

**THE
YORKSHIRE ASSOCIATION
OF
CHANGE RINGERS**



Newsletter
Summer 2011

Editorial

Thank you everyone who has sent articles for this edition or provided material from which an article could be written. Some articles are copied direct from newsletters prepared by the Branches, with the Branches' permission: thank you for including me on your circulation lists.

We hope everyone finds the Newsletter interesting.

The next edition is planned for Winter 2011/12, with copy already being assembled. Please do let me have material about what's gone on in your tower and Branch over the Summer and Autumn.

Robert Cater

Thank you to everyone who has sent in articles and photographs for this edition of the newsletter.

Matthew Blurton

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Yorkshire Association of Change Ringers



JASPER W SNOWDON DINNER CEILIDH

Saturday 15th October 2011



MIDLAND HOTEL — BRADFORD 6.45PM

Meeting for pre dinner drinks at 6pm

After dinner guest speaker

Ceilidh 8.45pm – 11.00pm

Ticket price £30.00

Dress Code Lounge Suit

Bookings taken by Sue Green maximum 10 per table email: suegreen43@yahoo.co.uk

Telephone: **01943 864081**

also via branch secretaries

Overnight stay at the Midland Hotel £60.00 per double occupancy for B&B

Central Council Meeting – Spring Bank Holiday Weekend

On 30th May I went to my first meeting of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers (the CCCBR) in Hereford. The Central Council is an annual meeting of representatives from different ringing societies and it was the 114th time the Council had met. 206 Council members attended the meeting, including some from the North American Guild and the Australian and New Zealand Association. It felt like a long way for me, but was even further for them! About 25% of the representatives were new to the Council.

To sweeten us up before the meeting, there was plenty of ringing available, with open towers on the Saturday and Sunday and peals for anyone who wanted to ring one! A highlight of this was climbing up a huge number of stairs to ring on the ten at Ludlow, with fantastic views over the surrounding countryside. On the Sunday night we were welcomed at the Three Counties Hotel for a Grand Dinner, where some of the Yorkshire Association representatives shared a table with our neighbours from the Beverley and District Society and Durham and Newcastle Association. We were particularly pleased to be joined for the evening by Dinah and Neil Donovan.

The meeting itself began at 10 o'clock on the Monday morning with a prayer and a welcome for new members. The Yorkshire Association had three of these, Deborah Thorley, who had been a member before, Peter Kirby and myself, joining existing members Barrie Dove and Brian Sanders.

The majority of the work of the CCCBR is done through committees which meet throughout the year, dealing with issues such as public relations, methods and tower management. Each committee reported back on the work it had been doing and new committee members were elected. Brian and Barrie are already on the Education and Public Relations committee respectively, while Peter was elected to the Bell Restoration committee and Deborah and James Blackburn from Beverley to the Education Committee, with me just missing out in a hotly contested election! Adam Crocker from Leeds University was elected to the Peal Records committee. All the committee reports were published in a supplement to the 'Ringing World' on 29th April, so I won't repeat them here. In breaks in the Central Council meeting we had the annual general meetings for the Ringing World and the Ringing Foundation, a company formed to promote and develop ringing for the future.

The meeting closed just before 7pm, when experienced members were settling down for another night at the hotel. Meanwhile I set off on the long drive back with a lot to think about. While the Central Council certainly

doesn't move quickly, it is important that ringers communicate with each other so we can promote ringing to the general public on a national (and international) as well as on a local basis. I also enjoyed meeting, and ringing with, a wide range of different people, sharing our experience of developing ringers and ringing. Next year, Chester!

Susan Laycock

Association AGM – York 7 May

The bells of all eight churches in the centre of York pealed out over the City for the Association AGM on Saturday 7 May, with over 100 members and friends ringing throughout the day. And it was also the day the Inter-Branch striking competition was held at a City church.

The first ringing of the day was perhaps the most unusual in that the six bells were available at The Parish – a night club converted from The Arts Centre, itself converted many years ago from St John's Church in Ousebridge. The bar is in the middle of the ringing circle and was stacked high with the multiplicity of bottles containing the kind of spirits and liqueurs which seem to be needed these days to make the exotic cocktails required by younger people. When ringing myself, I feared how much it was going to cost me if my rope snagged the display!

All the Association's nine Branches entered a team to win the coveted Inter-Branch striking contest silver cup which returned to Yorkshire a couple of years ago. The test piece was a course of Lincolnshire SM at St. Lawrence's Church judged by Peter Wilkinson of Cheshire.

Tea was a magnificent repast provided by the York ladies. They put in a lot of hard work to cater for over 100 people, including Christine Potter being at the church hall for over 12 hours plus several hours the night before assembling tables.

The meeting itself was a 'conventional' one, with Barrie Dove being elected unopposed as Association President for a final three-year term and Simon Reading as Peal Secretary. We stood in memory of recently departed members – Andrew Dunn (Bishophorpe), John Lloyd (Cawthorne), Harry Winter (Ripon), Albert Wood (Saddleworth) and Pat Lord (Batley).

The only surprising departure from 'convention' was that when a proposal was put to increase the annual subscription, it emerged that some 60% of the Association's 1800 members now pay half price, being under 18, full-time students or at least 60 years old. This percentage was shown to have steadily increased over the years, particularly as the membership

has grown older. An amendment was then proposed and carried which abolished the reduced rate for older members and kept the subscription at the present level of £8.

The results of the contest were eagerly awaited and in commenting on the striking Peter Wilkinson showed his possession of a keen ear and his consistency of approach. The winners were the band representing the East Riding Branch, with the Western Branch and York Branch closely in second and third places.

To close off the day, we complimented Dinah Rhymer and Neil Donovan on their forthcoming marriage.

After the event, Barrie wrote to Peter Wilkinson to thank him for coming to York to judge the contest. This is his reply –

Hi Barrie, it was with some trepidation that I agreed to judge the Striking Contest, especially on such “hallowed ground” as York.

As I said in my opening remarks, I was impressed that an Association with territory as extensive as the Yorkshire Association managed to field a full set of bands – some of those taking part must have traveled quite a distance! We don’t always manage to field a full set of teams in the Chester Diocesan Guild, which covers a much smaller area!

In the event, I thoroughly enjoyed the day, indeed the whole weekend, as I stayed with David and Christine Potter on both Friday and Saturday nights thus making the most of my visit to Yorkshire, only returning home on Sunday evening. The Yorkshire Association is to be congratulated on arranging such an enjoyable day.

Editor

General Meeting at Ecclesfield – 5 February

As Snoopy of Peanuts fame would have written “It was a dark and stormy night ... before the four-monthly General Meeting on 5 February”.

Well, indeed it was, with gale force winds and driving rain across much of Yorkshire making us wonder if we would get to Ecclesfield, just north of Sheffield, the following day. In the event the wind had abated a little by daylight and the rain had reduced in intensity from stair rods to cats and dogs. Some 65 of us made it.

After ringing on the fine six at Darton near Barnsley, restored a decade or so ago after coal mining subsidence had endangered the church, and

ringing at Ecclesfield, the Service there was led by the Vicar, Revd. Daniel Hartley, who had once been a Prison Chaplain. An extract was read from 'The Bell, its Origin, History and Uses', written in 1848 by a previous Vicar, Revd. Dr. Alfred Gatty during his long incumbency lasting from 1839 to 1903. It told of Contest Ringing going on all day and his delight turning somewhat thundery as it tediously and mind-numbingly went on hour after hour after hour.

Lunch provided by the local company was a never-ending supply of a Yorkshire delicacy, home-made meat and potato pie with mushy peas and gravy, made even more piquant by lashings of mint sauce. Cakes in all possible varieties followed.

After the darkness and storminess of the night and the sumptuousness of the feast, the meeting itself appeared to be over in a flash, without any sequential rumbling. Barrie Dove, our President, led tributes to recently departed members, Betty Jackson (Addingham), Ian McDonald (Ripon), R Fraser Mack (late of Leeds), David Nichols (Sprotborough, previously Rotherham), John Shrigley (New Mill) and Revd Peter Scholfield (Wakefield).

Barrie was proposed as our President for a second three-year term and Simon Reading as our Peal Secretary, to be voted on at our AGM in May if further candidates are nominated before the end of the month. The rest of the business was mild and pleasant, with an Agenda familiar to anyone who attends Association or Guild meetings anywhere. One particularly bright announcement was an Open Day in the Sheffield Branch for Bank Holiday Monday, 2 May, to raise funds for the augmentation of the eight to ten at the CC-recognised Ringing Centre at Ecclesfield.

At Whiston (8) and Rotherham Minster (12) later there were plenty of people there so that the ringing was certainly not in the doldrums. Afterwards it was a drive home through calmer weather, but still requiring use of the wipers and a steady grip on the steering wheel.

Robert Cater

[Sorry for crediting holy orders to Philip Hirst and authorship of the book 'The Bell: its origin ...' in the version of this article published in The Ringing World. Philip, who is the Tower Captain, read the extract during the service. Ed]

'The: Its Origin, History & Uses' by the Revd. Alfred Gatty

Reader, has it ever been thy lot to be within close ear-shot of a ringing match, at which eight or ten sets of ringers contended for a silver cup, or a purse of gold? We were awoke at day-break one fine summer's morning, by a steady course of plain bobs, which induced for a time a delicious

reverie, in the midst of which we soon relapsed into sleep – a sleep broken, nevertheless, by sounds and not unpleasing phantoms, as if the wand of Prospero had been waved over us.

We rose early, determined to combine an enjoyment of what we ascertained was a ringing match with our usual study avocations; but we found that we were not steady as usual at our work, and as time went on we became less so.

Two, three, four hours elapsed, and it was ; and still those changes, without change, rang on. Another hour passed, and we became nervous and irritable; and we resolved to ride far away into the woods, and to be at peace.

With some difficulty the impression of the sounds was removed, and we returned in the early evening in the hope that the match would have been over; but before the church was in sight, the peal was again audible; and when we were re-housed, even at long intervals there was only a short respite.

Night came; but locks, bars, and shutters did not exclude the sound – bed curtains could not shut it out. No hope arose from inquiry, for the Darfield and the Silkstone sets had still to ring. The din became awful, the monotony insufferable – every round in the peal was like a fresh revolution of Ixion's wheel, or the return of the stone of Sisyphus. Our slumber, induced by exhaustion, was feverish, restless, and often still conscious of the ringing; and when we awoke in the small hours, and the bells had ceased, we could scarcely for a time realize the stillness.

A little while and we had again relapsed into unconsciousness, but will it be credited that daylight had scarcely broken in the east, before the ringers were again at their task? From this point all dates and patience were lost, and it was only by a palatable mixture of entreaty and authority that we obtained a release from our nervous suffering before the following . This was indeed having 'too much of a good thing', a very surfeit of dainties that would have sickened Victor Hugo's Quasimodo himself; and we have resolved to go from home at the ringers' next jubilee.

Yet far are we from disliking the sound of bells in moderation, and at proper times: nay, we love them, particularly on all old festival occasions, although they may break our sleep; and we quite agree with our friend Charles Lamb that 'of all sound of all bells – (bells the music nighest bordering on heaven) – most solemn and touching is the peal which rings out the old year'. All ancient customs, again, such as the bell on Shrove Tuesday, are especially dear to us. 'A pancake for Shrove Tuesday', says Shakespeare, and the bell rung at mid-day, is the old signal for putting it on the fire. Give us, in short,

any of these interesting mementos of antiquity, be they of local or of general practice; but may the Fates preserve us evermore from the worrying tedium of another ringing match!

Education Committee

The Harrogate Ringing Course

The Harrogate Course took place this year over the weekend of Friday to Sunday, 8th to 10th April ably organised once again by Susan Laycock and John Leech. Andrew Slade and Deborah Thorley were the tutors.

A new student's personal view

Bright, warm spring weather found 11 students and almost as many helpers [*23 eventually – Ed*] meeting at Ashville College in Harrogate to embark on an extremely intensive bell-ringing course. There was virtually no other conversation from Friday night until late Sunday afternoon but that is how it should have been. I have been trying to ring for two and a half years but during these last two days, theories that were like 'sticky spaghetti', began to unravel. The tutors and helpers were magnificent, more of which later.

Ashville College offered us quite excellent accommodation if not excellent food, but we were there for bell-ringing not a gourmet weekend. The help yourself breakfast, however, had everything anyone could want. We were well looked after. After being met and warmly welcomed by our leader and organiser, Friday evening saw us all zooming off to our first practical lessons. The 'A' group to Sharow, the 'B' group to Chapel Allerton in Leeds. Being particularly terrified of bell ropes, my nerves were somewhat on a knife edge but here were helpers – angels in jeans and jumpers – ready to encourage, persuade and expertly rescue when necessary. Yes, I was a gibbering wreck for most of the time but Deborah, Penny, Susan Laycock, Janine and Barrie and other golden people were patience personified. The 'A' group at Sharow were also, I believe, ably supported and encouraged. During this time the tutors gained the measure of us. After we had rung for about one and a half hours, students and some helpers retired to the Squinting Cat public house, whilst other tutors went home ringing their hands in despair. What could they possibly do in two days to improve this little lot – especially yours truly?

Saturday arrived with intensive tutorials and practical sessions. Again we split into two groups. The 'improvers' and the 'slowly-trying-to improvers'. Group A found themselves at Birstwith and St. Wilfrid's. Group B at the dear little village of Aldborough, followed by Boroughbridge. The sun beat

down on us, the daffodils shone, the birds sang, our team of supporters arrived and all was well with the world. Plain Bob doubles, Bob Minor were rung and ear muffs were handed out to the local community. They knew it was in a good cause though. I think I approached the ropes with a little more courage. I think I momentarily smiled in the middle of Plain Hunt on ... something or other. It was all to do with the expert direction and support from the tutors and helpers and lasted for, quite a while. The Ship Inn across the road offered a welcome repast and quiet break for all before we ventured on to Boroughbridge. Here, I won't go into how I felt when the rope I was supposedly pulling, slipped off its wheel, apparently I have a slack back stroke. Oh, help!

