as The Selby & District Society of Change Ringers be founded for the purpose of further encouraging learners by holding practice meetings and that the said Society be affiliated to The Yorkshire Association of Change Ringers”.

The President was Revd. F Read (Selby), the Chairman Mr. H S Morley (Selby), The Ringing Master M C Bradley (Sherburn) and the Secretary/Treasurer T H Foster (Selby). Meetings were to be held monthly on the first Saturday. The annual subscription was one shilling (5p).

In the YACR Library, looked after for us by the York Minster Archive and Library, there are all the minute books from the Society’s foundation up to its winding-up at a meeting at Hemingbrough on 1 October 1983: tea was held at Bill Stoker’s house. The winding-up was said to be through lack of ringers attending meetings.

There is a Society Peal Book recording 39 peals for the Society. The first was of Plain Bob Minor on 17 May 1947 at Carlton juxta Snaith and the last of Stedman Doubles at Huntington (on 5 bells) on 1 September 1966*. There is then recorded a Quarter Peal of Grandsire Triples at Goole on 19 May 1983 in memory of Leslie Woodhead (Goole).

Editor

** This peal was Simon Burnett’s first peal – see elsewhere in the Newsletter for Simon’s recent activities at Haworth. Simon lived then at Bramham (6).*

Wath-on-Dearne and the ‘Panther’ ringers.

In the edition of Summer 2011 there was a photograph of the late Harold Chant standing by the former tenor bell that is now a silent witness to a once famous ring of six bells that served Wath for about 180 years.

The bell, cast in 1588 by Geo. Heathcote of Chesterfield, was taken down in 1935 and, whilst the other five bells were taken to Taylors in Loughborough, this one was placed on a plinth near the church’s north door.

Why a famous ring of six? In 1815 six ringers rang the bells for almost 8½ hours to what would be three full peals (15,120 changes) in 18 Treble Bob Minor methods, a record that has unofficially never been broken (the RW Diary records that 10,080 TB Minor at Edwalton on March 29, 2003 is the record). Wath ringers – and their rivals across the Dearne valley at Darfield -maintained a strong reputation throughout the 19th Century and into the first half of the 20th for closed-lead Minor ringing.



The Wath band on winning the Barnsley Shield. Taken in 1928 or 1931 (the only years the Wath band won the Shield), Arthur Panther is second from the left on the front row.

Wath's ringers recruited Josias Panther in the 1870s and he remained an eminent stalwart (and tower captain) until the 1920s, although his son, Arthur, became an even more able exponent of TB Minor ringing. In 1927 the Wath team tackled 197 different methods to 720s, 121 of them prior to either Sunday morning or evening services. This is a record probably never surpassed by any other local 6-bell team anywhere.

For some reason, although the bells had been refurbished in 1902, the band opted to have them recast and rehung, not as a ring of six, but as a completely new ring of eight. Bells 3 to 7 bear the facsimile inscriptions of the old bells (1 to 5). Due to limited space in the belfry bell 3 hangs above bells 1 and 2. The old bells were removed in January 1935 by Taylors and the new eight were in the tower by May in time to ring out for the Silver Jubilee of King George V.

Oddly enough, there are few records of the team after the augmentation and with the onset of WW2 and the increasing age of the ringers the team gradually faded away, never again remotely reaching their former glory 6-bell days. Arthur Panther died in 1941 and in his memory Harold Chant

conducted a full peal of Plain Bob Major on handbells that were once Josias' set that he allowed the Wath ringers to use. [*The ban on tower bells being sounded during this part of WW2 would have been in force – Ed*].

Arthur Panther's son, Fred, claimed the handbells back and kept them at his home but never used them. They comprised 46 bells by Shaw's, OI-C down to 18G with four duplicate bells amongst them. Bundled into a suitcase they found their way into the attic of Fred's son, Brian, who only recently rediscovered them. Brian, only ever a novice learner, has long since given up tower bell ringing but through his Mexborough Male Voice Choir membership came into contact with John Smalley, Wath's organist and bellringer, who then passed the news of the handbells on to me.

I inspected the handbells along with Richard Lewis who lives in Wath. He is a master metal worker who in 2001 forged the tenor clapper of St. Paul's Cathedral in London in time for the funeral of HM Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother. Together, we're embarking on restoring the largest 21 bells so that Brian (now aged 82) and his wife Christine can raise a team and ring with them, probably based at Conisborough Methodist Church. We strongly hope the 'Panther' bells and all the memories that go with them can once again be reactivated.

Michael King, Wath-on-Dearne

Obituaries

Geoffrey Cheetham – Todmorden & Heptonstall

Geoffrey, who died on July 20, was a skilled electrical engineer who, whilst in his teens, became passionately involved in church bell-ringing.

His parents worshipped at Todmorden Unitarian Church and it was there that Geoffrey was taught bell-ringing. Before that, though, he was exceptionally enthusiastic about model railways and would save up every penny he could to buy the best models that Hornby Toys produced. Geoffrey spent many hours on the platforms at Todmorden Railway Station collecting the names and numbers of engines in that nostalgic age of steam trains.

On college graduation he entered National Service with the Royal Air Force and was posted to Locking in Somerset. He couldn't believe his luck to discover that one of the leisure activities offered to recruits was bell-ringing, off-base at the local church. Needless to say, he didn't stop for a moment to accept the offer!

