

Handbell Ringers of Great Britain - Registered Charity No. 298945 (England) and SC038918 (Scotland)

North East Region eNews Issue 13 – November 2017

Dear Friends

As we were about to go to press with this edition of e-News I was saddened to hear that Colin Beevers, a past member of Ecclesfield Handbell Ringers, passed away recently. Colin was a member of what was affectionately known as “Ecclesfield A” so was perhaps not known to many current members. However, I remember with great affection the support and encouragement we received in the formative days of Beverley Town from Colin as indeed we received from many members of the Ecclesfield team at the time.

We approach the end of November and very soon the 50th anniversary celebrations marking the founding of HRGB will be part of our rich history. What a year it has been both nationally and, of course, our own celebrations in the North East Region.



It has been my privilege, along with Claire, Andrew, Tom, Christine and Roger, to visit each of the mini rallies and what a pleasure it has been for us all. Each event has been everything I could have wished for. Good ringing and that rare opportunity to have special time to chat to you all. The mini rallies together with our autumn birthday rally in Sheffield have seen a wonderful number of teams turn out to mark this important birthday. My thanks to you all!

I take this opportunity to specially thank those team leaders, and their teams, who took responsibility for arrangements for all the rallies; to Claire and Andrew who attended with HRGB sales; Andrew for being our “official” Teddy” photographer; to Tom for his energetic assistance and to Roger and Christine for their compère and archive contributions and guidance to teams leading up to the rallies.

We intend to arrange a photographic display at Grassington reflecting on a wonderful year.

Of course, time does not stand still and we have excellent contributions in this latest edition of e-News. A great article about the newly formed Dewsbury Ringers and the discovery of their historic set of handbells; four reflections on 50th birthday rallies; a reflection on the life of the late John Nixon (Bingley Ringers); the discovery of an early publication about the history of the famous Crosland Moor handbell ringers and a “publicity shot” of an equally famous handbell group – Dronfield.

Christine reflects on the special birthday of Dorothy from Bolsterstone Handbell Ringers and gives us a gentle push towards 2018 – the National Rally at Harper Adams University and the International Symposium in Australia.

2018 will soon be here but, in the meantime, I am sure you will all have seasonal performances before Christmas and, if you have, may I take this opportunity to wish you well in all you do, have a good Christmas and New Year and.....my best wishes to you all.

John Atkinson
North East Region Chairman

Notes from the Regional Secretary



Thank you all for taking part in our Golden Jubilee celebrations. It has been good to meet so many teams and individuals at the Autumn Rally and the mini-rallies that have taken place.

The Golden Jubilee Teddy has just about completed his journey through the Region – many thanks to all who have helped him on his way. We have some lovely photos which we hope to make into a permanent record of the year. Don't forget that there is still time to request a visit from the Ted if you have any particular event that you would like him to attend!

Bookings are now being taken for the 2018 National Rally, which is being hosted by the West Midlands Region this year, and if you feel like venturing even further, there is the Symposium in Cairns, Australia next year too.

It will be the North East Region's turn to host the National Rally in 2020 and your committee are already thinking about possible venues.

Liversedge Links

Looking back at some of the first editions of Reverberations, we were interested to find not one, but two connections to the Region's Liversedge bells.

The first was not immediately anything to do with the Liversedge bells – it was amongst reports from early teams and was about a team at Shrivenham in Wiltshire. It described the bells and activities of the team and went on to say “Four bells are normally rung by each member of the team but in exceptional circumstances this may be raised to five each – the fifth being supported at the handle by the ankles and rung by an appropriate foot movement.....!”

What is the connection with the Liversedge bells? The article was written by R T Irish (a founder member of HRGB) who now rings with the Glendale team in Wooler – and they have the Liversedge bells on loan. Mr Irish wasn't with the team when they came to the Wylam Mini-Rally – the team were short of ringers but very sensibly asked for volunteers to help them ring their pieces, rather than use the ‘Shrivenham method’!

The second link was an article by Geoff Lee about the Spen Valley Senior Scout Handbell Ringers – it was of course Geoff's widow who gifted the Liversedge bells to the Region. Geoff describes how the Scouts turned to handbell ringing after “a rather disastrous attempt at entertaining the elderly people in the district by singing carols”. They started with ten bells borrowed from their local church and were given more, including “some from a church bell tower – complete with birds' nests, moths and stagnant water in some”! They ended up with 140 bells, some unplayable, but repaired about 5½ octaves (some 80 bells in total). Geoff's article ends by saying that the changes in structure to the Scout Movement meant that the team was down to five members, but there was an interest in handbells at the local Secondary school and he was hoping to start a team there using the bells.