Back at Ashville, afternoon tea, handbells and a monstrous thing called a Wombel, awaited us. The tea was a blessed relief. I had a go on the Wombel and found that my slack back stroke was the least of my problems. When one is trying to work alongside a perfect computer, faults are shown pretty quickly. I was a dismal failure. For once the real thing was more preferable, although Wombeling does help with timing and stuff. Saturday evening was filled with a practical session at St. Peter's where all went well. At least the rope stayed on its wheel. We followed this with a communal chill-out with wine, cake, nuts and for me more theory with expert help from Liz Foster who actually made it fun! What is really a language from another planet, Liz interpreted into almost English. How does she do that? I enjoyed it!

Shall I now write about blisters? Sunday followed and we rang for 3 services: St. Peter's, St. Wilfrid's and the amazing little church at Beckwithshaw. Amazing, I thought, because of the tiny size of the ringing chamber and for the tail ends of the rope which were Yorkshire tails, meaning they had 'sally' type ends. They seemed very difficult to handle, but not by experts I suppose. The church at Whixley followed after lunch at Ashville. This was another charming church with wonderfully peaceful music playing constantly. At one point I thought the choir was trying to practice whilst we were ringing! Blisters? Was I the only person to have calluses and white blister spots on their fingers? Or was it something to do with my slack back stroke?

Joking apart, these last two days were memorable for so many reasons. Fabulous tutors and helpers who made a very valiant and successful attempt at making sense out of nonsense; extremely convivial conversations in great company, stunningly situated churches and in most cases beautiful bells. Huge thanks must go to all the organisers, tutors and helpers and also to the other students as the conversation throughout the weekend was a great aid to understanding. Personally, I have to give enormous thanks to Susan Laycock who acted as chauffeur for the whole of the weekend and also for being sage and mentor and all this coming

right at the end of a very hard term. I am filled with admiration as well as appreciation.

From a very nervous, even 'wimpish' beginner, I found the weekend very informative and more importantly, great fun! Thanks to all.

Glenys Rogers (Richmond)

Future Education Committee Events

Tower Maintenance Day – Saturday 10 September in the Central Branch.
Please apply to Brian Sanders at briansanders@blueyonder.co.uk

Teaching Bell Handling – Saturday 29 October at Tadcaster.
Please apply to Gail Cater at gail@thecaters.org.uk

The Ringing World Centenary Day

Saturday 26 March dawned grey and dull, but for over 2000 ringers even the best efforts of the weather, Network Rail, Transport for London and the TUC couldn't dampen their high spirits. After months of build-up, The Ringing World's Centenary celebrations had started!

There was a multitude of ringing-related activities on offer and it was really difficult to plan the day to get the maximum out of it. For once, I decided to forgo the temptation of grabbing a few towers and to concentrate on activities I'd probably never get the opportunity to do again.

So it was that I joined the queue outside Whitechapel Bell Foundry at 9.30am to have a look around. I thought that some enterprising local ringers might have seized the chance to sell coffee and bacon butties to us all, but perhaps I've just lived in Yorkshire for too long ... After about 30 minutes wait I got into the Foundry, passing through the unique door framed by a full-size profile of Big Ben (the original moulding gauge employed to form the mould used to cast Big Ben hangs on the end wall of the foundry above the furnaces to this very day). There was a self-guided tour of all parts of the shop floor with the Whitechapel staff on hand to explain the processes of bell founding. I was quite taken with a small octave of handbells in a dinky little case, but unfortunately didn't have quite the room in my rucksack to make off with them.

A couple of hours later I emerged to find a small notice on the door letting us all know that the art exhibition 'Inspired by Bells' was closing at 1230 owing to the TUC march. I had planned to go to the gallery later in the day, so I quickly changed The Plan and hot-footed it over to Embankment

station, thinking I could just about make it. I had not, of course, reckoned on the Metropolitan Police, in their wisdom, closing all exits from Embankment except for Villiers Street, which is the narrowest of the lot – along which everyone joining the march and those of us not joining it were being herded. I used to use Embankment regularly so tried all the exits I thought the Police might not have closed but to no avail – it was join the throng or return into the Underground. By this time it was obvious I wouldn't make it anyway, so I turned round and continued westwards to St Mary Abbots, Kensington, where I was hoping to catch up with some old ringing chums as well as getting another ring on the bells.

I did meet some old ringing chums, but not the ones I was expecting! We had a chat while we waited for more ringers to turn up. Eventually there were enough to ring – under the firm guidance of Stephanie Pattenden, which meant that we all got the best out of the bells, which are not the easiest to ring.

It was at this point that I should have been on my way to the Art Gallery, so with time now to spare there was only one thing for it – head for Dean's Yard, Westminster, and the beer tent!

John Taylor & Co had sponsored and were managing the refreshments, which included Real Ale and some welcome buns. The place was full of ringers, some enjoying the delights of the two min-rings, but most enjoying the beer and spotting ringers both famous and infamous.

At 2.00pm we were allowed into Westminster Abbey to have a look around before the service. The queue for this stretched right across the front of the Abbey and round the corner. Someone must have warned the Police that things might turn ugly with all us ringers chatting amongst ourselves as we patiently waited because suddenly there was much wailing of sirens and five or six police wagons appeared screeching round the corner... But it appeared they were needed at the march which we could see in the distance wending its way around Parliament Square.

Unfortunately there were so many people in the Abbey that it was virtually impossible to see anything, so we grabbed some seats and took in the atmosphere before the service started.

Then, for me, one of the highlights of the day. The magnificent organ heralded the entrance of the choristers and the start of the service. We were not required to do much, except to stand up and sit down, join in the responses and sing two hymns. The lessons were read by one of the Canons in Residence of the Abbey and the Editor of *The Ringing World* and the sermon was preached by the Dean, who welcomed us all by declaring how good it was to see so many ringers in church! He also apologised for the lack of service booklets but remarked that it was a relief this had happened at this service and not at the next Big One on 29 April! The final

hymn, Unchanging God, was sung to the 'wrong' tune for most of us, but that didn't stop us from almost raising the roof. We were accompanied out of the Abbey by the Carillon-Sortie by Henri Mulet, which provoked a spontaneous round of applause for the organist, and then exited to the sound of the Abbey's bells being rung by the lucky few who had won a place on the end of a rope in the ballot.

Across the road we trooped for the Grand Reception, probably more aptly described by those of us in there as a Bun Fight. However, tea and cakes were dispensed with efficiency and good humour and nothing ran out. At 5pm, another highlight – the attempt at the world record of change ringing on 24 handbells. The 12 ringers had only got together that morning for a bit of a practice, but produced an almost faultless performance which left the rest of us awe-struck, not to mention a feeling of complete inadequacy! This was followed by the results of the National Youth Contest – a striking competition for under-19s, held earlier in the day at Pimlico. Eleven teams of 8 had entered and the judges graded them *a la* GCSE, with two teams reaching A* and none getting lower than a C. The Hertfordshire team were declared the overall winners. It was really heartening to see so many youngsters from around the country taking part – perhaps next time there will be a team from Yorkshire?

The final event was a handbell concert given by the Wandle Ringers, who used a 5-octave set of handbells, plus duplicates, and a 5-octave set of handchimes to ring a wide variety of music including Lloyd-Webber's 'Pie Jesu', the spiritual 'Joshua' and ending up with Stauss' 'Firefest Polka'.

Whether The Ringing World will last another 100 years is open to debate, but the celebration of its first 100 was a day I'm glad I didn't miss.

Anne Deebank

National 12-Bell Striking Competition – the Eliminators

The Competition draws so many entries these days that three eliminating competitions have to be held to whittle down the entrants to nine teams for the Final. The top three teams in each eliminator go through.

This year the three eliminating contests were held on 2 April at Evesham, Birmingham Cathedral and Coventry Cathedral. The Stockton and York Minster bands qualified and so go through to the Final. The band from Leeds Parish Church very regrettably came a close fourth at Coventry so has to forfeit the privilege this year, although it's hosting the Final on 25 June.

The Final will have taken place before this Newsletter gets fully round the Association. A full report will appear in the next edition.

The Stockton on Tees experience

Our preparation for the eliminators this year was a continuation of the previous year, with an extra practice in most months, generally on a Sunday afternoon. We are most grateful to the towers who allowed us the use of their bells for this. Pre-Christmas we rang a variety of methods, including Bristol, Avon and Pudsey, but in 2011 we concentrated on the half course of Cambridge which we would be ringing in the competition.

We were very fortunate to have seventeen ringers in our squad and all of us went for a practice to our designated competition tower (Evesham), with a visit to Tewksbury too. It was here that the difficult final selection of the team was made and we felt we had rung quite well. On the day, nerves undoubtedly played a part and we rang slightly faster than intended, but were obviously thrilled to qualify for the final by coming first in our eliminator. We are really looking forward to competing at Leeds and we know that the locals will make it a great day, despite their understandable disappointment.

Jenny Town

The York Minster experience

Over the years, the standard of ringing in the National 12 bell Contest has increased considerably, so the preparation needs to be ever more careful and thorough. This year we were drawn to ring at Birmingham Cathedral, the City being the home of the most successful team in the history of the competition. Other teams in our eliminator besides Birmingham were Hursley, Liverpool, Melbourne, Oxford and Southwark, so we knew we had our work cut out if we were to come in the top three and qualify for the final.

As well as practising on our own bells at the Minster, we managed practices at Birmingham Cathedral, Aston Parish Church and Halifax Minster. We also had the opportunity at Birmingham to make use of feedback from the Strikeometer, a kind of "hawkear" which listens to and records each bell before assessing the accuracy of every single blow! When we went to Birmingham for our practice three weeks before the competition, Rod Pipe, a dear friend of ours and a great supporter of the York Minster team over the years was there to greet us and offer some words of encouragement. Imagine how saddened we were to learn that the day before the eliminator itself Rod had unexpectedly passed away, casting a shadow over an otherwise most enjoyable day.

The judges placed us third, behind Birmingham and Melbourne, and the point was made that the Strikeometer agreed with their findings. We now need to get our heads round Pudsey Surprise Maximus for the final at Leeds Parish Church at the end of June.

Christine Potter

Conducting Bob Doubles – for the first-time Conductor!

There are two main elements to conducting:

- calling – saying “go”, putting the calls in at the right place, and saying “that’s all, stand”. If you don’t get this right, the touch will be a disaster, and it will be your fault!
- conducting – knowing whether other people (and yourself) are right, and if not, helping others to get right, or knowing that it is sufficiently wrong to call round or stand.

Quite a few ringers are capable of “calling” Bob Doubles. They may call themselves unaffected by calling a bob each time they are doing four blows behind, or they may be able to call a particular bell unaffected. However, the aim of this article is to look at what you have to do to “conduct” Bob Doubles, and this necessarily means having an idea about coursing orders.

Let’s deal with the “calling” first. As with call changes, you say “Go Bob Doubles” just as the treble is about to pull off at handstroke and the method begins on the next handstroke. You say “That’s all” as the bells come round (hopefully!) at the treble’s final backstroke, and you say “Stand” as the treble leads at one handstroke so that everyone stands at the next handstroke.

You call a bob (it’s impossible to have singles in Bob Doubles) as the treble is starting its backstroke pull in 2nds place, just before it leads. Consider the effect of a bob at the first lead end of Bob Doubles:

Handstroke	351426
Backstroke	315246 – call “bob” here
Handstroke	<u>132546</u>
Backstroke	<u>123546</u> – the bob takes effect here, 2 runs in, 3 runs out and 5 makes the bob.

As with call changes, it is important to be able to watch (or hear) the treble, and to know when it is in 2nds place. You may be in 5ths place at the time, and if you wait until you start to ring at backstroke, the call will be too late. If in doubt, make the call earlier rather than later. Another way is to know what you are going to do, and make the call accordingly.

- If you are making four blows (unaffected), you must call “bob” immediately after you have passed the treble in 34.
- If you are making the bob, you must call “bob” as you pass the treble 23.

- If you are running out, you must call “bob” as you finish your lead, at backstroke.
- If you are running in, you should watch the treble below you and call “bob” just as you leave the back and move into 4ths place.

If you call a bob each time you are making four blows behind, you will ring 120 changes, the maximum possible on five bells. If you do this ten times and then call ‘a 60’ – or start with a 60 – (plain, bob, plain, bob, plain, bob or bob, plain, bob, plain, bob, plain), you will have called a quarter peal of 1260 changes – but will you have “conducted” it?

Conducting

Consider Plain Hunt on five bells

12345 You notice that the bells go up to the back in the order 53124,
 21435 they lead in the order 124531, and every bell passes the other
 24153 bells in a variation of this order (the 1 follows 2453, the 2
 42513 follows 4531 and so on). This “natural” order is cyclical
 45231 (5312453124531 etc), and occurs to a greater or lesser extent
 54321 in most methods.

53412
 35142 In Bob Doubles, the treble rings a fixed path (plain hunting),
 31524 but the other bells dodge or do four blows behind and pass the
 13254 treble in a different place each lead. If you look at a plain
 12345 course of Bob Doubles, and ignore the treble, you will see that
 there is a natural order of 532453245324 etc. When you next
 ring a plain course of Bob Doubles, try to notice this order. In
 particular, notice how the bells lead in this order, and how you (or the
 conductor) can help someone who goes wrong by saying “3 lead after the
 2” or “5 lead after the 4”. The basic coursing order of a plain course is 5324.

Let us now look at a 120 where bell 5 is the observation bell – in other words it is unaffected by the bobs and makes four blows behind at each one. The first bob comes at the end of the plain course, where it would come round if there wasn’t a call. At this bob, the 2 will run out (instead of making 2nds), the 4 will run in (instead of dodging 34 down) and the 3 will make the bob (instead of dodging 34 up). You will now pass the bells in the order 243 (instead of 324). In other words, the coursing order has changed from 5324 to 5243 – 324 has become 243.

