

UN TOWCH



North East Region Newsletter
November 1991

Issue 7

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear Friends and Ringers

The dark nights are here again, the wind and the rain and even the snow already. I always call the weeks around Christmas 'the silly season' because it is the time of year when everybody wants to hear handbell ringing. It's unfortunately also the time of year when colds and flu are on the rampage and we have to struggle to get to concerts. Teams are very lucky if they have spare ringers who can step into the breach when a concert ringer falls ill. I can certainly remember the times when I've gone ringing with my mum's words in my ears, "You shouldn't be out in your state!" That's a true Yorkshire expression.

However it's also the season of fun and happiness, leading up to Christmas itself. Next year we are hoping to organise for you a Christmas service in Selby Abbey on 5 December 1992. The aim is to celebrate Christmas in a church service where the music is provided by handbells. Details of the event will appear in this magazine next year.

I hope that you all have a busy season and that all your concerts are really enjoyable and successful, from both audience and ringers' point of view. On behalf of the Committee I wish you all a Happy Christmas and New Year.

HAZEL BRADEY
NORTH EAST REGION CHAIRMAN

TEAM UPDATE

In Edition 5 we asked for news of several teams which had not renewed their membership of the Handbell Ringers of Great Britain and we have now received the following information:

Rosalind Rogerson informs us that Western Hill was a series of teams in Durham which used her English Taylor handbells. When she left Durham in 1979 she took the bells to Sheffield with her and Western Hill died at that point. It is therefore well and truly defunct and unlikely to be resurrected under that name or in that format.

Rosalind also informs us that Broomhill Bells are reasonably alive but no one has paid a subscription. Rosalind is herself a member of more than one team and pays her subscription with the other team and has failed to persuade other Broomhill Bells members to pay up.

Rosalind also has some ideas about Cawthorne Young Lady, Knaresborough St John's, St Thomas a Becket School, The Chapter House Ringers, Silas' Irregulars, Knaresborough Juniors, Bradfield and Trinity HBR (Delius Team) though she doesn't say what those ideas are.

Mr and Mrs Hargreaves of Eastbrook Mission Handbell Ringers inform us that they were members of Girdlington Handbell Ringers during the 1960's and early 1970's. This team was led by Mr E E Froggat but they lost contact with the team. Mr Froggat died a number of years ago and the team disbanded. They also understand that Mr Froggat's widow disposed of the set of bells to someone in the North West Region.

Michael King of Ecclesfield School Handbell Ringers informs us that Chapelgreen no longer exist and haven't done so for 20 years. He also informs us that Burghwallis no longer exist either but their bells are still in the village.

BISHOP BURTON WEEKEND 1992

Following the success for the 1990 Weekend for Conductors, the National Executive has expressed a wish to hold a similar event in 1992.

The organisers will, once again, be Joan Engler and John Atkinson and it is proposed to hold a series of more specialised talks and seminars based on the experiences gained in 1990.

The dates are Friday 10 July to Sunday 12 July 1992. Details will be available both in Regional Newsletters and Reverberations in the New Year.

JOHN ATKINSON
COMMITTEE MEMBER

♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

BISHOP BURTON ENCOURAGEMENT

As a result of the Bishop Burton Weekend last year, we were encouraged to ask our local store (Binns) if we could ring Carols during the Christmas late night shopping. We were invited to play on the Wednesday evening and also on Saturday afternoon. The shop assistants were most kind and encouraging. The first place we were invited to play was Men's Underwear! Unfortunately this deadened the sound of the bells. A much better place proved to be at the bottom of the staircase facing a plate glass window. Not only could we be seen, but the sound of the bells rose to the roof and could be heard much more clearly. A donation from the store and gifts from passers-by raised some money for charity, but we felt the main gain was to put handbell ringing on the map!

PAT MEEK
BRIDLINGTON PRIORY HANDBELL RINGERS

TEAM PROFILE

TEAM NAME: Ecclesfield School

HIGH NO: 034

YEAR TEAM FORMED: 1964

NUMBER OF RINGERS: 12 + Leader

AGE RANGE OF RINGERS: 12-16 years

MAKE OF HANDBELLS: Whitechapel

AGE OF HANDBELLS: All re-cast in 1971; 2 newer bass ones in 1973 and 1990

NUMBER OF BELLS: 63

NUMBER OF OCTAVES: 5

LARGEST BELL (EG 25G): 31A#

MUSIC NOTATION: A number and letter style

STYLE OF RINGING (EG OFF-TABLE): Off-Table

TIME AND NIGHT OF PRACTICE(S): Days Monday to Friday 12.45-1.05 pm; also Tuesday or Wednesday 2.45-3.30 pm (school terms only)