What happened to the bells between September 1968 when that article was written and when they were gifted to the Region? Did they get used by the school, or did the Scout group reform? Can anyone fill in the gaps?



It has been confirmed that the next year's "Summer Ring" will take place on Tuesday 12 June 2018 at St. Chads, Far Headingley, Leeds – further details will be released or contact Christine – christine.lazenby@hrgb.org.uk

Christine Lazenby
North East Region Secretary

Dewsbury Handbells Ring Out Again

After numerous years of many handbells being kept in banana boxes in Dewsbury Minster, now we have a team ringing regularly.

The original Dewsbury handbell ringers used to ring in handbell contests at Belle Vue in Manchester and did extremely well, coming first several times. In 1889 they bought a new set of 186 bells from James Shaw in Bradford. War forced the team to disband and the bells were no longer used. They were sent for scrap but rescued. Some have disappeared but 123 were found in 2009 at the Minster.

How did I find myself running the Dewsbury Handbell Ringers?
Blame the 2012 Olympics!

Artist Martin Creed's Work No. 1197 asked that as many bells as possible to ring for the official Olympic Opening Ceremony at 8.12 am for three minutes. Our home tower is Dewsbury Minster and we live near Pontefract. A long way to travel to ring Tower bells for three minutes at a ridiculously early hour! We had come across some tatty banana boxes of handbells, in poor condition in the layer above the ringing chamber.

We decided to involve the local community by having handbells ringing out at the front of the Minster, with the Tower bells. The handbells were sorted out and we kept an octave on one side for possible later restoration. That still left us with over 100 bells to use. We set about getting publicity and "Look North" came to film us in action. The Dewsbury Town Crier came to along with some of his bells and said we should be collecting money for something. After a quick word with the Rector to see if we could raise some money to get some handbells restored, out came a container and we collected our first £85.

We looked at the idea of applying for grants but we kept getting negative responses. There were plenty of offers to help fund new sets of handbells but we didn't want any more, we wanted to preserve the heritage of those we had! At the Ringing Roadshow 2010 I had picked up a business card from Alan Collings, who restores Shaw's handbells. It had been filed away, in case of need one day. We didn't know how much we needed to raise. The bell foundry said they needed to inspect the bells at a price per bell which would be taken off the cost if they did the work. I spent ages trying to get through to them that I needed a rough idea of cost so I knew how much money we needed to raise. In the end, when I gave them the note and diameter of the largest bell, I was told as a rough guide a new set that size would be £6000 and it would be about half that. Well £3000 seemed an awful lot to raise but we had made a start. That filed business card certainly came in handy. Derek made the phone call to Alan Collings to ask about charges for restoration work. I was listening in and when I heard "£40 a bell, whatever the size, and new straps, anything else that was needed" I did a rapid calculation and realized we could get 19 bells restored! We didn't need £3000 after all.

In November 2015 we happened to be going over to Germany to visit Christmas markets. We took the bells down to Battle (Sussex) on our way to the Tunnel crossing. They were ready for our return a couple of weeks later in a purpose made box. He was shocked they had been kept in banana boxes and delighted that we were going to ring them for Christmas. I think our bells were given high priority for restoration.

The handbell group was launched. I don't have a musical background but I have ended up with the job of leading the group and writing the music out in numbers on a spreadsheet. It took a few tries before I found a format the team could follow easily.

Christmas morning our beautiful shiny bells were blessed and we played the melody for three carols. Our Honorary Curate Revd Elizabeth Lee said it added so much to the service for her.

In February 2016 our fundraising reached a point where we could afford another six bells to be restored.

Now we have 25 bells, two chromatic octaves. Producing new music using the templates set up on my computer it doesn't take long. Our repertoire is varied and includes Nursery Rhymes, Hymns, Folk and even a touch of Beethoven.



Members of the team come from several different churches in Dewsbury. It is only recently that we decided to have special polo shirts to make us look more professional. Revd Kathy Robertson was leaving our Team Parish and she asked for the handbells to ring in her final service. We arranged to have the Western 50th Anniversary Bear to sit on our ringing table in pride of place.

Now we are moving through the Harvest season and looking towards our Christmas ringing. Last year "Little Donkey" was our favourite piece. Maybe this year we will find a tune we enjoy playing even more. Onwards and upwards we go.