You will continue to pass the (working) bells in this new order until you call the next bob when you next do four blows behind, when this order, 243, will change to 432. After another course, the third bob will change 432 to 324 and it will come round with the 2 running in, the 3 running out and the 4 making the bob. This touch is generally known as “3 homes”, because you call a bob each time the 5th is at its home position (i.e. making four blows behind).

The same touch works for all methods where 2nds place is made at the lead end and is therefore the first and most useful touch that most people learn to call. Look at and learn the three coursing orders and how they change: 5324 becomes 5243 becomes 5432 becomes 5324. You will see that the three bells affected by the bob (324) rotate – ABC becomes BCA. Even when you are not calling the touch, notice the coursing order during the plain course and see how it changes after the first bob.

If you call a bob at the first lead end of the course, the 4th is the observation bell making four blows behind, and the three bells affected by the bob are 5, 3 and 2. The order therefore changes from 5324 to 3254 (again the three bells affected rotate BCA). A second bob at the same position a course later will change 3254 to 2534, and the third bob will change 2534 back to 5324, and you will be back in the plain course at the first lead end. So 532 becomes 325 becomes 253 becomes 532.

Remember that this coursing order is cyclical. Instead of thinking of the plain course as 5324, you could just as well think of it as 3245 or 2453 or 4532. It might be helpful, before you start, to think of the coursing order where the observation bell is at the beginning. So if you intend the 5th to be unaffected, think of it as 5324 and rotate 324 at the bobs. If the 4th is the observation bell, think of it as 4532 and rotate 532 at the bobs. If the 2nd is the observation bell (with the first bob at the second lead end of the course), think of it as 2453 and rotate 453 at the bobs. And if the 3rd is the unaffected bell, think of it as 3254 and rotate 254 at the bobs.

Manipulating these numbers is not easy at first, especially when you are concentrating on keeping your own bell right and making sure you say “bob” in the right place. But try noticing these coursing orders when somebody else is calling the touch (you could be ‘standing behind’): notice the order in which the bells lead or pass each other. Eventually it will become second nature to say to yourself 324 has become 243 at the first bob, and to notice that you always pass the bells in this order until the next bob.

Conducting a quarter peal of Bob Doubles

As mentioned above, you need ten extents of 120 changes, plus a 60 – or you could call eleven extents for 1320 changes. It is certainly possible to call the same bell unaffected throughout the quarter, but it could be a little boring both for you and the other ringers, and it’s easy to lose count of how many extents you have rung. One possible approach is to call the 60 first, (calling PBPBPB or BPBPBP), then call two extents with the 5th unaffected, two with the 4th unaffected, two with the 3rd unaffected, two with the 2nd unaffected and end with two more extents with the 5th unaffected. This makes it easier to keep count of the extents and to know where you are in the composition.

Roger Green

Meeting of Diocesan Bells Advisers

The fourth annual national meeting of Bells Advisers to the Diocesan Advisory Committees across the country was held on 8 June at Southwell Minster, the Cathedral for the Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham.

All four advisers for the five dioceses in Yorkshire were present – Andrew Aspland (Dioceses of Ripon & Leeds and Wakefield), John Arthur (York), Christopher Bennett (Sheffield) and Robert Cater (Bradford). About 33 Dioceses out of the 43 in England and the 6 in Wales were represented. Also present were some bellhangers, the President of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers and the editor of *The Ringing World*. The meeting is organised annually by Dr David Knight, the Senior Conservation Officer of the Church Buildings Council, part of the Church of England.

As Dr Knight said, one of the underlying objects of the meetings is to get all bells advisers 'singing from the same hymn sheet'.

The main topic at this year's meeting covered an introduction to the identification of timber bell frames. This is a rather technical subject but enables wooden frames of differing construction to be readily classified. It's a bit like having a classification system for plants, so that everyone knows what's being talked about from using a simple name. It's becoming increasingly required by the CoE that old frames be fully recorded, especially if there's a chance they will be removed from towers.

Dr Knight also pointed out that the Heritage Lottery Fund is keen to award grants for bell works with a strong heritage element. He also warned about leaving bells standing in the open in churches as they are increasingly being stolen for their scrap value. He announced that the 2012 meeting will be in June at Worcester Cathedral.

There is a wealth of information on the CoE's Church Care web site www.churchcare.co.uk. It includes information on caring about bells, the role of advisers and holds a database of all bells in the country. It needs 'digging deeply' to extract all relevant information.

Doncaster & District Society

Our Society celebrates its 90th anniversary in 2011. It was founded in 1921 because ringers from the Doncaster area had to travel to Sheffield or further afield for ringing meetings and wanted a local ringing affiliation. The Society covers towers within a 15 mile radius of Doncaster, from Thorne in the north, to Wath on Dearne in the south & includes several North Nottinghamshire towers such as Mattersey. Ringing meetings are

held on the last Saturday of the month, with an average attendance of about 15 ringers. The Walker Cup is awarded annually to the tower with the highest Sunday Service attendance and we always have an annual coach outing. Although the standard of ringing is not especially high, the fellowship is wonderful.

Our 90th anniversary year began tragically with the sudden death of our Ringing Master, David Nichols. He had been organising a ringing outing to the Manchester area using the Bury tram line and had purchased cheap group train tickets for us. We made the decision to go ahead with the outing and to dedicate it to his memory. On 26th February, 23 ringers caught the 8.40am train from Doncaster to Manchester Piccadilly (a further three ringers joined us at the first tower). We were especially pleased that David's wife, Helen (also a ringer), was able to join us for the day.

Unfortunately when we arrived at Manchester Piccadilly Station, we found that Greater Manchester Public Transport had chosen that weekend to suspend the Bury tram service due to engineering works and replace it with buses – which of course are much slower. Frustration mounted as the bus crawled in the Manchester traffic and the clock ticked past our planned arrival time at the Parish Church of Stand, in Whitefield. Thankfully we were able to phone the tower contact, who was very patient and revise our ringing times. When we eventually arrived at Stand, we really enjoyed ringing the Gillet & Johnson bells (22cwt, eight), the bells had a lovely mellow tone. We then caught the bus to Bury and although we arrived 30 minutes late, we received a warm welcome from the tower contact and really enjoyed ringing these musical bells.

Lunch was at a nearby pub; the staff coped well with our late arrival. This was followed by a lengthy bus ride back to Salford and we were at least 30 minutes late arriving at Sacred Trinity. However the tower contact Malcolm Murphy was very understanding and allowed us to ring for 45 minutes. These bells were easy going and delightful to ring. The standard of ringing was reasonable thorough out the day, considering we were a very mixed band with a number of less experienced ringers. We were able to walk to Manchester Cathedral from Salford and actually arrived on time. The Gillet & Johnson, 27cwt ten were really magnificent and were the highlight of the outing.

After ringing had finished, we all stood in silent reflection and remembered David Nichols, who had planned the day and who is greatly missed.

Marian Thomas

News from the Branches

Cleveland & North Yorkshire Branch

The sale of tea towels and bags displaying all towers in the Branch made £250 for the Association Bell Repair Fund and £405 for our own Branch funds. A new order for tea towels has been placed and will be with Christine Parsons, the Branch Secretary, at the beginning of June. Please contact her for your purchases or for information about how its done if you want to do a similar thing in your own Branch.

A New Band at Sharow – last September a group of four adults and three youngsters from Sharow together with two learners from Ripon Cathedral formed a new band with the aim of being able to ring for Christmas services. Under the guidance of Andrew Aspland and others from the Cathedral band, practises were started on Tuesday evenings.

With the some support from other experienced lapsed ringers within the parish progress has been good and the target of being able to ring open bells for Christmas was achieved. Perhaps their next target will to be able to enter a team in the Striking Competition. So Well Done to all those concerned and every good wish for continuing progress.

Central Branch

The Branch has a very active programme and combines some of its activities with the other two Societies in its area – the Barnsley & District Society and the Doncaster & District Society.

Branch activities alone during the first half of 2011 have been its AGM at Shelley in January, its Ringing Course in the Barnsley area in February, its Striking Competition at Cawthorne in March, its Meeting at Conisborough and Wath on Dearne in April, a Local Car Outing in May and its Meeting at Campsall and Badsworth in June.

East Riding Branch

The Branch assembled a band to ring in the 8-bell striking competition between Branches which was held in York on AGM day – and won!

See AGM report.

Leeds & District Branch

Stedman Workshop at Burley

On Saturday 19th March about 15 people gathered at Burley to attend a special Stedman workshop. This is the first in what will be a series of workshops, focusing on a single method or principle with the hope of being able to ring it perfectly at the end!

This workshop focused on Stedman Doubles and Stedman Triples, starting with plain courses and building up to touches throughout the morning. It was led by the Branch Ringing Master, Adam Crocker. After ringing endlessly for 2 hours, I think we all agreed, (including the helpers!), that we were all much more confident with our ability to ring Stedman.

Striking Competition at Kirk Deighton

On Saturday 4th June the Branch Sunday Service Band Striking Competition was held at Kirk Deighton. The judge was Gerald Parsons from the Cleveland and North Yorkshire Branch, and he placed the teams as follows: the Winners – Leeds Parish Church, 2nd – Burley, 3rd – Ossett, 4th – Chapel Allerton, 5th – Kirk Deighton and 6th – Knaresborough.

Leeds P C will be going forward to represent the Branch in the Association Sunday Service Band Striking Competition in September. The striking competition was followed by a superb tea and the Branch AGM.

Adam Crocker

Scarborough & District Branch

Our **Pickering practice** in the Winter, always a pleasurable event, was made the more so by the news that John Siddle and Kathy Carter had finally got spliced (in ringing parlance) in a quiet ceremony at 11am on 11.01.11. (*Shouldn't have too much trouble remembering that one when it comes to anniversary time John!*)

So, as well as the tea and coffee kindly laid on by the Pickering ringers, we had a drop of bubbly to drink their health and to wish them well on behalf of the Branch. It was great to see a couple of new faces there. Thanks to all who attended and helped, and congratulations to John and Kathy.

Home baking was also the order of the day at the Intensive *Practice at Flamborough* where the table groaned with cake. Seventeen people attended, with an almost equal split between helpers and beginners. The

afternoon was relaxed and enjoyable, with plenty of Rounds, Call Changes and Plain Hunt – most attendees suggested it had been useful. We will probably try a similar exercise later in the year. If you would like one in your tower please let the officers know. Hopefully it also gave people a flavour of what Branch practices are like and will reduce the ‘fear factor’ many learners feel about attending!

Striking Competition at Kirkbymoorside. After a hectic week of last minute emails and phone calls, during which the number of teams entering the Branch Competition in April went from three to seven, and the numbers for tea went from 12 to 30+, the feared damp squib went with a bang: great weather, excellent ringing, delicious tea and good fellowship. Simon Percy did a very professional job in his first solo outing as judge, and thanks go to him (along with an Amazon voucher).

Full results:

1. Pickering: 32 faults, 87% accuracy
2. Scalby: 33 faults, 86% accuracy
3. Brompton/Wykeham: 42 faults, 83% accuracy
4. Kirkbymoorside: 54 faults, 78% accuracy
5. Filey: 66 faults, 73% accuracy
6. Bridlington: 69 faults, 71% accuracy
7. Scarborough: 71 faults, 71% accuracy

Congratulations to Pickering, who win the trophy and go forward to represent the Branch at the Association Sunday Service Bands Competition on 17 September.

On our **Branch Outing** on Saturday 21 May an intrepid bus load of excited grown ups set out on an adventure into West Yorkshire. Our visit started with a ride from Clayton West to Shelley on the Kirklees Light Railway – the love of trains will never leave some!

Having arrived at Shelley the “serious” business of the day began. A small ringing chamber meant much time was spent exchanging bands, fortunately there was a large Garden Centre with cafe next door to occupy those not ringing. On to Kirkburton, extremely narrow spiral staircase leading to a swaying chamber. A challenge, however once there the eight were a nice ring offering a variety of methods. Next we were on our way to Emley. We seemed to drive round and round Emley Moor mast for ever due to a wrong turn however, when we got there as well as catering for the less experienced ringers Christine, tower captain, put together a Boy

Band and a Girl Band to ring more advanced methods. On to Ossett – road diversion signs meant a big bus going down narrow country lanes but we arrived safely for an early evening ring on a splendid 12.

On the bus home out came the wine and Pringles – a perfect end to an interesting day. Edwin King put together a trip which catered for all – for ringers a nice mix of bells with tower captains catering for all levels of ability. For non ringers churches, villages and towns to look round together with a Garden Centre. Add to that a trip on a steam train and I think a good day was had by all. Thanks Edwin.'

Janet Bate

Association BRF Donations

Despite having one of the smallest membership of all Branches, the Scarborough and District Branch has always topped the table of donations to the BRF, largely thanks to the generosity of our members, the pro-activity of successive BRF reps. and our leading the way in inaugurating the use of Gift Aid envelopes for collections at monthly meetings. Sadly, we have been knocked off our perch by the Cleveland and North Yorkshire Branch, thanks to their dubious tactic of selling tea towels!

I appreciate times are hard for all, but I hope you will join me in rising to the challenge of putting the Scarborough and District Branch back where it belongs at the top of the tree. Preserving and maintaining the rich heritage of Yorkshire's bells for future generations is a vital task, and one from which we may all, at some time in the future, benefit.

Selby & District Branch

Branch AGM

The Branch held its AGM in March and a new committee elected. We were sad to say good bye to Kirsty Watts who has now moved out of our area. Kirsty has been a stalwart of the Branch for many years and in the past was secretary and BRF rep. We were also sad that Catherine Riley has had to stand down as meeting secretary through work pressures. Catherine has done an exceptional job in this roll and will be greatly missed. We welcome Liz Hull as our new meeting secretary and she has already demonstrated her able capability in the job. Martin Hardgrave was our deputy ringing master last year but through circumstances found that he had to fulfil the ringing master roll for the majority of the year, a job that he exceeded at. So much so that he has now been elected ringing master for this year.