WHERE PRACTICE(S) HELD: On the school premises

PAST ACTIVITIES: World Record for Long-Length Musical Tune Ringing in 1982 (52 hours), 1985 (56 hours), 1989 (60 hours). TV appearances on 'Record Breakers' 1986 and 'Opportunity Knocks' 1989. Numerous local area concerts but have been into Cheshire, Loughborough and Worksop. Regular School Concert every year since 1969 in which the handbells form the main item. Good rapport with Radio Sheffield.

FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES: Possibly one more World Record before the Leader retires! Otherwise, continuing with practices and concerts as per previous years, mainly in local area as and when required.

ANY OTHER COMMENTS: The disadvantage of a school team is the major change of personnel every three or four years but somehow recruits have always come forward. Another one is the hopes of the early retirement from teaching of the Leader of the team when, unless a keen handbell-ringing teacher joins the school's staff, both ringers and bells will be a feature of the past.

A CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

Readers of 'In Touch' will know that the North East Region Committee is proposing to hold a Christmas Celebration of Handbells in 1992.

Original plans to hold the event in Wakefield Cathedral proved problematical but we are pleased to announce that permission has been granted for the Concert to be staged in Selby Abbey.

The date is 5 December 1992 and your Committee is presently drawing up a programme of music. Further details will be given as soon as possible. In the meantime, make a note in your diary!

JOHN ATKINSON
COMMITTEE MEMBER



CLASSIC COMPETITION - WIN £250

Mayola Music have published a collection of music for twelve handbells entitled 'Classical Favourites' arranged by Guy Ratcliffe. The collection comprises Saint Anthony Chorale; Ode to Joy from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony; La Donna e Mobile from Verdi's Rigoletto; Grand March from Aida; The Birdcatcher's Song from The Magic Flute; Humoresque by Dvorak; Bach in the Belfry - Medley; Never Weather-Beaten Sail by Camplan; Hornpipe from Handel's Water Music and Honnye Hill Suite by Ratcliffe.

Mayola Music is so enthusiastic about this new collection that they are sponsoring a competition.

Any team, regardless of size, can enter the competition free by submitting a cassette tape with three pieces from the collection. The standard of recording will not be a factor in the judging. The prize is £250 with a separate Junior prize of £250 if all ringers are 16 or below.

To be entered in the competition, cassettes must be submitted before the end of January 1992.

Full details of the competition have been circulated to each team.

♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

HRGB SILVER JUBILEE MUSIC COMPETITION

Congratulations to Vic Cox who took second place in the HRGB Music Competition.

Vic's original composition 'Bosley Minn' was placed in the 'Two Octave and Under' category which attracted 13 entries.

Another regional member, Pat Brennan, was placed in third position in the 'Two to Four Octaves' section with his evocative composition 'The Ruined Church of St Thomas a Becket'. A most creditable result. Well done, Pat!

A total of 42 entries were received in support of the competition covering a wide variety of styles and moods.

Well done to all who had the courage to take part!

JOHN ATKINSON
COMMITTEE MEMBER

♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

HARROGATE MUSIC FESTIVAL

The Harrogate Music Festival will be held over the weekends 6/8 March, 13/15 March and 20/22 March 1992. The handbell class is planned for the evening of Saturday 7 March but may be changed to the evening of Saturday 14 March if the number of entries is too low.

There are two handbell classes. The details are:

Class 107 - Handbell Ringing Bands (Under 13) - Wait Shield (Limited to 3½ octaves of bells)

Own choice of music, not to exceed 10 minutes

Class 108 - Handbell Ringing Bands (Open) - Vera Broadburn Cup

(a) Own arrangement of The Harmonious Blacksmith by Handel with one variation OR The Ash Grove (Trad); and

(b) Own choice(s)

the whole programme not to exceed 15 minutes.

The adjudicator will be John Cooke. He is the Northern Commissioner for the Royal School of Church Music. He has conducted choirs and led summer schools in Australia, New Zealand, North America and the Benelux countries. He is an examiner for the Associated Board, adjudicator and regular broadcaster and is the Director of the RSCM Northern Cathedral Singers.