We practice on most Friday teatimes, 5:30 to 6:30, a most convenient time, and visitors are always welcome.

Ronalda Johnstone
Dewsbury Handbell Ringers

Joint Birthdays for Bolsterstone Handbell Ringers

The Golden Jubilee Teddy Bear was invited to accompany the Bolsterstone Handbell Ringers to a very special celebration in October.

It was the 80th Birthday party for their conductor, Dorothy. Also pictured with Dorothy and Ted is Brenda, who was celebrating her 89th birthday on the same day. Brenda started the team in the 1980s and still arranges their music.

Christine Lazenby
North East Region Secretary





50th Anniversary Mini Rally - Saturday 2nd September 2017

What another fantastic day of ringing!!

Today was the second of the four “50th Birthday Mini Rallies” for the North East Region. This event was hosted by the Glendale ringers in the north of the region, Wylam.

The morning started off with each team introducing themselves and then showcasing pieces from their own repertoire.

Tyne Valley – Peal ringing (Plain hunt on 6), “Dream Angus”, “Lambtom Worm” (audience singing), “Dance to the Daddy”, “Heddon on the Wall”

Silver Chimes – “Glockenspiel”, “Slade Song”, “Inisheer Waltz”

Bells Up – “Scarborough Fair”, Pachelbel’s “Canon”

Glendale – “Jupiter Theme, I Vow to Thee my Country”

Teams then joined together in ringing several massed ringing pieces: - “Show me the way to Wallington”, “Birthday Celebration”, “The Keel Row” and “Northumberland”.

We then broke for lunch with some members staying put and some exploring the lovely village and what it had to offer.

The afternoon started with another practice of the massed ringing followed by more team ringing.

Tyne Valley – “Bobbie Shafto”, “Bonnie at Morn”, “Sweet as Sugar Candy”, “Canny Wylam”

Silver Chimes – Repeated the same pieces played in the morning session

Bells Up – “Theme” from “The New World Symphony”, “On Ilkley Moor”

Glendale – “Can Can”, “Jesu Joy of Man’s Desiring”, “Rule Britannia”

Newburn & Throckley – “Ring out the Bells”

After a lovely day of ringing we all then sang “Happy Birthday” and enjoyed some lovely refreshments with a slice of birthday cake.

Fabulous music making by great people under one roof, what more could you want.



Thomas Baker

Beverley Town Handbell Ringers



North East Region Golden Jubilee Rally. 7th October, 2017

Holy Trinity, Sheffield were the hosts for this auspicious event in the Regional calendar.

Fifty years to the day since the formation of Handbell Ringers of Great Britain at a Rally in Ashton-under-Lyne, ten teams from the North East Region gathered at St. John’s Church Hall, Abbeydale, Sheffield to celebrate with a day of ringing, reminiscing – and birthday cake!

The teams that attended ranged from a team that was present at the original Rally to one that had joined HRGB in relatively recent years, ringing sets of bells ranging from a 5 octave ‘long set’ to just eight bells.



Teams attending were Holy Trinity Sheffield, Ecclesfield, Beverley Town, Clifton, Stannington, Dronfield, Broomhill and members of Bradfield, Holy Trinity Messingham and Treble Eight, who formed a combined team. Some teams rang tunes with a 'golden' association, or ones that they had rung or heard rung at early Rallies.

The Massed Ringing was conducted by our Regional Chairman, John Atkinson. The pieces used were the three Golden Jubilee competition winners – Polaris, Dance Suite for Bells and Three for the Road – plus Birthday Celebration, arranged by Margaret Cunnington of the Northallerton Handbell Ringers.

The hall had been beautifully decorated to reflect the Golden Jubilee theme and several teams had brought along scrapbooks and

memorabilia to share. Snippets from past issues of Reverberations relevant to the Region were interspersed with the announcing of teams.

Graham (Scott), a member of the Beverley team, had made and decorated two beautiful birthday cakes, which were cut by Hazel Bradey, Molly Barker and Maureen Dewhirst who had been present at the rally in 1967. The cake was enjoyed along with a glass of prosecco, kindly provided by our Chairman.



Christine Lazenby
North East Region Secretary



Mini Rally at Sowerby Bridge – Hosted by the Ryburn Ringers



On Saturday 28th October we hosted the West/Central area mini rally to celebrate the 50th anniversary of HRGB at St Paul's Methodist Church in Sowerby Bridge. We were joined by teams of ringers from Clifton Village, Treble Eight, Bingley, Grassington and Ripon and, of course, we welcomed John, Claire with her merchandise and Andrew with his camera. We persuaded John to lead the proceedings and conduct the Massed Ringing!