Following our success in the 10 for 10 competition we have continued with our monthly 10 and 12 bell practices. As an experiment we have alternated them, one month on the third Sunday of the month the next month on the third Thursday of the month to give as much opportunity as possible for all to attend. This has proved to be very popular and we have been extremely pleased with the results. Our attendance at these practices has been between 20 and 30 and it is very encouraging to see the progress that is being made. We still have a long way to go but as they say "great oaks from little acorns grow".

At the beginning of April the Branch had an outing to the Retford area of Nottinghamshire and was joined by members of the Doncaster and District Society. It was a beautiful sunny Spring day and was very much enjoyed by all those that attended. It was good to mix with other ringers and new friendships have now sprung up. The standard of ringing throughout the day was good and it was nice to see two ten bell towers included in the day, something we would have shied away from a few years ago.

Stuart Raggett

Striking Competition

The Striking Competition eliminator for the 2011 YACR Sunday Service striking competition was held at Nunburnholme on Saturday 4th June. For the last couple of years there had only been one team entering (Tadcaster) who by default went on to represent the Branch in the final. This year however we had six entries representing five towers: Pocklington, Wetherby, Tadcaster, Escrick, and Selby (A & B). Thank you very much to all those who took part.

The results were announced after a buffet tea at Market Weighton by the judge Barrie Dove. All teams completed their test piece, and Barrie passed comment on their performance before announcing the results. Congratulations go to Escrick who won what proved to be a close-run contest. Tadcaster relinquished the Branch trophy which was presented by Barrie to Liz Hull who rang for the winning team.

Martin Hardgrave

Sheffield & District Branch

Four teams representing three towers competed in this year's Striking Competition at Treeton. The bells tested the skills of all the ringers and in the end Walkley A won the John Gilbert Cup for the change ringing

competition and Walkley B the David Munday Cup for the call changes competition. The other teams competing were Rotherham and Ecclesfield.

In recent months the winners of the Branch's 100 club have been Thrybergh and Ecclesfield Towers (£50 each), Peter McCoy (£50), Mark Pitcher (£50), Vikki Romegoux (£50), June and Arthur Collins (£150) and Pat Collins (£50).

The 100 Club has been a spectacular success over the years, with the surplus going the local bell projects. The Branch recently granted £4500 towards the project at Ecclesfield to augment its eight bells to ten.

[Does any other Branch operate a similar scheme please? It's easy, and brings in significant money. Ed]

Western Branch

Recruitment and Retention

Undoubtedly recruitment is a priority and, countrywide, towers welcome new ringers of all ages. One Western Branch band, comprised mainly of enthusiastic late starters, has prepared notices which they deliver by hand to potential recruits. Their commitment is infectious.

Looking around our Branch, it is also great to see more young people are being attracted into ringing and are doing very well. Recently two or three local Scout groups have investigated bell-ringing and some Scouts have joined bands.

When a Wombel has been made available at school fêtes, children have been delighted to have a go at ringing. Extra practices to encourage learners, some using simulators, are being held around the Branch. Longwood Ringing Centre offers bands the opportunity to ring on a Saturday, by arrangement, to concentrate on certain aspects or methods, including handling.

Pat Kefford (Longwood)

Here's a 'face to face' interview between Pat and Emily Jones, aged 12½, who rings at Longwood.

Q: How did you become interested in bell ringing?

A: I attend St Mark's Church, where the bells are rung for services. My dad and grandfather are bell ringers. They took me up the tower to see the bells being rung.

Q: *Why did you start ringing?*

A: Because my dad does. I was very young when he taught me handling. I stood on boxes stacked as high as I was tall. I stopped for a while, until I was bigger.

Q: *Did you like ringing from the very start or did you gradually come to like it?*

A: I loved it from the start.

Q: *What were your first impressions when you came into your first tower?*

A: Cold!!!

Q: *How long did it take you to learn handling techniques?*

A: A few months

Q: *Where else have you rung?*

A: Other towers, Branch trips, tower trips, and in one contest. (Our band has been away to Wales twice). On the whole, I have enjoyed the visits.

Q: *If you were to go to university, would you continue to ring?*

A: Possibly not as a priority but if I wanted to meet people and make new friends I would expect to find a warm welcome in local towers, especially where students ring. I would have to find out about any change ringing society the university may have.

Q: *What is the best thing about ringing?*

A: The sweets!!(A jar is kept in Longwood)

Q: *What is the worst thing about ringing?*

A: Pass.

Q: *What career do you fancy?*

A: Midwifery.

Q: *What other hobbies do you have?*

A: I play guitar and am a Guide.

Q: *What would make your ringing experience even better?*

A: More sweets!! and people my age.

Thanks Emily this could help us understand what we can do to encourage young people.

Striking Competition – No ginger beer but lashings of bell ropes!

There was certainly a need for some Branch members with 'outdoor' experience at our annual striking competition and barbeque this year. The Oxenhope ringers had very kindly offered to host the event, so Saturday 21 May saw us setting up camp in a rather steep field with glorious views next to the church. Seasoned barbeque cooks worry about rain, but when the field kitchen is on a hillside, 1000 feet up, and it's one of the windiest days for several weeks, there are other problems to concentrate the mind!

Having discussed the wind direction at length and considered and rejected various possible barbeque locations, we finally set up shop underneath the open rear hatchback doors of two cars. Not a solution The Famous Five would have chosen, but note to Enid – 'this works!'

The indoor kitchen staff, led by Celia Holmes, were ready with tea, cakes and a vast array of puddings, and Bob Schofield and his team were manning the beer barrels in the marquee – in fact, the organisation was so efficient and the offerings so tempting, that we almost forgot the real reason for being there! But Peter and Gail Randall, who were judging the competition, were settled into Bob's caravan in the corner of the field, so it was time for battle to commence.

As in previous years, we'd offered teams a choice of an early or late ringing slot, with the result that 10 of the 14 teams, due to all manner of other ringing commitments, including the ordination service for the new Bishop of Bradford, chose the shorter late slot. This required some imaginative restructuring of the afternoon, but somehow, we did manage to fit in all 12 Sunday service bands who'd entered, plus two 'fun' teams, as well as providing the judges with refreshment break and still managing to finish dead on 6pm.

During the course of the afternoon, Neil and Fraser Murray manned the barbie like two seasoned pros and were soon whacking out vast piles of sausages and burgers almost faster than people could eat them, but the food and the plentiful supply of Timothy Taylor's, plus Sue's quiz, kept everyone occupied whilst they listened to the competition ringing – as did the attempts by the Oxenhope ringers to keep the marquee anchored to the ground. Interestingly, I think that the idea of lashing it down with a set of old bell ropes might actually have come from one of the non-ringing staff.

But, in the end, it was the results that mattered and we all gathered in the church to hear Peter and Gail's comments. It was no surprise to hear that

Kirkheaton's excellent test piece* had been placed first by quite a long way, with Halifax, Ilkley, Skipton, and St Anne's Cathedral, Leeds almost inseparable in positions 2 to 5. These were followed by Longwood 'fun', Alan's 'fun' (!), Longwood, New Mill, Bingley, Haworth, Brighouse, Idle, and Kirkby Malham. It's extremely encouraging that this event has been such a success for the third year running, and that we're still attracting new teams – a big welcome this year to Haworth – we hope you'll be back in 2012!

Finally, we should once again thank everyone who worked so hard to make the day enjoyable, especially all the Oxenhope ringers, and Peter and Gail Randall for kindly agreeing to judge the competition.

Sue Green

*[*no doubt rung with closed leads (cartwheel) – Ed]*

York Branch

Barn Dance & Supper

A late addition to the York Branch Calendar – the Family Barn Dance & Supper on Saturday 28th July proved to be a great success. General ringing at Strensall (6) was followed by a ceilidh at Sheriff Hutton village Hall. The band – the Bad Bargain Band talked 50 of us aged from just 4 years to 81 through the steps, making the most complex of dances easy to follow for young and old alike. There was a fear Bob (from Huntington) may not make his 80th birthday as he flew past during Strip the Willow like Raymond Briggs' Snowman following James!

A Supper of paté et fromages went down a treat and everyone enjoyed the evening immensely. One 11 year old reportedly said 'Mum, that was the best day of my life!!' Praise indeed !

Tina Walker

Striking Competition

The competition for the Doreen and Ronald Sanderson trophy was held at Stockton on the Forest on 4 June. Nine bands entered, with St. Wilfrid's, York, entering three. The winners were one of the two Minster bands and so go through to the Final of the Association's Sunday service Bands competition.

Tower News

Aldbrough – Not Quite the Royal Wedding

The first wedding for 2011 on our list was for Saturday 8th January. There was no request for bells or organ. (Perhaps a quiet winter wedding?) About a week before the wedding one of the ringers was talking to the bride on the phone about arrangements for flowers and happened to enquire about bells. 'Yes please!' was the answer. The next uncertainty was the time of the service. The bride had said 3.30 pm. The vicar said 3pm. Ringers were organised who could make both times.

We then learned that there were to be drinks before the service. Oh dear! Were they going to put up a table for drinks at the base of the tower? (Aldbrough is a ground floor ring.) So, drinks at 3 pm with the service starting at 3.30pm

On Thursday night practice we could not ring before we had moved a forest of greenery piled high. This was going to be a large wedding if the amount of flowers was any indication. The font which is immediately in front of the base of the tower already had an 7ft arrangement on it. We had never seen so many flowers before. On Friday we learnt that the drinks were to be in a marquee outside the church for guests who were travelling from a distance.

At lunch time on the wedding day itself we had a phone call to say there would be nowhere to park, so we should use the church warden's yard – 4.10 pm would be time enough for ringers to arrive. On the way we passed a couple of photographers near the village hall with big lenses and laptops resting on the top of the wall. A bit odd I thought. Four of us arrived together, usual scruffy ringers, although we do wear our Association sweat shirts for weddings, although the flowers on the font would have kept our jeans, gardening shirts and not so clean boots out of sight. The church full to capacity with lots of morning suits. The choir in full flow was the Yorkshire Chamber Choir. We hung up our coats as usual and looked around. Gosh! The flowers wouldn't have looked out of place in a cathedral.

One of ringers who was already there said 'So do you know what all the fuss is about?' Showing us the list of ushers on the service sheet, the last name was pointed out – 'William Wales'. William, Kate and Harry are here!

Thoughts rush in. 'Oh I wonder where they are?' 'Where is Kate?' No chance of spotting her, too many people, all with their backs to us. This

ringing better be good! We all sign a card and give it to one of the male guests sitting nearest the tower. I am given a strange look in response to my request to hand this on to the bride and groom. 'It's only a card from the ringers' I say. Of course the four men in morning suits are part of the security.

The choir finished and the bride and groom were ready to come down the aisle. The organ starts to play the Widor Toccata as it should be played, very loud. We take our positions on our ropes and wait until the bride and groom reach the church door. No chance of hearing the bells. Must concentrate hard. No question of anything else but rounds. We often compete with the organ, but this time there was just no contest.

At last the organ finished to a round of applause from the remaining guests. We were then able to hear our bells and finished with some plain hunt and call changes. As the last guests left the church the ushers including Prince William went round tidying the pews, and blowing out candles, so we did get to see him in the end.

The excitement really sunk in at the end, once we sighed with relief that the ringing had gone well. We found out that the only person who knew the week before was the church warden. The Vicar had not found out until the evening before. It was a well-kept secret. The warden said the whole day had been very relaxed, and everyone was most friendly. Prince William had arrived in the morning and bounced into the church asking what jobs there were to be done. Although there were lots of security, none was visible. All had gone like clockwork.

We would have been happy to help out on 29th April but

Jo Mitchell

Beighton

The work to replace the floor to the ringing room was completed on Maundy Thursday; we will be ringing for Easter Day – Alleluia!

[A snippet on the YACR 'information line' – Ed]

Bingley

Does your tower have a pile of handbells rotting away in boxes in a corner or cupboard somewhere? Many towers do. At Bingley we discovered 71

Association Inter-Branch Striking Competition



Photograph (l to r) – Peter Wilkinson (Contest judge), James Blackburn (Beverley), Barrie Dove.

Doncaster & District Society



At Manchester Cathedral. L to r: Kneeling/sitting: Trisha Jopling, Marian Thomas, Thomas Fisher, Derek Wagstaff, Richard Davis. Middle row: Harold Johnson, Linda Peers, Anne Walker, Annabelle Prebble, Lorraine Fishwick, Jay Downes, Charlie Bird. Back row: Philip Walker, Judith Jopling, Helen Nichols, Ted Steele, Liz Tarleton, Ian Kingston, Cyril Toyne, Jim Hirst.

Education Committee: Conducting Course at Tadcaster

A course on conducting Bob Minor was held at Tadcaster on Saturday 27 February. The superb 8-bell simulator in the tower allowed ringing to go on all day without any disturbance to the public. By the end of the afternoon all the students were getting used to transposing coursing orders.

The group photograph shows most of those there - the students, tutors and helpers.

Robert Cater



Back row l to r: Fiona Weare (Lightcliffe), Emma Coles (York), Andrea Pygott (Ossett).
Second row: Martin Hardgrave (Acomb), Peter Tiley (Haworth), Stuart Raggett (Tadcaster). Third row: Gail Cater (Committee Chairman), Cate Gardner (Tadcaster), Tracey Jones (Hemsworth). Bottom row: Barrie Dove (Assoc. President), Brian Sanders (Assoc. Ringing Master).

Masham



At Masham we recently gained a new ringer from overseas following a recruiting drive we held in the winter – Yvette la Grenouille. She’s learning the ropes fast and now takes her turn in maintaining the bells.

(PS – she’s not a Black Sheep)

Ian Y Johnson



The Western Branch Striking Competition’s winning team – Kirkheaton.

L to r: Derek Sharples, Bill Weston, Gillian Davison, Stephen Littlewood, John Spencer and David Hamby.