Entry fee for groups:	by 1 January	by 17 January
Up to four performers	£3.50	£4.00
Five to ten performers	£4.50	£5.00
Over ten performers	£8.00	£8.50

Entry forms available from Mr K S Burton, 6 Old Trough Way, Harrogate, HG1 3DE (tel 0423 569907). Please send SAE.

Completed entry forms plus a cheque payable to 'Harrogate Competitive Music Festival' to be sent to Mrs J Watkins, 7 Woodside, Harrogate, HG1 5NG (tel 0423 565240).

Copies of the syllabus from Mr M J M Annett, 3 Rossett Drive, Harrogate, HG2 9NS.

Note: A copy of your music will be required by the adjudicator which must be sent well before the day. It

is your responsibility to ensure that copyright requirements are adhered to.

Other rules are listed in the syllabus.

VIC COX
COMMITTEE MEMBER

♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

RALLY REPORT

Autumn 1991

On 2 November 1991 nine teams from throughout the region met in Otley for the Autumn Rally.

The teams who attended were: Beverley Town Handbell Ringers, Eastbrook Mission, Ecclesfield Handbell Ringers, Otley Handbell Ringers, Society of Seacroft Handbell Ringers, Thurlstone Bell Orchestra, Treble Eight Ringers, Trinity (Idle) Elgar Team and Trinity, Ripon.

The Rally was opened by Hazel Bradey, the Regional Chairman, who also compered it along with Roger Lazenby, the National Secretary. The massed ringing pieces were 'Come to the Fair!' and 'A Great and Mighty Wonder' and these were rang at the beginning of the rally and at two other sessions. Otley Handbell Ringers had the honour of opening the team ringing session and the piece of music they chose was called 'John Brown's Body'.

During the afternoon there was a workshop entitled 'How can I get more from my ringing?' which was suitable for teams of up to three octaves. Whilst the workshop was taking place there was some ad hoc ringing from those not attending the workshop. This meant that ringers from the larger teams rang with the smaller teams who had ringers attending the workshop.

The Annual General Meeting was held during the afternoon when the Regional Committee was elected. The officers elected are as follows:

Chairman - Hazel Bradey (Ecclesfield Handbell Ringers)
Secretary - Joan Engler (Beverley Town Handbell Ringers)
Treasurer - John Atkinson (Beverley Town Handbell Ringers)
Committee Members - Caroline Barker (Clifton Village Ringers); Jenny Brabham (Eastbrook Mission); Vic Cox (Dronfield); Edna Sinclair (Trinity (Idle) Elgar Team) and Ken Sinclair (Trinity (Idle) Elgar Team)
Executive Committee Representatives - John Atkinson (Beverley Town Handbell Ringers) and Vic Cox (Dronfield)

♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

NORTH-NORTH EAST REGION WORKSHOP - SEDGEFIELD 6 JUNE 1992

After some discussion, it was decided that teams based in the north of our Region should be invited to say what they would like and expect from a one-day handbell ringing workshop. Information has already been sent out with a request for teams to express their interest and suggest suitable topics. The workshops will be open to other regional teams when the Committee has more details of numbers likely to attend.

It is hoped to provide workshops for in-hand and off-table teams and to include advice and discussion on practical ringing techniques and choice/simple arranging of music.

If you have not already returned your initial invitation please do so as soon as possible so that your opinion can be taken into consideration. If your team, or some members, would be interested in the workshops but have not yet received details, further information can be obtained by sending an SAE to: Mr H Mottram, Sedgefield Handbell Ringers, 38 Whitehouse Drive, Sedgefield, Cleveland, TS21 3BX.

JOAN ENGLER
COMMITTEE MEMBER

LETTER TO THE EDITORS

Dear Editors

I would like to comment on Vic Cox's piece 'A Christmas Celebration', in the August issue of 'In Touch', in which he gives advance notice of the Region's planned 1992 Christmas event at Selby Abbey.

He says 'I hope I have not made it sound as though this is an elitist event.' It is an unfortunate fact of life, I think, that many people who are not very good at something think that those who are are 'the elite' and, in some circles, have even formed a seemingly impenetrable clique.

Cliques I don't like, but as for the 'elite', I think that if this word has to exist at all, it should stand for something we should all aim for in order to raise our standards.

I detect a slight note of apology in Vic Cox's remark, quoted above, but there is nothing wrong with expecting performers at a concert to be good - excellent, even. No one should think of the performers chosen as 'the elite', but merely as teams who have practised enough and are proficient enough to take part - who are professional enough, if you want to go that far.