For the Massed Ringing we decided to use some of the music especially composed for the anniversary.

These were "Royal Birthday Celebration", "Three for the Road" and "Dance Suite for Bells". We also included "Waly, Waly", as we felt that many of the people would already have played the other pieces at rallies recently. Each team also played three pieces during the day and as the teams were of different sizes we had a good mixture of music. We finished by 3.15 pm so no one was too late home.

As we were a fairly small group it was a very informal affair with plenty of time to drink tea or coffee and to chat with other team members. A wonderful buffet lunch was provided by a café in Sowerby Bridge who raise money to help the homeless in our area.

Altogether it was a good musical and social day enjoyed by all.

Greta Pilgrim
Ryburn Handbell Ringers



Priory Handbell Ringers Rally Organise Anniversary Mini Rally

On Saturday 4th November the Priory Handbell Ringers organised a mini rally at Ganton Village Hall to celebrate 50 years of the Handbell Ringers Association. Seven teams from the Yorkshire area attended. There were about 50 ringers in all.

The teams were from:

St Mary's Church Messingham
Scarborough Town
Beverley Town
Market Weighton
Filey (two teams)
Priory Handbell Ringers

There were three sessions of massed ringing:

"Birthday Celebration" - This had been especially written for the occasion and was based on Elgar's "Pomp and Circumstance March no 4". It cleverly included the "Happy Birthday" tune.

"Dance Suite for Bells" - This was especially composed for the 50th Anniversary of the Handbell Ringers of Great Britain.

"Three for the Road" - A medley of well-known songs such as "It's a long way to Tipperary".

Then each group performed their own choices.



Priory Handbell choices were:

An arrangement of Gustav Holst's "In the Bleak Midwinter"

The hymn "How Great Thou Art"

We joined forces with Pat Meek's Filey team for "You raise me up"

I found the massed ringing magical: 'sounds and sweet airs that give delight'. It was so ethereal it resonated round the Hall.

The Priory Handbell Ringers gave very musical performances which were enchanting.

Why not come along and hear them at the Priory Handbell Coffee Morning Saturday 2nd December, 10 am until noon in Church Rooms. It's a great start to Christmas and raises money for the RNLI. Entry £1 including homemade mince pie.

Anthony Halford
Bridlington Priory Handbell Ringers

Tips for organising a Rally - (gained by experience of organising a rally at Wylam 2nd September 2017)

1. Pick a date bearing in mind clashes with events in the area and more widely. Some teams have a summer holiday break to follow school holidays.

2. Find a venue. Factors to consider are – Is there nearby parking/is there access to public transport? How many people do you expect to attend? Does the venue have tables and chairs available? What kitchen facilities are available?

You will need some set up and break down time before and after the event so bear this in mind when booking times.

3. Co-ordinate with the regional secretary to publicise the event. Include a request for contact details from teams attending and be prepared to nominate a named person as the key contact for your event with phone number, email and postal address details.

4. Make posters and flyers and distribute locally. Send to attending teams and non attending teams to encourage participation of individuals if not teams. Is contacting your local newspaper or other media appropriate? Consider using the opportunity to promote your team locally.

5. Choose massed ringing pieces. Take into account the skills of those attending ensuring there are both pieces to challenge the experienced and simpler pieces to include the novices. Send the music to the attending teams two to three weeks ahead of the event. Confirm who is prepared to conduct the pieces. Decide how long to allow for each team to ring.

6. Send a personal message of welcome to teams attending one to two weeks ahead and confirm the number of attendees and requirements for tables/chairs. Give information about catering - do you plan to offer lunches or can you direct people to local establishments for meals? If you plan to offer drinks/biscuits/cake make plans for how this will be achieved - manpower etc. Confirm any needs such as need for electrical supply for sales tables/display. Include information about how to find the venue and parking.

7. Work out a table plan for the attending teams in the venue and print out labels to show who is where. Work out a running order for the day being prepared to be flexible for people attending part of the day only or to take account of travel delays. Allow time for team ringing and massed ringing with a “concert performance” of massed ringing to close the event.

8. ON THE DAY

Put up posters/balloons/bunting to make the building easy to pick out for visitors unfamiliar with the area.

Set up the tables and chairs and label and give a copy of the programme for the day.

Have someone designated to welcome teams as they arrive and direct to where to set up.