Selby and District Branch



Members of the Selby Branch with the Doncaster & District Society on the Selby Branch outing outside Retford Church.



Liz Hull of Eskrick receiving the trophy from Barrie Dove for the Selby & District Striking Competition.

York Branch



York Branch Ceilidh: "Tap Tap Stomp Stop" as we listen & learn the steps.

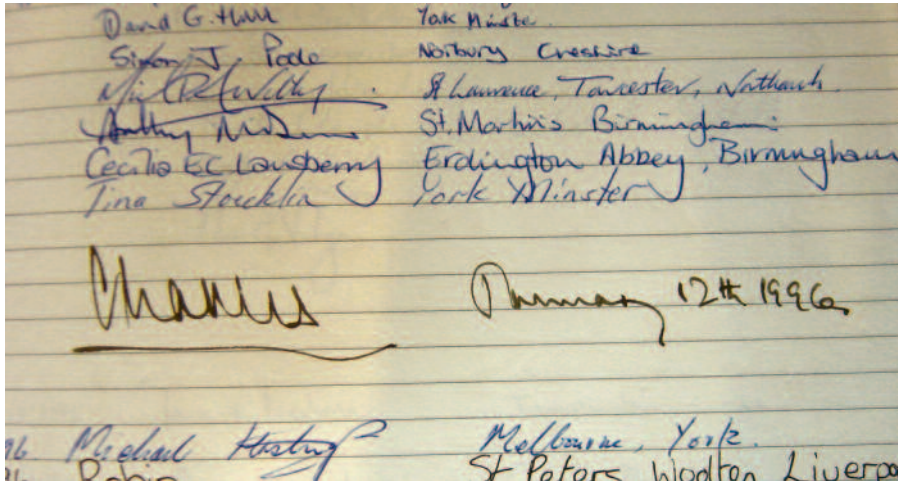


*The winners of the York Branch striking competition – one of the two Minster bands.
L to r: Robert Cater, James Sanderson, Christine Potter, Peter Sanderson, Gail Cater
and Emma Coles.*

All Saints Church, York

All Saints Church (8, 7cwt) is an architectural gem and especially famed for its 14th and 15th Century stained glass. Prince Charles had a private visit to see the glass in 1996 and with there being no other way to record his visit, signed the bellringers visitors book.

[I hope Michael Hastings signing next recognised the signature above – Ed].



The Bingley Handbell Band. L to r: Back Row: Jane Lynch, Claire Ricketts, Diane Greenwood, Roger Pollard, Jane Pilbin. Front row: Ann Cossavella, Marnie Cade, Kate Stanley, Sydney Ricketts, Solna Burnham, Ann Parkinson.

Burley



Safely in the bell tower ... now what.



Nafferton: bells augmented.



Dewsbury Minster by Stuart Mills.

North Rigton



Some of the new North Rigton band, l to r, Katie Costantini, Judi Barton, Nigel Martyn, , Emma Brennan, Elio Costantini, Andy Brennan.

York, St. Wilfrid



Ewan Hull of St. Wilfrid's, York being interviewed by the BBC.



Part of the stained-glass window installed in memory of Clive Vigden at St Wilfrid's York.



Tina Walker and Tim Bradley (York Minster) tuck into a late night Deep Fried Mars Bar – a Scottish speciality.



York Minster on Safari in Edinburgh. L to r: David Leese, Holly Webster, Johnny Stokoe, Helen Green, Alan Eccles, Christine Potter, Rachel Storr, Tim Bradley, Emma Coles, Tina Sanderson, Peter Sanderson. Dark glasses predominate.

Halifax & District Association members present at its winding-up



L to r: Back row: Roger Tarbatt (Shelley), John Spencer (Kirkheaton), Wynford Carter (New Mill), David Hamby (Kirkheaton), Andrew Naylor (Ripponden). Front row: Arthur Rogers (Easingwold, formerly Elland), David Micklethwaite (Penistone), Catherine Marsden (Knottingley, formerly Kirkheaton), Richard Senior (Kirkheaton), Bryn Richards (Warsop), Gordon Rigby (Roughtown). Missing: Susan Nielson (née Greenwood) (Meltham) who had to leave early and Gillian Davison (Kirkheaton) who was on 'tea duty'.



Harold Chant

Harold Chant of Felkirk was one of the stalwarts of closed lead (cartwheel) Minor ringing in the Barnsley style. He wrote prolifically in the *Ringing World* under the pseudonym The Professor about Minor ringing in general and was recognised as one of the country's experts in the genre. He did much work on his subject for the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers.

Here's a photograph of him taken at a ringing meeting on Saturday 1 August 1970 in Wath on Dearne church along with Gail Cater, three days before daughter Julia was born.

[Am I right in saying this is Wath on Dearne church? Ed]

bells in three tatty cardboard boxes, which have not been used properly in living memory. They are Shaw bells (of Bradford) dating back to the 1880's and were in a pretty serious condition. They were badly tarnished, some were cracked, a few notes missing, and most needed all the leather and felt work replacing.

In October 2008 the tower bell ringers decided to do something about this sorry state of affairs and sent the bells to Taylor's Bellfoundry for a quotation to restore them. We received a quote for £3200 to restore two chromatic octaves in 18G, which is 25 bells, including new storage cases, and decided to set about raising the money to have the work done.

We did anything legal to raise money including, car boot sales, recycled clothes collections, a sponsored walk and ring, catering for a wedding, and seeking donations from the public, local businesses and funding organisations. Thanks to generous donations from Bradford & Bingley Building Society, Shipley Community Chest and Bingley Civic Trust we reached our target in February 2010. The bells returned to Taylor's in March 2010 and at the beginning of July 2010 we went to collect the restored bells, it really is difficult to believe they are the same ones.

Then the really hard work began, we had to learn how to play them. Six of the tower bell ringers wanted a go plus we recruited several new volunteers who responded to local adverts for people to join the group. We started practising about three times per month with the aim of performing by Christmas 2010. It was not easy, as half the team cannot read music, and we have no one with previous hand bell experience to instruct us. We use colour coded staff notation music, and after a lot of trial and error, and much hilarity, we gave our first performance at the Western Branch Carol Service at Idle on December 11th 2010, followed by our own church carol service a week later.

Since Christmas we have continued to practise a range of tunes and attended our first Handbell Ringers of Great Britain Rally, at Grassington, on 21st May 2011. It was quite daunting playing our repertoire of tunes in the company of some really expert teams from across the North East of England, but we received loud applause for our efforts and felt pleased with our progress to date.

We have a busy summer ahead with performances booked at Saltaire Fete and Bingley Show before we revert back to Christmas Carols. We intend to have a third octave of bells restored and are beginning our fundraising efforts again. This will take us to 37 bells and extend the range of music

we are able to play. The bells have certainly been brought back to life and we hope they will be used and enjoyed for many years to come.

Jane Lynch

Burley

A Daring Rescue

“How am I going to get down?” isn’t a question bell ringers normally ask themselves getting up the belfry steps is much more of a worry, so the question gets ignored just in case Health and Safety decide ringing is far too hazardous. Leeds University Society of Change Ringers (LUSCR), in association with the Yorkshire HART team tried to answer that question, one dark night in September.

In 2005, Hazardous Area Response Teams (HART) were developed, and the Ambulance Service started training Paramedics “who would be able to work safely in such environments even when there are contaminants or other serious hazards present (whether caused deliberately or accidentally)”. The HART service flourished in Yorkshire, and the team took an active part in any complicated emergency situations – difficult vehicle extrications, unusual locations etc.

A keen pre-hospital care bell ringing member of LUSCR had always wondered how an injured person would safely be evacuated from a bell tower. When Alison Wareham from the HART team mentioned that the team were looking for new training opportunities, a difficult extraction scenario was planned.

After discussion, Burley, St Matthias was chosen as the venue, because although there are fewer stairs than other Leeds churches, the stairs are uneven and narrow, with not a lot of height in the staircase. There is no ‘trapdoor’ option, and no chance of lowering a casualty down the outside.

On the day of the scenario, Charlotte Davies, who was playing casualty, waited in the bell tower (possibly alone – a picture taken once the HART team had arrived perhaps indicates she wasn’t) for the arrival of the HART team. Adam Crocker waited at the bottom of the stairs to show the HART team where their casualty was. Charlotte had ‘fallen off’ the bell frame, hitting everything on the way down to the concrete floor of the ringing chamber.

The exercise started well, with laughter as the Paramedics realised how difficult the extraction was going to be! The first step was getting Charlotte

onto a stretcher, then lowering her out of the bell chamber, into the belfry. This was complicated by the chime wires getting in the way, the bell frame being very low, and the small trapdoor out. Charlotte was lowered safely out of the bell chamber, into the belfry.

Throughout stage one of the rescue, Charlotte felt very safe. The special stretcher used (a MIBS) provided a lot of support, and was quite comfortable. Being lifted around the bell chamber was very disorientating, and there was a lot of dust flying around.

Stage one over, and time for stage two – the descent down the spiral staircase. The Paramedics had identified anchor points for all their safety ropes, and everything was secure and ready.

Charlotte was slowly lowered down the spiral staircase, with a Paramedic below, and a Paramedic above. The descent was gradual. Some of the ropes kept getting caught underneath the steps, slowing progress. Everyone breathed a sigh of relief when we reached the bottom.

Surprisingly, being lowered down a spiral staircase was very comfortable. There wasn't so much dust around, and Charlotte had some control about how she was lowered down.

Once Charlotte was safely at the bottom, Paramedics Alison Wareham and Matt Crowley faced their biggest challenge of the evening – having a go at ringing, supervised by the LUSCR President, Adam Crocker.

The HART team found the evening very enjoyable, and very challenging. The equipment they had available worked, and they were very pleased to safely rescue the casualty. In a real life situation, how they evacuated a casualty would depend on how quickly the casualty needed to go to hospital, and what injuries the casualty had – we might have to resort to bum shuffling down the stairs yet!

Overall, the exercise was educational and enjoyable. I'd strongly recommend getting in touch with your local HART team, and giving them a challenge – hopefully you'll never need to rescue an injured bell ringer from the tower, but if you do, at least you'll have a head start!

Charlotte Davies

Ecclesfield

We have almost raised enough to cover the cost of all the work that we want to do for the augmentation of our bells from 8 to 10, the retuning of the original bells and new bits of frame etc. We still have money to raise towards the renewal of the stonework in the louvres.

However, we have arranged with Whitechapel to cast the two new bells, in order to secure them before another rise in the price of bell metal. The casting is taking place on Friday 3rd June and a party of ringers and the Vicar and Churchwardens are going down to London to watch. The bells will be brought back to Ecclesfield and displayed in order to encourage the remaining fund raising.

Jennifer Armeson

Giggleswick – Items from the Belfry Book

Purchase of the Church Handbells

On Thursday February 16th 1905 a concert was given in the National School, Giggleswick in connection with the Change-ringers of the Parish Church, for the purpose of raising funds for the purchasing of a set of handbells, and new ropes for the Belfry. Mr. John Graham was responsible for the programme, and the concert was most successful.

Ringers Meeting, March 30th 1905

A meeting of the ringers was held in the Belfry on Thursday evening March 30th 1905 after week-day practice. Present – Mr. Brassington, Mr. S.D. James, Mr. James Hodgson, Mr. M. Hudson and Mr. Whiffen. The minutes of the last meeting were read, confirmed and signed, by the presiding member Mr. Brassington.

The following balance sheet was submitted to the meeting of the concert held on February 16th 1905, and passed unanimously.

Receipts – (sale of tickets and admission at door)

J. Hodgson	4s 6d.	Mr. Moorby	2s 6d.	Mr. Bradley	5s 0d.
J. Clark	4s 6d.	J. W. Brassington	3s 0d.	S. James	0s 6d.
Mr. Hudson	8s 6d.	J. L. Bulcock	7s 6d.	E. P. M. Whiffen	2s 0d.
E. Graham	2s.0d.	J. Graham	61s 3d.	Door	30s 9d.

Total: £6. 11s. 10d.

Expenditure – Cab 3s. 6d. School 6s 10d. Printing 16s 6d.

Total: £1. 6s 10d.

Balance in hand – £5. 5s. 0d.

Total profit: Five Pounds and Five Shillings*

Disposal of Concert Profits. Mr.Hodgson Proposed, Mr. Hudson Seconded, and those present unanimously agreed that the proceeds of the concert ring: the sum of £5. 5s. be handed over to the Church Wardens, with a request that the money be spent by them on the purchasing of 8 hand bells through Mr. Graham, and six new ropes for the Belfry.

Mr. Whiffen proposed, Mr.Brassington seconded that Mr. John Graham be thanked by them for his valued services in promoting and bringing to such a successful issue the concert aforementioned and such motion was carried.

Vera Walker

* around £475 at present day prices – quite a tidy profit from the concert!

Vera tells me the handbells are still in the tower and the Graham family still live in the village – Editor

Halifax Minster – Stuart Mills

Many of us at some point in our ringing careers will have come across Stuart Mills, whose knowledge of towers, bells, practice nights and who rings with whom is encyclopaedic. He is a unique character in the Western Branch, very sociable, well liked and much appreciated for his tenacity and enthusiasm.

He possesses an outstanding natural ability to sketch and paint towers and can often be seen doing this as well as photographing and recording bells.

Stuart was taught to ring in the Huddersfield area by Wynford Carter (New Mill) and further encouraged by Sally Williams (Brighouse), who has diligently transported him to towers around Yorkshire and far beyond. He has rung three peals to date and is a member of the band at Halifax Minster.

Alan Trebble

Handsworth – 90th Anniversary Celebrations

The peal of eight bells and clock were placed in the Handsworth tower in memory of those men of Handsworth who fell in the Great War 1914-1918. The bells and clock were dedicated on Saturday 18th December 1920 by Dr. Leonard Hedley Burrows, the first Lord Bishop of Sheffield. The first peal on the bells was on Saturday 9th April 1921 of Plain Bob Major consisting of 5056 changes.