Geoffrey joined the Rochdale Branch of the Lancashire Association of Change Ringers in 1955. He served as secretary and later was elected branch chairman. He went on many bell-ringing outings and holidays, usually arranged by Peter Schofield, Donald Bateman and Jeffrey Kershaw, originally bellringers at St Peter's Church, Walsden. and Ian Oram (Kent and Sussex). His last ringing holiday was to Devon in Easter 1992.

He never kept records of the different church towers he visited, though his colleagues have estimated the figure to be around 4,000! He rang 114 peals. He was very loyal to Christ Church, Todmorden, and became very upset when its bells were removed in 1989 and changed his allegiance to Heptonstall, where he rang until about 2006.

For years Geoffrey was a member of CAMRA and always had a Real Ale Guide handy on his travels. He always visited the British Beer Festival wherever it was being held and went to others around the country, usually with his good friends including Arthur Rogers.

[Extracted from a report in the Todmorden News – Ed]

Tom Bush – Ilkley

Tom Bush was 62 when he joined the Ilkley band in 1985. He was a quiet man whose life centred around his family and the church, so the death of his wife just after his daughters had both moved away from home left him alone– but determined not to be lonely.

He'd had a few bell handling lessons as a teenager in Somerset, and although he knew that taking up ringing again was never going to be easy, he saw it as the basis of the new social life he needed. Once he'd gained enough confidence, and joined forces with the other late learning enthusiasts in the area, staying at home on a weekday evening was not an option! For over 10 years, he visited every local practice every week, and joined Roger and myself on trips all over the country as an 'honorary' past member of Leeds University Society.

As a result, he made significant progress in his ringing and was quietly, but hugely, proud of his achievements – two peals rung when he was well over 70 and possibly his finest moment – a quarter peal of Stedman Triples in his home tower.

We've missed him in recent years, since he became unable to climb the tower steps, but he will be remembered by everyone at Ilkley, for just being himself – a lovely person and a true gentleman.

In all the years we rang with Tom, on so many different occasions, there was never one practice night, day out, trip or tour that didn't end with him going out of his way to say – 'Thank you so much'. As did his daughters, who told me recently that ringing had provided their father, in his retirement years, with the most wonderful social life imaginably. He'd adored every minute of it, and they'd never felt a need to worry about him when they knew he was out with his ringing friends!

Which proves, should we need reminding, that bellringing is about so much more than just moving around a large piece of metal on the end of a long rope.

Sue Green

Roland Coates – Fewston

Bell ringing's a complex art
And our Roland started late
By jove! He made quick progress
Improved at lightning rate.

A typical Yorkshire person
Soon labelled bell ringing mad
Almost seven days a week
But a most reliable lad.

Enthusiastic, dependable
He would travel far and wide
To ring at other towers
He practised his hobby with pride.

We've heard of sports fanatics
But ringing was Roland's game
Dear Dorothy must often have said
'Oh! Off he goes again'

Forever on his journeys
To ring at other towers
If the rest of us were willing
He'd plod on for hours and hours

Fewston, Masham and Pateley
Church towers both near and far
All joyous times for Roland
Journeying around by car.

Grandsire, Bob Doubles and Stedman
Mean nothing to many of you
But to Roland words of magic
And that bell rope of red, white and blue.

Some think we're a group of fanatics
That keep kids awake at night
If ever you're at a loose end
Come and watch (you're probably right)

You may be captivated
If you've not seen ringing before
Please don't believe silly rumours
Your feet will not leave the floor!

You would certainly get a surprise
And may even fancy a go
As they say 'That's what he'd have wanted'
You see, you just never know.

There's bells in heaven I'm certain
Rest assured, for Roland I hope
He'll be grumbling at the angels
If they don't pass him a rope.

I know he would not mind some humour
So I'll close with that earlier refrain
'Bell practice tonight' he may say
Reply —-'Oh ! He's off again!'

Poem to Roland. Written and Read by Frank Dean at Roland's Funeral on 23 August.

Dates For Your Diary 2012

- 4 Feb. General Meeting (with lunch), Brighthouse.
3 March General Committee Meeting, Sherburn in Elmet
24 March National 12-Bell Contest Eliminators
12 May Association AGM and Inter-Branch 8-Bell Striking Contest, C&NY Branch
3–5 June HM The Queen's Diamond Jubilee
23 June National 12-Bell Contest Final, Melbourne (Derbyshire)
18 Aug. Life Members' Gathering
15 Sept. General Meeting & Final of Sunday Service Bands Striking Contest

Ten Commandments For The Bellringer

Remember Monday evenings to keep them wholly for the Practice.

Thou shalt not tarry without the gates.

Thou shalt harken to the sound of thy striking and keep thy bell within her place.

Thou shalt not bump the stay, lest it break and thou be carried up to the heavens.

Thou shalt not follow one rope too long – for the eyes are the windows of the mind. If they be glued to one rope how shall the mind be lighted.

Thou shalt not rely completely upon thy helper but cultivate thine own understanding, for he that listeneth for his helper from place to place shall stumble and perish, but he that counteth his own places can in no wise strike in the wrong place.

Thou shalt learn thy methods well.

Thou shalt not contemplate thy homework nor housework nor thy boyfriend nor thy girlfriend nor any characteristic of thy fellow ringers – lest when a call be made thou shalt be taken unawares and be utterly confounded.

Thou shalt not break any covenant with thy band to follow after thy wife nor thy best girl nor thy second best girl nor thy friend nor thy enemy – for the band will not hold him worthy that turneth his Yea to Nay.

Thou shalt honour thy band and thy ringing master and forget not that regular attendance is also expected of thee on Sundays.

As displayed in Bradford Cathedral.

JOHN TAYLOR & CO.,

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