Have warm drinks available as some will have travelled quite a distance to the event and will need refreshment before ringing.

Offer a form so teams can record what was played to make it easier to report on the event afterwards.

Have spare copies of massed ringing music available.

ENJOY YOUR DAY!

Sue Parker

Tyne Valley Handbell Ringers

Farewell to Tower and Hand Bell Ringer - John Nixon

In late summer 2015 a new person appeared, without announcement, at a Tuesday night tower bell practice. Little did we know then how significant a part of the ringing teams John Nixon would become, nor did we foresee how fond we would all become of him or how soon we would be saying our sad farewells following his death in early July this year. John was a very experienced ringer and brought over 63 years of ringing experience with him.

John came that evening to ring tower bells, but by the end of the evening, and after a visit to the pub, we also found out he rang handbells. So the very next evening, there he was at his first handbell practice! We were very grateful for his experience and commitment both as a tower bell ringer and as a handbell ringer.

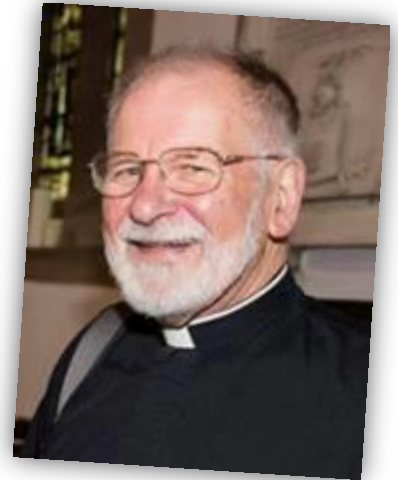
In just short of two years John supported the teams ringing for Sunday Services, weddings and other community events. One of his greatest pleasures was conducting the “Firing of the Bells” in October 2016 to celebrate the 200th Anniversary of the opening of the Leeds Liverpool Canal. This enabled John to combine two of his greatest interests; bell ringing and Canal and River Trust involvement. John’s retirement meant he was no longer involved in active church ministry and so he was also able to be a great support to the Handbell Team as they often rang during weekday afternoons to entertain people at various local retirement and care homes.

John had a confident and very pleasant character and was never backward in encouraging ringers to push the boundaries of what they were capable of in bell ringing terms. He also very quickly became involved in the social side of bell ringing life, be that tower or hand bells. John’s interests often matched that of other retired male ringers in the tower and their anecdotes of older men misbehaving on various “Industrial Archaeology” jaunts, often entertained us in the pub after ringing practice.

Below is our group’s photo with the Jubilee Bear in John’s arms which was taken at his last practice only a week before his death.

We felt it very fitting that not only did John’s funeral include a fulfilment of his wish for the tenor bell to be rung 79 times as his coffin was brought into All Saints; that is once for each year of his life, but it also included the theme tune from “Last of the Summer Wine”, enabling us to smile and remember the lighter side of our too brief relationship with him. He will be missed and remembered by both the tower and hand bell teams at All Saints.

Solna Burnham
Bingley Hand Bell Ringers



All items for the next issue of eNEws should be sent to - aford11@aford11.karoo.co.uk.

by 28 February 2018

Don't forget, if you are sending pictures or articles out of a newspaper or magazine, you will need to know the name and address of the newspaper or magazine as well as the date of publication.

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

Crosland Moor United Handbell Ringers

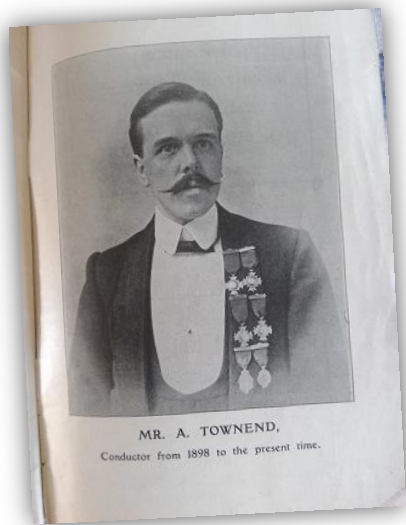
History & Wonderful Record – by James H Ellis, Hon. Secretary

Amazing things are found in the strangest of places. In the premises of Ramsey Clay, Painters and Decorators in Huddersfield town centre, a culling of part used paint tins was taking place. The building in Bath Street is an old one and some areas inside had not been fully cleared by previous occupants. Nathan Clay, the director, set to and tackled clearing the store. To his amazement, he came across one small booklet dating from the end of the 1800s and a thicker one from 1929-30. The small booklet is a record of the founding of The Crosland Moor United Handbell Ringers.