Two peals were rung to celebrate the 90th Anniversary of each: Yorkshire SM on 18 December 2010 and Handsworth SM on 9 April 2011. Thanks go to Simon Reading for arranging both.

Middlesmoor

A peal of Surprise Minor was rung at Middlesmoor on 2 May, which was the first peal on the bells for 43 years. It was rung for the Royal Wedding and was also the first peal on the bells since they were rehung in 2000. The band was Kevin Atkinson, Catherine & Jeffrey Ladd, Andrew Yardley, Timothy Holmes and Barrie Dove.

For those who have not visited this tower there is one of the most spectacular views in the Dales from the churchyard. The church is placed high above Upper Nidderdale and the view is one of wide vistas down the dale towards Pateley Bridge.

Nafferton – Augmentation of the bells – the Story of the Project

The Nafferton Church Bells Project was originally to add a fourth bell to the two mediaeval bells cast in 1450 & 1500 which were hung with a new tenor bell in a new frame in 1881. Tests showed that this was not possible as the tenor bell was of poor quality: much of the work needed to augment the bells would be the same for any number. The PCC decided to form a Bells Committee which was told of a good second-hand ring of 6 bells from St Minver in Cornwall. We contacted the Keltek trust and paid a deposit on the bells, which were being held in Dorset by Nicholson's (Bellhangers).

The first step was to get a structural report on the condition of the tower to confirm it was in good order and could support the frame and the 'new' six bells along with the two mediaeval bells. Thankfully, this was positive. We then sought two tenders for removing the three existing bells and oak bell frame and installing the six St Minver bells in a new frame, along with the two mediaeval bells to be used as service bells. The cost of the project

was estimated at around £80,000. The Archbishop of York and John Gledhill of Nafferton agreed to be our Patrons.

The hard fund raising work then started! We were advised of grant making bodies to apply to and in October 2006 the local fund raising commenced with a sponsored 1 mile swim which raised £669. Then came an intensive programme of events, craft fairs, whist drives, Lenten Lunches, Hand Bell concerts, Christmas Concerts in Church etc. A Flower Festival was held in Church in August 2009 for which sponsor money for the flowers was requested. We had an excellent response from local organisations and individual donors. The area Masonic Lodges were also very generous. We received a very large donation from Mrs. Joan Shawcross a member of the congregation in memory of her late husband, Bill. This made the project viable. We also gratefully received grants from the Yorkshire Association and the Beverley & District Society. Our thanks go to the all who contributed in all possible ways.

We had a worrying time when Taylors, Eayre & Smith went into administration; luckily this soon was resolved. Work started on 8 January 2010, when a joiner commenced building a new ringing room, which was finished just before Easter. The Archbishop of York dedicated the bells on 3 October 2010.

A band of ringers is being trained and at the time of writing we are able to ring four bells most Sunday mornings. We have been able to ring for four weddings and the Midnight and Christmas morning services. We had all six bells ringing in the New Year. On 23 February the first peal on the bells was rung jointly for the B&D Society and the YACR by Dinah Rhymer, Gary Audley, Barrie Dove, Neville Pailing, James Blackburn and Robert Jordan.

Les Senior

A New Six for North Rigton

In April, the Yorkshire Association acquired its lightest ring of bells with the installation of a new ring of six (tenor 3-0-6) at St John the Evangelist, North Rigton.

This must also rank as one of the fastest installation in recent years, the period between the initial idea and the bells ringing for service being little over a year. The success of the project owes a great deal to the enthusiasm of John Hopkins, who lives in the village. His daughter was married at the church soon after he moved to North Rigton, but he was disappointed to

discover that there would be no ringing for the wedding. When he heard talk of a specific project to mark the centenary of the church in June 2011, a ring of bells seemed like the perfect solution.

He soon found other villagers keen to back his idea and then it was just a question of persuading the PCC that a ring of bells would be a more meaningful addition to the church than the (centenary) toilet that was being considered.

Serious fund raising began and thanks to the generosity of the local community, an order was placed with John Taylor & Co, with the work being completed in time for the bells to be anointed on 27 March. They were rung for Service for the first time on Easter Sunday by the new band who've been trained by Rog and Sue Green from Ilkley and Stuart Holtam from Addingham.

The core of the new team of eight ringers are from three local families, with parents and children learning alongside each other. The bells are just perfect for young learners and since ringing began in earnest, there's been enthusiastic interest from some even younger members of these families.

None of this would have been possible without the help and support of other local ringers, in particular everyone at St Wilfrid's, Harrogate who so kindly allowed us to use their bells for much of the last year to teach the new band. Andrew Aspland, as bell advisor to the Ripon & Leeds Diocese, provided invaluable help in the planning stages and even more during the three weeks when the bells were installed. Also, several of the other ringers from Ilkley and Addingham have given their time to travel across to Harrogate most weeks to help with teaching and lots of rounds ringing.

There's certainly a great sense of achievement in seeing a new band ringing on a new set of bells, and we hope that other members of the Association will come and enjoy these bells for themselves. Practice night is Tuesday at 7.30pm. Sunday services are only twice a month, but contact details are included in the 2010 Association Report.

Sue Green

Northallerton – the 2011 Ringers’ Dinner

On the afternoon of Saturday 15th January 2011, a peal of Yorkshire Royal was rung at All Saints’ Northallerton. It was the 290th peal on the bells, just a few short of the leading peal tower in North Yorkshire and was rung to celebrate the Northallerton Ringers’ Dinner.

Shortly after this, sixty-six ringers, friends and guests began filtering into the venue for socialising and drinks. It is around forty-five years since the first Northallerton Dinner, which was held at a local village pub. Nowadays it is held in The Tithe Bar, the pub used by the ringers after practices and peals, which carries a good variety of real ales and wine.

The Dinner itself is a very informal event with no dress code, which leads to an interesting mix ranging (for the men!) from top hat and tails or black tie, to those who have chosen “smart casual”. There are generally no speeches and the formalities amount to the Grace beforehand and a short ring on handbells afterwards. This year the Grace was led by Rev. Darren Moore and a course of Grandsire Caters was rung by: David Hull, James Holdsworth, Peter Randall, David Town and Jennie Town.

The Northallerton ringers support the ringing at Ainderby Steeple and at Brompton, and ringers from both these towers were present. It was also a pleasure to welcome the clergy from all three churches as our guests. The final seal of approval was perhaps the presence of the President of the Yorkshire Association, Barrie Dove, who made ample inroads into the real ales on offer.

David Town

Oxenhope – Making Good Use of Simulators

A year ago we installed our simulator at Oxenhope: whatever is happening in the meeting room below it enables us to ring each Wednesday, and we get no complaints. Phase two came quickly: a monthly afternoon session specially designed for intermediate ringers, generally with more time on their hands, who wanted to improve their eight bell ringing at a more consistent level than could be attained at their local practice night.

We now have a number of regular simulator sessions in the area and this has set me thinking about how we should combine forces to improve our ringing; for recruitment, yes, but especially for retention and progression of those who have learned the very basics or are intermediates finding it

hard to migrate up to the next level. First, what is currently happening is great. Some concentrate on one or two named methods, Oxenhope sticks to triples and major, and Saltaire with its simulator will be handling treble dodging minor.

So where are the problems?

1. Not enough people in the tower.

Once upon a time, we ran monthly eight bell practices on a Monday night in Keighley. Numbers dwindled so we could only ring six, and the sessions fizzled out. In fact we were too ambitious. Personal standards weren't good enough, the bells were too heavy for a band of intermediates, and of course it was an evening, when some local towers already had a practice and potential numbers were reduced.

2. Too many people in the tower.

Popularity has its problems! If there are more than, say, a dozen for an eight bell practice, the least able don't get enough chances to learn the methods, yet the more able, who have to ring every touch, get more practice, thus widening the gap.

3. Too wide a gap in ability.

Whether we like it or not, "expert" ringers are intimidating, especially to those of more mature years. This shouldn't happen if learners are matched, both in ability and ambition to the group they are joining. If the gap is too wide, however, a less advanced learner will end up sitting out most of the session on the bench, and walk away, not to return. Not only this, the more advanced learners will feel deprived of their time on a rope having to reduce the standard to accommodate the less able.

The Solution

The simulators have given us the most revolutionary teaching aid invented in the last fifty years: the ability to practice a method time and time again without worrying about the neighbours. In theory, we can ring day in, day out, without concern, and devise sessions as follow ups to the Branch training day for everyone, whatever their level. Provided each ability is met somewhere, it should be possible to achieve a balance of numbers at each simulator practice and set a minimum entry standard, particularly at the intermediate and advanced levels. The Saltaire practices are set up for those who already know basic Treble Bob. Oxenhope is for those who can already ring a quarter of Bob Minor and want to progress into higher numbers. We now need to formalize this into a complete package.

Afternoon practices are a must, even though the potential attendees are those with more leisure at their disposal. They are precisely the group who are more numerous, and yet have furthest to go, or are stagnating short of their potential in local practice nights where the highest level of achievement, perhaps a failed course of Oxford, isn't going to teach anybody anything. The young, if they are enthusiastic, soon find bands to suit their ambition, but of course if the older locals have progressed further in afternoon sessions, there will be less incentive to jump ship.

Opportunities at each level need to be at regular intervals, and publicised to those likely to attend. Each session needs trainers, but they don't have to be expert method ringers, just good at their job. I would suggest that on top of the current practices we could include plain hunt through to plain bob minor, another aimed at other plain methods, incorporating touches, and one for surprise major. And, for a fee, how about hiring out the simulator towers to other bands to spend time teaching handling, ringing in rounds, or practising special methods?

Bob Schofield

Sharow

I'm sure most ringers will have heard by now that a peal band got fastened in the tower at Sharow in June by an irate parishioner. But hardly anyone knows of Susan Green's part in getting them out –

'Pre match nerves and national fame' – North Rigton ringer, Nigel Martyn, admitted to feeling 'really nervous' before his first quarter peal on 29 May – but we weren't too worried as we felt certain that his former day job must surely have given him plenty of experience of stressful situations. And we were right – the ex Leeds, Everton and England goalkeeper was soon into his stride ringing the tenor behind to Plain Bob Doubles without the slightest sign of nerves.

Unbeknown to any of us at the time however, two other members of the quarter band were also soon to find national fame, although in rather a different manner. Colin and Nicola Turner, visiting the area from Oxfordshire, had asked if they could have a ring on the new bells at North Rigton so we invited them to join the quarter peal band. As we said goodbye at the end, we wished them luck with their afternoon peal at Sharow.

Need I say more? Well, just one thing. Thanks to the massive press and TV coverage, few people in the whole country can fail to know about the Barricaded Bellringers of Sharow and that after their peal finished they found themselves fastened in the tower as the trap door to the ringing chamber had been wedged shut. But I'd like it to be noted that I knew about it first!

In their hour of need and lacking the phone number of the lady with the key, Colin remembered they had my home number, and so I was the one who received their distress call about 5.15pm that afternoon and I gave them the phone number of one of the locals. Good job I was sitting at my desk putting the morning's quarter on Campanophile at the time and not out walking the dog!

Sue Green (Ilkley)

[Barrie Dove was interviewed about it on BBC Radio 2 – Ed]

Skipton

Digby Burton, one of the Association's two Vice Presidents, retired from the Captaincy at Skipton in April after holding the post for 47 years. Digby, who hails from Grassington and is now 82 learned to ring during the early part of WW2 when at school in Staffordshire. He is one of the sadly dwindling number of ringers who rang on VE Day to celebrate the defeat of Nazi Germany in May 1945. After National Service and medical training he returned to Skipton where he practised as a country GP until his retirement in 1989.

Over his ringing career to date he has taught dozens of ringers at nearby churches and still supports weekly practices at Thornton in Craven, Gargrave and Burnsall in addition to Skipton.

He has been replaced by Christopher Wright, who has been Deputy Captain for many years and who is being ably assisted by Kevin Haseldine.

[Is there any other current Tower Captain in the Association who has been in post longer than Digby? – Ed]

Tong

The bells of the Georgian church of St James', Tong Village, have been silent since the 1960s. However, with the help of a grant of £45,900 from the Heritage Lottery Fund awarded this month, the bells will ring out once

again from this Grade 1 listed building to announce church services, weddings and special occasions. Five of the six bells date from 1730, with a sixth bell being added in 1841. The story of the bells and the bell ringers is a fascinating one, which will be researched by a local history group. The fruits of that research will be displayed in the church as part of the overall project, and regular open days will be held for visitors.

The work required to restore the bells will involve removing them from the church and transporting them to the bell foundry, where they will be cleaned and tuned. New bell wheels, pulleys and other fittings will be fabricated before the bells are returned to St James'. A group of volunteers will be trained to ring and maintain the bells.

The total cost of the project is estimated at £63,000. In addition to the Heritage Lottery Fund grant, over £11,000 been raised locally, much of it through gift days, funeral bequests and coffee mornings. One lady who worshipped at the church for many years asked that donations be made to the project to celebrate her 90th birthday. Grants have also been awarded by the Yorkshire Association of Change Ringers and the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers

Canon Gordon Dey, Vicar of St James', said "The restoration of the bells will be the icing on the cake for our historic church in Tong Village. However, what makes this project really exciting is the opportunity that it will create for many local people to share in the history of the bells and the bell ringers. We are delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has made this project possible."

Fiona Spiers, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund – Yorkshire and the Humber said "This is a fantastic project which will restore the historic bells of St James' Church, and train volunteers in the skill of bell ringing and how to maintain the bells, ensuring the sustainability of the project after funding ends. The project will also provide the community with opportunity to learn about history of the bells and the people who have rung them over the past 200 years. This project really demonstrates how a lottery funding can have a lasting impact!"

