



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

North East Region eNews Issue 4 – June 2015

Dear Friends

Welcome to our June eNews.

I am writing my Chairman's Welcome on the 21st June 2015 – the official first day of summer but you really wouldn't believe it! I am sure we all live in hope for some fine, warm weather before the nights start to pull in!

Since our last e-News we have held our Spring Rally and AGM at Grassington, once again. The event was, as usual, well attended and we were particularly pleased to welcome the new Chairman of HRGB. Christine gives a brief report on the AGM and a visit to the region website *Gallery* will enable you to view a selection of photos of the event.

We were also pleased to welcome Beth Vowles (Grassington) and Peter Fawcett to the position of Honoured Member. Their citations are included in this edition of e-News.

A very enjoyable concert by the Northern Bell Orchestra was held in May and pictures can be viewed in the website *Gallery*.

Treble 8 ringers acted as hosts for the region "Summer Ring". A very pleasant and relaxing evening was enjoyed by the 50 + ringers who joined in a well chosen selection of pieces capable of being rung "at sight". Well done to all who supported the event and to Christine and Roger Lazenby for making the arrangements.

The NEC continues to look at advancing recruitment of young ringers and engaging with education authorities and, of course, looking toward 2017; the Golden Jubilee of HRGB

Looking to the future it is with pleasure, on behalf of Beverley Town Handbell Ringers, that I invite members to visit Beverley on 17th October 2015. Our theme will be "Christmas Comes Early" and we hope that this rally will offer an opportunity to hear a selection of Christmas repertoire! Details will be circulated soon but please book that date in your diary **NOW!**

I look forward to seeing many of you at Beverley and send my best wishes to you all!

John Atkinson
North East Region Chairman

Notes from the Regional Secretary

AGM report.

The Regional AGM was held during the Grassington Rally on May 9th.

The Regional Officers were re-elected, as were the current committee with the exception of Kathy Smith, our Junior Representative, who wished to stand down. There were no nominations for Junior Representative so this position is still vacant – if you think you may be able to help then please have a chat with me or Kathy to find out what it entails.

Andrew Ford did not wish to stand as NEC Representative for a further year. Christine Lazenby was elected as NEC Representative.

The North East Region Committee for 2015 is:

Chairman and NEC Rep – John Atkinson

Secretary and NEC Rep – Christine Lazenby

Treasurer and Webmaster – Andrew Ford

Committee Members – Hazel Bradey, Solna Burnham, Helen Foley, Margaret Ibbetson, Rachel Schoon.

Many thanks are due to Kathy and Andrew for their work in their roles as Committee Member and Junior Representative and NEC Representative.

Notes from the National Executive Committee meeting

Crescendo Scheme for Junior Ringers

If you are the leader of a Junior team or have Junior Ringers in your team, you might be interested to know that the Crescendo scheme for young ringers has been re-launched. It is now a free resource which can be downloaded from the HRGB website, with a small charge for the badges which can be purchased when the stages of the award have been completed.

Music for young ringers

Do you know of music for handbells which works well and enthuses young Ringers? As part of the Handbells in Education discussion, the NEC is and would be interested to know if members have any recommendations. Please let me know if you have any ideas and I will pass them on.

HRGB Golden Jubilee

2017 is the Golden Jubilee of HRGB. Plans for how to celebrate nationally are already being discussed.

The Jubilee logo competition attracted 28 entries and the shortlisted entries are now being considered by the Jubilee planning committee.

From the questionnaire we already have some ideas from members but we would like to know any further ideas that you might have as to how we could celebrate as a Region. What would your team like to see organised? What type of events might your team support?

Keeping in touch

If you change your postal or e-mail address or telephone number, please would you let me know so that we can ensure that you receive your copy of e-News and any other relevant information. If you don't receive e-News directly and would like to do so, please let us have your e-mail address.

Christine Lazenby
North East Region Secretary

Our Journey so far

This is the story of 37 Handbells.

In late 2013 Mr Keith Everingham and a group of other ringers from St Augustine's Church were discussing the Hedon Handbells which the ringers used to ring at Christmas time.

The bells are approximately 150 years old and we believe were donated to the ringers by one of the Vicars of Hedon.

We investigated and found them in a dusty cupboard, unused and unloved and in quite a sorry state. What happened after that, I can only describe as a whirlwind, to get the bells restored to their former glory and learn to ring them (most of us had never rung handbells before). The first step was to have them assessed and obtain a quote for how much this venture would cost so they were packed off to Whitechapel Bell Foundry.