Mr James H Ellis, Hon Sec, compiled this booklet of 36 pages. Handbell tune ringing in Huddersfield probably goes back to the 1700s and earlier.

The band was formed in July 1890 by a group of five gentlemen, including Mr Thomas Cartwright, who wanted to provide an agreeable and useful occupation for the young men of the district. They put up the funds for the bells and all the trappings. Notices for young men to apply to learn to ring handbells went to Sunday Schools and a good response was had. However, they found handbell ringing was not as easy as they had anticipated. It required effort, perseverance, and constant practise. Quite a few gave up. The average age was 14, with the eldest being 15.



They threw themselves into learning and attending practices earnestly with Mr Thomas Cartwright as Conductor from 1890 to 1896. (Mr Cartwright was at one time Mayor of Huddersfield).

The band went out ringing on Christmas Day in 1890, following which they had blistered and sore hands but that didn't put them off at all. They rang for special occasions and events and the income from this paid the maintenance and replacement of the bells.

Mr Albert Townend was Conductor from 1898. He was a violin teacher and member of Huddersfield Philharmonic Society. His musical knowledge was the key to the success and fame of the Crosland Moor United band. The ringers became excellent and entered contests, in which they became famous. Their supporters travelled with the band to hear the contests and the home-coming after these contests was greeted by crowds of people at the station. Belle Vue contest was held every year and

Crosland Moor's band came first in 1901, 1902 and 1903. Having three consecutive wins, they were not allowed to enter in 1904 and their rivals known as Huddersfield Albert came first after being in second place in 1902 and 1903. In 1905 Crosland Moor United came first again. In 1906 they came first and got the silver cup in the Yorkshire Association contest.

James H Ellis

Dronfield Handbell Ringers

Our small hand bell group has been making music on hand bells for over 40 years. We are one of the foremost small hand bell groups in the country performing classical favourites, popular music and even jazz, and have a wide repertoire of Christmas music needed to fulfil the many engagements at that time of year.

Performances

Many of our concert performances have been with other groups, mainly choirs, but we also perform to clubs and associations where our compact size is suitable for relatively small rooms. The 2017 Christmas season will see us performing at Chatsworth House and Haddon Hall, amongst other venues.



Weddings

We welcome inquiries from couples and wedding organisers looking for a group to ring bells prior to and after the ceremony in places where traditional tower bells are not available. We can supply a musical interlude within the ceremony or at the reception afterwards.

Contact Enquiries for any of our services are welcome - Call for details -

Tel: 07884 954368

Email: dronfieldhbr@aol.com

Website: www.dronfieldbells.co.uk

For the full article including video clips follow the link -

<http://www.derbyshiregazette.co.uk/ringing-the-bells-in-dronfield/>

Forthcoming Events

2018

Saturday 27 January - Northern Bell Orchestra - Rehearsal - Ashover Parish Hall.

Further details contact Judy Gees - hsocello@btinternet.com

Saturday 24 February - Northern Bell Orchestra - Rehearsal - Ashover Parish Hall.

Further details contact Judy Gees - hsocello@btinternet.com

Saturday 24 March - Northern Bell Orchestra - Rehearsal - Ashover Parish Hall.

Further details contact Judy Gees - hsocello@btinternet.com

Saturday 14 April - Northern Bell Orchestra - Rehearsal - Ashover Parish Hall.

Further details contact Judy Gees - hsocello@btinternet.com

Saturday 12 May – Spring Rally & AGM – Grassington, further details will be released or contact Christine –

christine.lazenby@hrgb.org.uk

Saturday 19 May - Northern Bell Orchestra - Rehearsal - Ashover Parish Hall.

Further details contact Judy Gees - hsocello@btinternet.com

Saturday 9 June - Northern Bell Orchestra - Concert in Ruskington

Further details contact Judy Gees - hsocello@btinternet.com

Tuesday 12 June – ‘Summer Ring’ – St. Chads, Far Headingley, Leeds – further details will be released or contact Christine – christine.lazenby@hrgb.org.uk

Saturday 30 June - Northern Bell Orchestra - Concert in Southport

Further details contact Judy Gees - hsocello@btinternet.com

Saturday 7 July - Northern Bell Orchestra - Rehearsal - Ashover Parish Hall.

Further details contact Judy Gees - hsocello@btinternet.com