Vic Cox emphasises that those teams who want to take part in this event must be of a certain standard, which is right - but I emphasise: let no one think of the people who have attained this standard as 'the elite' and therefore somehow separated from 'the rest of us' (which is what the term elite implies).

If we have the talent and the determination, we can all be 'the elite', then the word will have no meaning in handbell ringing circles because we are all in that class! Anyway, what is an 'elitist' event? It isn't the performers themselves who describe themselves as elite (or I hope not) but rather other handbell ringers who watch and listen to them. I repeat - they aren't any more elitist than you or I. They're just very good in what they do, just as we can be if we want to.

Yours faithfully

SHELAGH BROWN

EDITOR, EAST ANGLIA REGION NEWSLETTER

BELLS AT FOUNTAINS

The Dronfield Handbell Ringers took part in one of a series of 'Choirs by Floodlight' concerts held in Fountains Abbey during the months of August, September and October.

These concerts are held either in the cloisters or the cellarium depending on the time of year and the weather. Our concert was on 12 October, the night was dark and cool so we were in the cellarium. This is the first part of the Abbey you come to when you approach the building across the grass from the main entrance. It is the long low section with the magnificent stone vaulted roof. The accoustics are superb.

The title of the series implies 'choirs' and a glance at the programme for the season confirms this. There are choirs from all over the North of England and even one from London. So prestigious is the venue that choirs apply for available dates over a year in advance - all the dates for 1992 are taken already - and all give their services free for the benefit of the National Trust.

We were there through our association with the St Lawrence Singers, a small choir originally from Pudsey, near Leeds, but now drawing its members from as far afield as Nottingham and Manchester. The Singers specialise in church music, motets and madrigals and their reputation has brought in invitations to sing in most of the Cathedrals in the Midlands and the North.

Our previous performances with the choir had been at East Riddlesden Hall, near Keighley, also a National Trust property. These performances had been rather more informal than the Fountains Abbey concert, but the combination of choir and bells had been a great attraction.

The choice of programme needed some careful thought. This was not the usual WI meeting, but a performance with a very professional-sounding choir to a knowledgeable

audience who had paid a not inconsiderable sum for the privilege of listening to us.

We decided to play music we enjoyed and which demonstrated the variety of musical styles possible on a small number of bells, 27 in our case.

Most teams will know the problem of starting a performance. Generally it takes one or two pieces before you have settled down, gained some confidence and warmed up the bells. You can't do this when sharing the bill with a choir - there's not enough playing time. We partially overcame the problem by arranging a practice in Fountains Abbey during the hour before the concert started. We also chose an opening piece we all knew very well and were confident of playing. Finally we 'warmed up' by carrying the bells across what seemed like a mile of grass from the main entrance to the Abbey itself.

The setting for the concert was wonderful. The Abbey was beautifully floodlit and over 300 people settled down to listen, and listen they did - no shuffling or coughing during the playing.

The choir opened with a selection of Tutor anthems and motets. It gave the concert a rather serious start, but the audience were very warm in their appreciation of the beautiful sounds they heard.

Our opening item was 'Morning' from the Peer Gynt Suite by Edward Grieg. The reception was tremendous - I don't know what the audience expected, but they obviously enjoyed it very much if the applause was anything to go by. After that we felt very confident and relaxed and never looked back. We completed our first session with 'Allemande' from the French Suite No 2 by J S Bach and 'In a Persian Market' by Albert Ketelby.

The singers were now into their less serious songs with arrangements of folk songs and English romantic part songs - all unaccompanied.

Our second session opened with our own arrangement of 'Summertime' from Porgy and Bess by George Gershwin - an arrangement which has given us some trouble in the past but which now responded to some hard work in rehearsal.

We completed our performance with the quiet, contrasting, ethereal piece 'Gnossienne No 2' by Eric Satie and an arrangement of the once popular piano 'lollipop', 'Rustle of Spring' by Christian Sinding.

A selection of madrigals from the choir and the concert was over. The audience were wonderful and showed their enthusiasm in the time-honoured way. Many came to see the bells, talk to the ringers and singers and express their thanks for an enjoyable evening. There were visitors from the USA, Europe and Australia as well as more local people so we hope we have extended the love of handbell ringing into new territory.

There was just time for a coffee in Fountains hall with the singers and National Trust staff before setting off for home feeling very satisfied with an occasion which had far exceeded our expectations.