A small group of us, Keith Everingham, Jenny Everingham, Tony Bryant, Melanie Bryant and me got together and discussed how we could make this dream a reality. We began by thinking of fund raising ideas and planned our first function in March 2014. We were encouraged by the generosity of the people who came, however, we also realised that this was going to be a long haul. We wrote many letters to local companies and businesses, some were generous, others not so. We joined forces with the Church and shared some of the proceeds of fund raising activities.

We then decided to apply to the Lottery, however, initially we were unsuccessful. We planned further fund raising activities such as race nights, quizzes and functions such as inviting the Beverley Town Handbell Ringers who came to do a concert at the church. We raised just over £2000 from our efforts.

We then decided to have another go at the Lottery and this time we rang them for their advice. Jenny and I set off filling out the forms, neither of us had ever done this before so it was a rather time consuming exercise. Much giggling and much coffee later we sent off the forms only to find that we had applied in the wrong section but this time we had an advisor who put us on the right track. We then waited and waited trying not to get our hopes up and planning further fund raising activities. At this point we were so keen to start that Mr John Atkinson was approached and he very kindly lent us 37 Handbells so that we could get started. We visited him and he gave us some instructions on bell handling. A Musical Director Mrs Joan Richardson was appointed along with other keen learners.

Then the call came from the Heritage Lottery telling us that we had been successful with our application and we would be awarded £9,800 for our venture. I was so excited that I didn't take in what she was telling me and I had to ring her back to ask her. Whitechapel Foundry was instructed to start the restoration and we began to learn to ring the borrowed bells.

On 18th February 2015 our small committee set off to London for what proved to be a very exciting and rewarding experience. We were given a tour of the Foundry and then the most important part, we



presented the Heritage Lottery Fund cheque and finally we saw the Handbells, shiny with new leathers, fully restored and placed in beautiful cases lined in red velvet. We got them back to Hedon safely and on 25th February 2015 they were used for the first time in approximately 20 Years. When we started this venture we could not have foreseen that we would have got so far within eighteen months and consider ourselves extremely lucky to have had such support to make it happen.

So pardon the pun but:-

“HEDON HANDBELLS ARE ONCE AGAIN ALIVE WITH THE SOUND OF MUSIC”.

This story would not be complete without thanking the many people who supported us:-

St Augustine's Church PCC
Hedon Methodist Chapel
Mr John Atkinson and The Beverley Town Handbell Ringers
Hedon Town Council
The Haven Trust
The Mayors Trust
The Hedon Co-operative Store and garage
Mrs A Suggitt
Mr and Mrs Lindop
Mr and Mrs Shields
Mrs K Wilson

The committee of enthusiastic people who had the determination to see this through to the end.
All of the many people who attended our fund raising activities.
And of course our Hedon Handbell group of ringers

Tina Green
Hedon Handbell Ringers

National Residential Ringing Week - final concert



The National Residential Ringing Week is being held in Sheffield from 3rd – 7th August.

The final concert is at The Edge, Sheffield University, on Friday 7th August at 7.30 pm. Tickets are £5 on the door.

Further details from aidan@soloringer.com 07906 259721

This venue is in reach of many teams in the Region and it would be good to see many of you there



Forthcoming Events

2015

Saturday 4 July - Northern Bell Orchestra - Alford, Lincolnshire

Further details contact Judy Gees hsocello@btinternet.com

Friday 7 August - Ringing Week Concert - The Edge, Sheffield

Further details from aidan@soloringer.com 07906 259721

Friday 25 - Sunday 27 September - Yorkshire Dales Handbell Gathering - Hardraw

Saturday 17 October - NE Region Autumn Rally - Beverley

Further details to follow -

2016

Saturday 27 February - Joint Tower Bell and Handbell event - St Matthias Church Hall, Burley, Leeds, LS4 2DZ

Further details to follow or contact Solna Burnham rnsburnham@talktalk.net

Friday 1 - Sunday 3 April - National Rally - Penrith

Saturday 7 May - NE Region Spring Rally - Grassington

New Honoured Members

Presentations were made to Beth Vowles (Grassington Handbell Ringers) and Peter Fawcett (researcher and author) following the AGM.

The following citations were read at the AGM.

Beth Vowles and her husband Alan, encouraged by an enthusiastic local team, purchased a two and a half octave set of Malmark handbells in September 1984. The Grassington team of 12 to 15 ringers have met weekly for practices since then at Beth's home, where musicians and novices are welcomed with equal warmth and friendship.