Louise Connacher

[This is the press release Louise has distributed to the media – Ed]

York Minster

Adventures in a Foreign Land

Listening to the Minster Royal Wedding peal on the Friday from a sunny pub garden seemed the perfect start prior to a weekend of ringing, eating and socialising with the band in Edinburgh over the bank holiday weekend. And despite the apparent early onset of Alzheimer's in the group, we weren't to be disappointed by the venture up north ...

Arriving in Edinburgh bright and early on Saturday morning, the keen amongst us bounded off the train to meet our tour guide for the weekend, Mr J Sanderson. As we headed off for the first tower, David Potter realised he'd left his bag on the train and faced with a choice of running back for it or buying a new set of clothes, he headed off in the direction of Marks and Spencer's. Fortunately the young Charlotte Mitchell saved the day rescuing the 'unidentified item' from the train before the terrorism squad descended. A quick stop for coffee and finally we made it to St Andrew's and St George's 8, enjoying fine ringing on the oldest ring in Scotland.

After lunch (and a dash back by Johnny to the café for his wallet and Rachel to the church for her fleece) an empty afternoon stretched before us. James exclaimed how he'd never seen the weather so good in Edinburgh so many of us took the most of the opportunity to climb Calton Hill for wonderful views. Back to Princes Street Gardens for coffee, an ice cream and a quick nap by our Ringing Master and we all felt suitably refreshed to tackle Edinburgh Cathedral. We enjoyed the challenge of this vast 12 and after David instructed us "Now I don't care if you can hear your bell or not, but I still can", we managed to get some good ringing on them. Off to St Cuthbert's now and although tired and hungry we appreciated this lovely 10.

Many will expect that the evening's best stories originate from the younger members of the band, but that was before we welcomed Bob and Gail Cater to the group. After Sunday morning ringing at St Cuthbert's we went back to the park for coffee and were treated to a salacious story of rundown kebab shops, two Deep Fried Mars Bars, samples of whisky and misplaced B&B door keys (Mrs Cater) resulting in a slightly slurred serenade by Mr Cater to Holly asking to be let into the building. Whilst the Caters spent Sunday recovering*, the rest of us took to climbing Arthur's Seat – a definite highlight of the weekend with clear blue skies and magnificent far reaching views. We almost didn't make it back in time for the bus to Haddington, especially when at the last minute James realised we were at the wrong stop – David did have to run in the end!

We enjoyed Haddington's easy going 11cwt 8 with everyone enjoying a good ring. After a pub meal in the town and a standoff between Peter and Charlotte over some scampi and chips, we embarked on an eventful hour bus ride back to the city (warning: those with a delicate disposition look away now). Now as a woman I have often been on the receiving end of grumblings from the opposite sex about our ability to suddenly need the toilet just as we're about to leave. But it might be something men should take more care of, particularly if your name is Johnny Stokoe. Halfway home Johnny's dancing feet could hold the inevitable back no longer and a fortuitous change of driver allowed him to vault over a nearby fence for some light relief. Unfortunately the lack of adequate shelter nearby meant the older ladies at the back of the bus had a rather clearer view than they expected! It seems this might be more common in Scotland than we thought though because the driver was well prepared and provided Johnny with hand-sanitizer as he stepped back on the bus to rapturous applause!

Monday dawned bright and sunny (again!) and we headed off on a coach to grab three more towers. I don't think the Dunblane Cathedral locals were expecting 30 thirsty bellringers for coffee at 10am on bank holiday Monday but they were very accommodating. Everyone enjoyed the peal here, possibly our favourite of the weekend with David P exclaiming the 8 were "Majestic!". Off to Stirling now and a stop for coffee with a bite for lunch before a quick ring on the 6. The afternoon was rounded off nicely with a ring at the light 8 at Alloa, run like a military operation by Johnny until Bob asked, "who fancies a coffee?" throwing the best laid plans into disarray. The churchwarden had kindly opened the kitchen for us.

Upon returning to Edinburgh we had a chance to grab a quick dinner before catching the evening train home. The weekend was a thorough success with good ringing, wonderful weather and a healthy dollop of socialising. Huge thanks must go to James for organising the weekend, to the Scottish ringers for the use of their bells and to Christine for marshalling the troops from the York end. If this collaboration is anything to go by, then I look forward to visiting Ruth Sanderson in Birmingham next year ...

By H Green

[Actually we walked to Leith and looked over the Royal Yacht where it is now permanently moored: well worth a visit – Ed]

St Wilfrid's, York

10th Anniversary of the Great Heck Train Crash

Clive Vidgen was a railway man, following in his father's footsteps. On Thursday February 28 2001 he was travelling south on the East Coast main line when his train was involved in the Great Heck crash. Clive was one of ten who died in the disaster at the premature age of 39 years.

Clive was actively involved in the York ringing scene, being a member of the bands at St Wilfrid's and Bishopthorpe. At St Wilfrid's, he often joked that when he became famous he'd have a stained-glass window of himself installed in the tower, in particular to keep the sun out of the eyes of those ringing the 7th and 8th, bells which he often rang.

In Clive's honour, the St Wilfrid's band commissioned Ann Sotheran, a nationally renowned stained glass artist based in York, to produce a suitable design, and the completed window was dedicated by The Very Rev. Canon Michael Ryan in October 2003. The design includes depictions of Ripon Cathedral, York Minster and Hexham Abbey, where St Wilfrid was appointed Abbot and later Bishop, and three yellow sunbursts representing St Wilfrid's three pilgrimages to Rome in the 7th century.

To mark the 10th anniversary of Clive's death, the bands at Bishopthorpe, Escrick and St Wilfrid's rang quarter peals at their respective towers. May he rest in peace.

David Hull

Ewan Hull

Ewan Hull aged 8 years old has been ringing now for some 18 months and recently scored his first peal, thus putting him into the company of the very small number of ringers who have achieved this before celebrating their age in double figures.

Ewan was featured in the national and local press in January and was interviewed about ringing by the BBC for a programme broadcast that month, as the photograph elsewhere in the Newsletter shows.

Ewan's first quarter was in December 2009 and at the time of writing he has rung 17, including ringing the treble to Plain Bob Royal for the wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton recently. His first peal was rung at Strensall – the treble to Plain Bob Minor – on 7 May, with the band including his father and grand-father. One of the band, Paul Cammiade, has now rung in the first peals of three generations of the Hull family.

Looking Back

Earlsheaton – 40 Years On

Here's a photograph taken on 3 October 1970 at a gathering of the Leeds & District Branch just after it had fused with the Leeds & District Amalgamated Society. Short skirts were de rigueur.



It's taken at Earlsheaton (Dewsbury) on the occasion of the last public ringing of the bells. The following day a peal of St Nicholas' Bob Triples was rung conducted by Ian North and the day after that the bells were taken out of the tower and scrapped. Demolition of the church followed.

The Society/Branch Chairman Robin Brown, then of Rothwell and now of Bedale, is at the back sporting a beard. The late Ted Hudson, a stalwart of ringing at Sharow and in the Association as a whole, is fourth from the right. The man in the flat cap, Edgar Cole, lived in Heckington, Lincolnshire and always used to come to ringing in Yorkshire in a taxi. It was reputed he had 'come into money'.

The second photograph, taken about the same time, shows Mr. Hemingway Dransfield, the last ringer of the once famous Earlsheaton band which won numerous striking competitions before WW2. All the ropes had Yorkshire ends, which were cut off as souvenirs by the ringers of the last peal. Gail's and mine have hung over the newel posts of the stairs in all the houses we've lived in since.

Editor



The Halifax & District Association of Change Ringers – 1904 to 2011 – The Final Meeting

For much of the second half of the 20th Century there have been no fewer than three ringing societies covering the Halifax area of Yorkshire – the Halifax & District Society of Change Ringers, the Archdeaconry of Halifax Guild of Change Ringers and the Yorkshire Association of Change Ringers.

The Yorkshire Association has been in place since 1875, the Halifax Association from around 1904 and the Halifax Archdeaconry Guild from the early 1950s, although this last Society had two false starts, one caused by the disruption to ringing in WW2.

The late Noel Moxon of Cawthorne writing in *The Ringing World* in 1959 said that at the time when interest in the 'Heavy Woollen District Association' (formed in 1893) began to wane, the Halifax & District Association was formed, its headquarters being The Ring of Bells at Halifax. The object of the Association, according to its rules, was 'the encouragement of Scientific Change Ringing amongst its members by means of competitions or otherwise'.

A splendid silver cup, value £9.17.00 (today around £1000) was purchased in December 1904, the money being raised by subscriptions from fourteen neighbouring towers. The first recorded contest for it was at Halifax Parish

Church on 12 January 1907. Test pieces were 640 Kent TB Major or 676 Grandsire Triples. Out of four entrants, Brighouse won with 252 faults.

Six and eight-bell contests were held alternately from then until 1933, when only two teams entered; since then all contests have been on six bells. Mr. Moxon said that 126 contests had been held up to 1959 and 42 different towers had participated. Previous to 1918, Earlsheaton (church demolished in 1970 and its bells scrapped) was the most successful tower with 14 wins and at one time won the cup seven times in succession. Between WW1 and WW2 Liversedge was a great power, winning 13 contests with Batley close on its heels with 12 wins. In 1957 in the contest at Brighouse, when the touch was 504 changes in any method, the top four teams were Liversedge, Meltham, Shelley and Elland.

In the 1950s and 60s the number of teams entering usually varied between four and six, but this had dropped to only two by the 1980s – Kirkheaton and Roughtown. These teams were fierce contest rivals but always remained good friends. Kirkheaton first won in 1971, but during its heyday Roughtown won more often. Friezland was also a worthy winner on several occasions.

The style of ringing in the 6-bell contests held over the years has nearly always been with closed leads, and usually with an exceedingly high standard of striking.

Although contest ringing in the Association sadly declined as the Century wore on it did not do so in the neighbouring Barnsley & District Society. The last time a contest was held for the Association cup was twenty or more years ago. Richard Senior of Kirkheaton, Huddersfield, was the President at the time and has safely guarded the trophy at his home since.

By this year he had decided it was time the cup was being used again for the purpose it was intended, but probably by a different society. Accordingly, at a specially convened meeting of the Association at Kirkheaton on Saturday 5 March, Richard proposed to the thirteen members present that the society be wound up and the cup donated to the Archdeaconry of Halifax Guild, with a wish that it be competed for again. This was agreed.

The Archdeaconry Guild held its AGM immediately following. It gratefully welcomed custody of the cup and gave an assurance that competitions for it will be held in the future.

[Thanks are due to Andrew Fawbert of Brighouse for supplying much of the data on the olden days and to Richard Senior of Kirkheaton for the more recent data – Ed].

Heavy Woollen District Association and the Joint Council of Yorkshire Ringing Societies

Following from articles about both these organisations in the last edition of the YACR Newsletter (Winter 2010/2011), I have had correspondence with Dennis Greenwood of Metham, who used to ring there but is now sadly lapsed. Dennis says –

“Following an enquiry I made about a cup that was donated to the Saddleworth Museum by Joe Burgess of Friezland and reportedly that of the Yorkshire Heavy Woollen District Association, the curator replied as follows:

Dear Dennis, many thanks for your enquiry – YES we do have the cup in our collection – the transcription on the front reads -

THIS CUP WAS WON AT – Mansfield 1888, Dinting 1891,
Chapel-en-le-Frith 1892

To the Ringers of Ch (Christ) Ch (Church) Friezland

J. W. SHAW	Cond 1st
G. T. SHAW	2nd
J. DICKEN	3rd
S. DICKEN	4th
W. BRADBURY	5th
I. T. DICKENS	TENOR

The curator also confirms that Joe Burgess did in fact donate the cup to the museum but no Association minute books, which I had been told were also there. However, as the cup was competed for at churches in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, I wonder if this was in fact a cup belonging to the Yorkshire Heavy Woollen District Association. Whatever, it is interesting that another old ringers’ cup has shown up”.

It was good to hear from Dennis after so many years. I myself was present at a Closed Lead (Cartwheel) touch of Minor at Crofton in the late 1960s, rung primarily by Dennis’s family, which was so well struck that the audience applauded. Dennis reminds me it was probably at a Joint Council of Yorkshire Ringing Societies’ Open Day and was on his sister, Susan’s, 12th or 13th birthday. After ringing and the applause everyone sang ‘Happy Birthday’. In addition to Dennis and Susan in the band were their parents Mary and Joe Greenwood and their maternal grandfather Charles William (Charlie) Byram. Susan is Susan Neilson today and still rings at Meltham.

Editor

Steel Bells at Sowerby Bridge and Stainland

The towers at Stainland and Sowerby Bridge (not to be confused with nearby Sowerby) once held steel bells cast by Naylor Vickers of Sheffield.

The six bells at Stainland (tenor c11½ cwt) were installed in 1860, hanging in a two-tier wooden frame with the tenor and fifth on the upper frame – with all this weight on the upper frame they must have been fun to ring! Five years later a full octave was installed at Sowerby Bridge, probably on one level, and the tenor here weighed c14 cwt.

How much use was made of either of these rings of bells is questionable – the tone would not be pleasing to both the ringers and those outside. There is no evidence of peals being rung at either. There is evidence however that Sowerby Bridge did consider replacing their bells, as in 1911 they obtained a quotation from Taylor's for an bronze octave with a tenor of around 15cwt. This was obviously not pursued but for what reason is not known.

What is obvious is that both sets of bells became unringable but remained in their respective towers until the 1980s. After that, events went in different directions. Stainland replaced their ring with a bronze chime of 6 consisting of four second-hand bells and two new ones, all being chimed by an Ellacombe Apparatus. Sowerby Bridge on the other hand had their bells removed and to this day nothing hangs in the tower.

But what became of the original steel bells? Remarkably, it is thought that both exist, though the chances of them ever being rung again are remote.



St Andrew's Church, Stainland.

The bells from Stainland are understood to reside in a Deer Park in the local area where presumably they are pure ornaments; the octave from Sowerby Bridge are believed to be in storage at the North of England Open Air Museum at Beamish (near Durham) – will we ever see them on display?