VIC COX
DRONFIELD HANDBELL RINGERS

♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

The views and opinions expressed in letters, reports and articles in this newsletter are those of the writers and are not necessarily shared by the HRGB Executive Committee, North East Region Committee or the Editors.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

1992

31 January	Closing date for Classic Competition
7 or 14 March	Harrogate Music Festival
3/5 April	Weekend Rally, Lancaster
16 May	Regional Rally, Grassington
6 June	Workshop, Sedgfield
10/12 July	Bishop Burton Weekend
29 July onwards	International Symposium, Canada
5 December	Christmas Celebration, Selby Abbey

1994

28 July onwards	International Symposium, Australia
-----------------	------------------------------------

J J J J J J J

This is the seventh edition of 'In Touch' and we are still struggling to get articles. In the North East Region there are 55 teams and 229 members so we should be able to get lots of articles but so far we have only heard from a handful of people. We are very grateful to the following who have submitted articles:

John Atkinson (Beverley Town Handbell Ringers)(12 articles)
Hazel Bradey (Ecclesfield Handbell Ringers)(12 articles)
Roger Lazenby (Treble Eight Ringers)(4 articles)
Gillian Levitt (Beverley Town Handbell Ringers)(1 article)
Anne Hopley (Kinder Ringers, North West Region)(1 article)
Joan Engler (Beverley Town Handbell Ringers)(4 articles)
Tom Foster (Selby Abbey Handbell Ringers)(3 articles)
Caroline Barker (Clifton Village Handbell Ringers)(3 articles)
Derek Gordon (Beverley Town Handbell Ringers)(2 articles)
A Nonymous (North West Region)(1 article)

Barbara Rastrick (Trinity Handbell Ringers (Elgar Team))(1 article)
Judith Hazelhurst (Hessle Handbell Ringers)(1 article)
Michael King (Ecclesfield School Handbell Ringers)(1 article)
Christine Lazenby (Treble Eight Ringers)(1 article)
Vic Cox (Dronfield Handbell Ringers)(1 article)
Elizabeth Coles (Beverley Town Handbell Ringers)(1 article)
Shelagh Brown (Editor, East Anglia Region)(1 article)
Pat Meek (Bridlington Priory Handbell Ringers)(1 article)
Joan Speak (Market Weighton Handbell Ringers)(1 article)

You will see that we have received articles from 16 people within the Region and three outside the Region. This does not represent a very large proportion of the membership and we would like to hear from more of you.

As you will see, one of our contributors has been Tom Foster from the Selby Abbey Handbell Ringers. Those of you who know Tom will be aware that he has been awaiting an operation to replace both his hip joints. We are now pleased to report that he has had the operation and is feeling much better. In fact, he is now four inches taller than he was before he had the operation and is looking forward to being able to make the odd appearance at a team practice and letting us know what the team is up to.

Why don't you let us know what your team is doing - even if it's only to tell us about some amusing incident at a rehearsal - or tell us about your concerts/public appearances. The article can be short or long, amusing or serious - it really doesn't matter as long as you tell us about it.

If you attend a rally, let us know your views on whether it was good or bad - don't leave the writing of a review to the Editor.

We still need someone to review new pieces of music. Despite previous appeals no one has offered to do this for us. We have three pieces awaiting review - 'Theme

from Symphony No 1' by Johannes Brahms, 'Lysbeth with a Y' by Malcolm Wilson and 'Variations on a Highland Cradle Song' also by Malcolm Wilson. If you are interested in reviewing any or all of these pieces please contact us without delay.

We have received news about some of the teams which have not renewed their membership with HRGB and we are grateful to all those who have contacted us with details. There are, however, still quite a few teams we have not heard about and we would like to hear from anyone who has any details.

If you have any articles for publication please send them to: C Gilchrist and A Ford, Editors, 'In Touch', c/o 15 Mill Drive, Leven, BEVERLEY, North Humberside, HU17 5NR. The last date for receipt of articles for the next edition is 7 February 1992. We look forward to hearing from you.

All that remains is for us to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year - but don't forget to keep 'in touch'.

Claine, Anderson.

Kall-Kwik Printing

Many Thanks on behalf of the North East Region must go to Kall-Kwik of Hull who printed and sponsored this edition of "IN TOUCH".



Just a quick call away

LETTERHEADS - PROGRAMMES
TICKETS - BROCHURES
LEAFLETS - PHOTOCOPYING
DESIGN - ARTWORK

Kall-Kwik Printing
The Woollen Warehouse
South Church Side
Hull HU1 1RR
Tel: (0482) 586487/8
Fax: (0482) 586489