Beth plays as a member of the team and until recently also conducted the playing, encouraging and organising every aspect of the team's activity. She has cheerfully arranged many performances of handbell-ringing for the church and other groups, including village events such as the Dickensian Christmas Fair (which is attended by visitors from all over the UK) and regular visits to residential care homes and nursing homes in the Craven District.



Beth is proud of the fact that the team is a member of the family of handbell ringing teams in the North East Region. It was her invitation, over 20 years ago, that initiated the Spring Rally being held at Grassington. Her continued support and help with organisation over many years is been much appreciated by the Regional committee.

Beth's loyal commitment to handbell ringing in the North East Region continues and she is affectionately respected by all her ringing friends. She is an excellent ambassador for the art of handbell ringing and the North East Region is pleased to grant her Honoured Membership in recognition of her work promoting handbell ringing both in the community and the North East Region of HRGB.

Peter Fawcett is the author of 'Ringing for Gold', an extensive work documenting the story of Handbell Ringing, particularly in the north of England. It is a unique and remarkable account of the history of handbell ringing, which would never have been discovered and recorded without Peter's enthusiasm and dedication.

Peter's interest in handbells began in the 1970s when he read a local history book which referred to a set of handbells in Clifton, near Brighouse. This set him off on a journey which was to last for over 40 years, culminating in the publication in 2012 of 'Ringing for Gold'.



His research led him to discover the Clifton handbells (in a bit of a state) in a mill basement.

His next challenge was to find people ring them and to raise funds for refurbishment. The Clifton Handbell ringers were reformed in 1976 by Peter after a sixty year absence. They are now one of the leading exponents of Yorkshire –style off-table ringing. Peter also founded and developed a Junior team in 1978 and reformed the Crosland Moor Handbell Ringers.

Peter has continued to be an active enthusiast and researcher of handbells and handbell ringing, recently helping to organise the very successful Hardraw handbell gathering.

He continues to be a champion of the art of handbell tune ringing and the North East Region is pleased to grant him

Honoured Membership in recognition of his work in researching and promoting handbell ringing both in the North East Region of HRGB and further afield.

Christine Lazenby
North East Region Secretary

Yorkshire Festival Arts & Culture Fun Day - Dewsbury Minster

In February our branch of HRGB received a plea from Ronalda Johnstone of Dewsbury Tower Bell Ringers. They had located a set of dilapidated handbells which they wished to raise funds to restore. As part of their efforts they were holding an Arts and Culture Fun Day at Dewsbury Minster and wondered if a team of handbell ringers could join them. The only problem was they needed a response within three days!

The event clashed with other commitments for several committee members, but on circulating other members of the Bingley Band, we found we would be able to assist. Once committed we then discovered the full details!

Ronalda and her husband Derek were keen to have us give a one hour handbell workshop to complete beginners visiting the Fun Day, the aim being that the beginners would then play a small piece in the Fun Day 'showcase' finale. No mean feat! In addition they asked us to teach handbell ringing by numbers..... not the method of reading music we use!

Luckily Roger, our sole gentleman ringer is an excellent teacher. He managed in two sessions to make us good enough to be teachers and we were then ready to be let loose on the public of Dewsbury.

In the meantime Ronalda and Derek visited us at Bingley and plenty of advice and information was exchanged during the practice and afterwards in the pub. We recalled all our efforts at fund raising and encouraged them to borrow the set of Liversedge Handbells to get their band started. This would then enable them to start playing at events which would in turn boost donations to their appeal. We discussed playing by reading music (or by marking the music), rather than by numbers, because numbered notation can limit future repertoires.



On the day Dewsbury Minster was busy. Fellow contributors to the Fun Day were a poetry workshop, a ukulele tutor, an art exhibition and lots of other interesting activities and stalls. We attracted 12 volunteers to attempt to learn 'Land of Hope & Glory'. They ranged in ages from 7 to 70 and their musical knowledge went from the non-existent to the very experienced. All were full of enthusiasm and by the end of the session the piece was quite recognisable.

The "showcase" piece went well and was well received. Our own band then played a different arrangement of the same piece, which went down so well an encore was requested.

We hope that we went some way to publicising the handbells in the area and that some of the people who tried the handbells might be inspired to join Ronalda and Derek's group in restoring the bells. We were not asked to raise funds for the restoration on the day and hope that was not due to shyness in asking on Ronalda and Derek's part. If other groups in the area are considering fund raising to restore their bells, don't be shy we would be happy to do something similar again as a fund raiser.

Solna Burnham
Bingley Handbell Ringers

All items for the next issue of eNEws should be sent to aford11@aford11.karoo.co.uk by 30 September 2015

Don't forget, if you are sending pictures 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.