Steel bells may have been cheap and cheerful when they were cast but they did not stand the test of time as bronze counterparts of the same era would have done. There are probably only about a dozen sets remaining in the country.



*(I am indebted to some detail from Dennis Greenwood's "Bells of the Churches in the Diocese of Wakefield" in the production of this article).
Peter C Kirby*

Christ Church, Sowerby Bridge.

Obituaries

Albert E. Wood – Saddleworth

Albert learnt to ring at Saddleworth in the early 1960s and provided continuous Sunday Service ringing from that time. He took over as Ringing Master and Tower Keeper when David Ashley moved out of the Saddleworth area. Albert was always totally dedicated to ringing at St Chad's and spent many Wednesday evenings teaching learners of all ages – he did everything possible to keep ringing alive.

Being of the old school he always took good care of the bells and was the first to volunteer when anything needed fixing. To Albert it was always better to spend 3 or 4 hours effecting a repair rather than ask the church to spend a few pounds to replace with new. I always remember one of the bell wheels almost falling apart and the time Albert spent gluing on extra supports and when it wouldn't run true he used string to pull it back in place and retain it.

Albert joined the YACR in 1968 and the Annual Reports show that he rang just one peal for the Association*, although I know he rang at least three peals for other Societies. He was always coy about his age, but we think it was just about his 90th birthday when he died.

In his later years as a ringer he started to suffer from deteriorating health, struggling to climb the stairs and to grip the rope. Eventually after having a heart pace-maker fitted he had to stop ringing – a really sad loss to ringing in the area.

Most people will not realise that Albert regularly attended practices at other churches:- Mossley, Ashton, Todmorden to name a few and he was always held in high regard, as a totally nice and well-meaning man who wouldn't cause offence to anyone. He continued to visit other towers until he stopped driving. It was always a great surprise to many that he walked up the hill to St Chad's in all weathers to attend ringing and, until towards the end, always refused offers of lifts. His closing comment for all Saddleworth ringing sessions was "thank you for coming".

Very much missed and a great loss to Saddleworth ringing.

Jeff Brannan

[The tenor behind to Grandsire Triples at Saddleworth on 10 February 1968, in which I rang. The snow was several feet deep at the church, which is set high on the Pennine moors above the village of Uppermill – Ed]*

Betty Jackson – Addingham

During the course of our lives we most of us will meet, or hear about, people who are an inspiration to us. Betty Jackson was, undoubtedly, one such person.

Betty was nearly 60 when she learnt to ring and was the first to admit that she didn't find it easy. Arriving at an Ilkley practice night towards the end of a Betty handling lesson could be quite a nerve wracking experience, but she found our reaction hugely amusing, and it only made her even more determined to succeed. Which she did – and once the bell handling phase had been mastered, she worked out a game plan that would make up for all those lost years of not ringing. She befriended other late learners and newly retired ringers in the area, and for several years they toured all the local practice nights looking for any, and every, opportunity to ring.

Progress was made. Once Plain Bob and Grandsire were mastered, her confidence grew and she rang a few quarter peals before moving on to her favourite method, Stedman. She recognised that this was going to be a very serious challenge, but with her trusty Steve Coleman book by her bedside, she knew she would succeed.

In 1994, aged 67, she was delighted to achieve her long standing ambition of ringing a peal – although she was quite adamant that it was not an experience she intended to repeat!

No opportunity was ever missed for expanding her ringing horizons. Holidays in New Zealand and visits to relations in Vancouver meant she never left home without the necessary contact details for the local ringers. She joined Bob and Gail Cater's ringing tour to South Africa, meeting relatives near Durban. She also joined two Leeds University past members' trips to Ireland and the Channel Islands.

But her ultimate desire was to see regular ringing again at Addingham, and Betty was prepared to make this happen. She was now nearly 70, and knew she didn't have the skills to teach bell handling or train a band, but she had the ability to charm, persuade and cajole those who could. As tower captain, she provided the energy and determination to create a completely new band and ensure its continued success, until ill health forced her to retire in February last year – when she was 83! And even then, she was still able, for a while, to rustle up her legendary lemon cake for the 'service' break at Addingham weddings.

This commitment to ringing was only one small part of a long life lived to the full – one in which the desire to give and participate far outweighed any desire for personal glory. Betty held a translating diploma from the Institute of Linguists, specialising in scientific Spanish. She also held the position for some years as County Commissioner for North Yorkshire in the Girl Guides movement.

Betty will be remembered by so many people whose lives she touched, but for the ringers at Ilkley and Addingham, she was the ultimate proof that the success of a local band is built more on energy, enthusiasm, co-operation and good humour than the ability to ring advanced methods. We will never forget her.

Sue Green

David Nichols – Sprotborough

David Nichols died suddenly on 8 January aged 64: he had been looking forward to his retirement in July. In addition to his ringing with the Association, David was also actively involved with the Doncaster and District Ringing Society, serving on its committee and, in the last two years, taking on the role of Ringing Master. Many ringers have commented that David was a stalwart of that Society and his loss is a major blow. He was a very popular Ringing Master and his organisational skills and ability to encourage others was second to none.

David was taught to handle a bell at the age of 13 at All Saints, Rotherham by the late Norman Chaddock and continued to serve the local band there for over 30 years. He joined the Association in 1960 and rang his first of 470 peals for the Association in 1962, conducting 31 of them.

David rang 571 peals altogether for various Societies throughout the British Isles, conducting 38 of them in the years between 1962 and 1995. He made a return in 2008 to ring his last one. These were on all numbers of bells from 6 to 12 and in methods from Plain Bob to advanced Surprise Major, Royal and Maximus, including 10 of them on handbells. Many of these peals were rung as part of a thriving local band at Rotherham, often in support of learners. Others were rung at various towers throughout the United Kingdom during weeks of holidays which took him to many different places in the years between 1969 and 1980. David also rang in four silent & non-conducted peals – Plain Bob Royal with a Rotherham local band, Cambridge Major and two peals of Spliced Surprise Major.

David also served as an officer of the Sheffield & District Branch of the Association – as a committee member from 1976 to 1979, Assistant Secretary from 1979 to 1983 and Secretary from 1983 to 1986.

In addition to ringing, David became involved in Scouting through his son's joining the movement and later all his children joining. He and his wife, Helen, were happy to transport equipment to camp sites and set up camp. He became treasurer to the local Scout Group and worked with Helen in the administration of the camping ground.

He was above all a family man, devoted to Helen, their children and grandchildren. I know he will be missed by all who knew him.

Neil Donovan

[David is at the extreme left on the black & white photograph in the Winter 2010/11 edition of the Newsletter, which was taken at Beverley in 1966 – Ed]

Fraser Mack

Fraser was born in Leeds in 1944. He was taught to ring in the early 1960s at Leeds Parish Church by Ronald Dove and rang 10 peals for the Yorkshire Association between 1962 and 1965.

After graduating from Liverpool University he took up employment with Plessey's in Liverpool and was for many years a member of the band at All Saints, Childwall.

Fraser's first wife died in 2001 and, after remarrying in 2006, he moved to Bakewell where he joined the band at Holy Trinity, Ashford in the Water.

Fraser died on 28 December 2010 aged 66 and a peal of Lincolnshire Surprise Major was rung in his memory at Tideswell by the Derby Diocesan Association on New Year's Day 2011.

Tony Stamp

Gravestone in Masham Churchyard

GEORGE THORNBERRY

Died 18 September 1810 aged 84 years

Here lies an old ringer
beneath the cold clay.
Who has rung many peals,
both to serious and gay.
Through Grand-Sire and Triples,
with ease he could range.
Till DEATH called his BOBB,
and brought round his
last Change.

Harry Winter

Harry Winter died whilst only in his 50s. Harry learnt to ring with his brother and sister in the late 60s/early 70s at Knaresborough. After University Harry moved to Ripon where he was an active member of the Cathedral band and a chorister. After leaving Ripon Harry moved to the Oxford area where he continued as both a ringer and chorister.

On a personal note it was Harry who really got me interested in ringing again when we moved from Tyneside to Teesside. At the time of the move I had rather lost interest in ringing when Harry rang me out of the blue asking if I would ring in a quarter of Stedman Caters at Whitby. I accepted and enjoyed the quarter so much that I got back into ringing with more enthusiasm.

Gerry Parsons

Sqr Ldr Ian James Mcdonald MA RAF (ret'd) – Ripon

Ian McDonald, born 1947, learnt to ring at Ripon Cathedral in 1999 in response to the 'Ring in the Millennium' Campaign. Following a distinguished career in the RAF he was looking for a hobby that challenged his intellect and appealed to his sense of tradition, so following a tour of the tower and bells at Ripon, he duly signed up. He was very interested in the 'hardware' and was a keen hands-on supporter of the augmentation to 12; he spent many long cold hours in the tower assisting the bell hangers during the project.

From the outset Ian enjoyed the social aspects of ringing, he was a pub regular after practice and rarely missed annual dinners and tours. He was a regular supporter of Cleveland and North Yorkshire Branch events, especially the monthly mid week Wednesday practices which he enjoyed. He was also an accomplished long distance walker and local historian which made him a very interesting travelling companion on ringing tours.

On leaving the RAF Ian had trained as an accountant so when the position of treasurer for the Cathedral bell ringers became vacant in 2001 Ian was a natural choice and he continued the role until his untimely death in October 2010.

Unfortunately Ian became ill in 2009 and his health gradually deteriorated and he was eventually diagnosed with cancer early in 2010. He delayed chemotherapy as he was determined to finish his OU degree in French that was nearing completion (regretfully not completed). His funeral was held at Ripon Cathedral and was well attended by representatives of the Ripon Cathedral band, the Yorkshire Association, the RAF as well numerous friends and family. The 12 bells were rung half muffled by Ian's many ringing friends prior to the service including some meticulous call changes – he would have approved.

Martin Davies

Revd. Peter Scholfield – Wakefield

Peter insisted that there be no eulogy at his funeral, nor any obituary in The Ringing World. This then is a brief factual summary of his ringing career with the YACR. He joined in 1956 and rang 133 peals for the Association and one for the Cleveland & North Yorkshire Association. He was secretary of the Central Branch for three years in the late 1970s. When he retired from active ministry he joined the band at Wakefield Cathedral. He died in October 2010.

Derek Johnston

Dates for your Diary

25 June	Final of the National 12-bell Striking Competition at Leeds
20 August	Life Members gathering at Hemingbrough
3 Sept.	White Rose Shield 12-bell Competition at Sheffield Cathedral
10 Sept.	Tower Maintenance Day in Central Branch
17 Sept.	General Meeting in Central Branch
15 Oct.	Snowdon Dinner in Bradford
29 Oct.	'Teaching the Teachers' Day at Tadcaster
4 Feb. 2012	General Meeting in Western Branch.

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Proposed Cuts to the National Health Service

The British Medical Association has weighed in on the new Prime Minister David Cameron's health care proposals.

The Allergists voted to scratch it, but the Dermatologists advised not to make any rash moves.

The Gastroenterologists had a sort of a gut feeling about it, but the neurologists thought the Administration had a lot of nerve.

The Obstetricians felt they were all labouring under a misconception.

Ophthalmologists considered the idea short-sighted.

Pathologists yelled, "Over my dead body!" while the Paediatricians said, "Oh, Grow up!"

The Psychiatrists thought the whole idea was madness, while the Radiologists could see right through it.

The Surgeons were fed up with the cuts and decided to wash their hands of the whole thing.

The ENT specialists didn't swallow it, and just wouldn't hear of it.

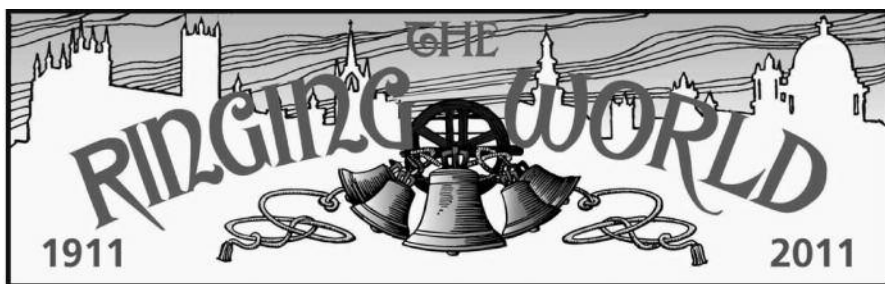
The Pharmacologists thought it was a bitter pill to swallow, and the Plastic Surgeons said, "This puts a whole new face on the matter...."

The Podiatrists thought it was a step forward, but the Urologists were *****d off at the whole idea.

The Anaesthetists thought the whole idea was a gas, but the Cardiologists didn't have the heart to say no.

In the end, the Proctologists won out, leaving the entire decision up to the *****s in London .

Dr Digby Burton, Skipton and Association Vice-President.



100 for RW 100

The Ringing World invites you to take part in the **'100 for RW100' Challenge**, setting and achieving targets based around the number 100, to mark the centenary of your newspaper.

Full details of the challenge can be found on the RW website at www.ringingworld.co.uk/centenary.

We are sure that there will be countless unusual ideas. When you have organised and held your event, write in to let us know and submit your entry to the **100 for RW100 Challenge**. The most innovative and original idea will win a prize.

You must complete your challenge before January 15th 2012. So get thinking and good luck.

The Ringing World, 35A High Street, Andover SP10 1LJ

01264 366 620 • 100forRW100@ringingworld.co.uk

www.ringingworld.co.uk/centenary

The Cleveland & North Yorkshire Association

This certificate hangs in Tadcaster ringing chamber. The words at the bottom say "Make thee two trumpets of Silver – And when they shall blow with them, all the congregation shall gather themselves unto thee. Numbers 10 – 1 & 3"

The C&NY Association merged with the Yorkshire Association in the later part of the 20th Century to become the C&NY Branch. An article on the Association's long life would be good for a future edition of the Newsletter.

