



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

North East Region eNews Issue 6 – October 2015

Dear Friends

Welcome to our October eNews. Summer fades into memory and the autumn heralds the start of handbell rehearsals in preparation for our Christmas and winter season.

My thanks to the members who have submitted articles for inclusion in this edition. Hot off the press is a contribution from Lindsay Trevvarthen, with photographs by Philip Gregory, about the Hardraw Gathering a couple of weeks ago. A good time was had by all!!

Christine and Roger Lazenby attended a concert given by the Clifton Handbell Ringers as part of the Brighthouse Arts Festival. Appearances by handbell bands at prestigious arts and musical events does much to raise the profile of handbell ringing as a serious contributor to the music scene. Well done, Clifton!

A word search submitted by committee member Rachael Schoon will get the grey cells working!

Committee member Solna Burnham and member of Bingley Handbell Ringers writes a very complimentary piece about a Masterclass I gave in the summer. The day was extremely enjoyable with good humour, hard work and a very agreeable lunch. Solna mentions the benefits the group gained from my attendance. The North East Region is fortunate to have many members for whom handbell tune ringing has been their life! Solna encourages other teams to ask for help if they feel our experience may benefit your group. You only have to ask and someone will come and assist you develop your ringing.

Hazel Bradey writes a very informative article on Compering at Rallies. At a recent committee meeting discussion took place about encouraging members of the NE Region to try their hand at compering a rally session, and conducting massed ringing as well. In this edition Hazel gives helpful pointers for those eager to “tread the boards”.

Finally, your Regional Secretary gives an update on team membership and 'News from The North'.

I hope to see many of you at the autumn rally in Beverley but to you all I hope you enjoy your handbell ringing, particularly in the build up to Christmas and send my best wishes to you all.

John Atkinson
North East Region Chairman

Notes from the Regional Secretary

News from 'The North'

A very big welcome to our newest team, the Glendale Ringers from Wooler in Northumberland. They are based in the same village as the Cheviot Ringers, who disbanded a few years ago.

The Syddall Ringers, a Youth Team from Catterick, are a thriving team; their leader, Helen Arnold writes, "I currently have a dedicated team of eight ringers and a waiting list of children wanting to join. I'm also in the process of starting another after school club at Hipswell primary school".

The Embleton Handbell Ringers from Northumberland have recently taken part in Flower, Craft and Music Festival at Holy Trinity Church, Embleton.

Christine Lazenby
North East Region Secretary

Yorkshire Dales Handbell Event

The last weekend in September brought ringers from all regions of HRGB (except Scotland) to the third handbell gathering at the Green Dragon Inn at Hardraw Scaur near Hawes in the beautiful Yorkshire Dales.



This informal event, organised this year by Helen Foley of Dronfield Handbell Ringers, included rally and massed ringing and a workshop, with the opportunity to take part in the Sunday service at the small church of Saints Mary and John, immediately adjacent to the pub.

Philip Bedford led massed ringing using music from the Bedford Collection, a wide range of varying difficulty, from traditional 17th century folk music and popular songs, such as John Brown's Body and Widdicombe Fair via Tavern in the Town, through classical (Brahms' Lullaby) to Gregorian plain chant.

Arrangements and original music from Vic Cox's Dronfield Collection formed the other massed ringing, expertly conducted by Helen Foley: two pieces from Vic's Derbyshire Suite and three contrasting ones, Serenata by Toscelli, the Tanzanian national anthem, Mungu Ibariki Afrika (God Bless Africa) and Ravel's Bolero.

Helen also led the workshop where we practised for church three pieces by Michael Coe, who had given us special permission to use them for the occasion.



Late on Saturday afternoon, there was an excellent short concert by Dronfield Handbell Ringers and the Canterbury Ringers – an amalgam of Philip Bedford's teams! There was a small, but appreciative audience.

On Sunday morning, while some took part in the church service, others did some ad hoc ringing from the Bedford collection or practised some qigong (ancient Chinese health exercises), went for a walk to the waterfall or just relaxed! After some more massed ringing, we gave a mini concert of our favourite pieces from the weekend. Two visitors were amazed: "You play real music!"

The Green Dragon had changed hands eight weeks prior to our weekend and proved to be a steep learning curve for the new proprietors; however “it was alright on the night”. For those who ate (and drank – some great real ale) in the pub, the breakfasts were good, lunches were fine and dinners excellent.

Thanks to Helen for her superb organisation (and patience) and to the rest of the Dronfield team for providing the refreshments and arranging the raffle. There may have been fewer of us this year, but everyone really enjoyed themselves. In fact, one said that he had gained more from the gathering than most of the other events he had ever attended. Go, Helen!

Lindsay Trevarthen
Dronfield Handbell Ringers

Bingley - Master Class

In July John Atkinson, the chairman of the North East Region of handbell ringers, visited Bingley to give us our very own 'Master Class'

We extended our normal Saturday practice to include a lunch break and benefitted from having a conductor to listen to us and to be critical (in the nicest possible way) of our faults. It is often difficult if you are ringing yourself to hear all the other bells equally.

John's ideas ranged from the simple, such as sticking Elastoplast on the plastic clappers of the small bells to make them less strident, to the fundamental, such as adapting the music and not sticking rigidly to the arranger's instructions. He did not say though whether we could do that with his arrangements.

He also gave us advice on different ways of handling music such as loose sheets, books, and sharing or duplicating so you can turn the page when it suits you. He also helped us with ideas of sharing accidentals and from that developed a basic lesson in ringing off the table.

Altogether it was a very productive and enjoyable day. We would recommend that other novice bands such as ourselves take advantage of John's kindness and years of experience. He is only too willing to help.

Solna Burnham
Bingley Handbell Ringers

All items for the next issue of eNEws should be sent to aford11@aford11.karoo.co.uk. by 31 January 2016

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.

WORDSEARCH

O	L	L	E	B	G	N	I	G	N	I	S
T	L	O	N	G	N	I	N	R	C	H	O
P	E	L	T	F	I	L	T	R	A	M	L
M	T	L	I	F	W	S	G	K	I	V	E
A	V	T	M	B	S	Y	E	T	O	U	K
D	I	O	E	T	R	H	O	E	R	C	I
B	B	C	L	O	E	T	E	L	U	Y	R
M	R	E	L	O	W	R	T	L	V	N	T
U	A	K	H	H	O	Y	P	A	L	I	S
H	T	C	W	S	T	R	I	M	L	E	B
T	E	H	C	U	O	T	G	N	I	R	Y
R	O	T	A	L	L	E	T	R	A	M	G

HANDBELL TECHNIQUES

MARTELLATO
PLUCK
TOWERSWING
GYRO
THUMBDAMP
SHAKE
MALLET

LETVIBRATE
ECHO
SHELLEY
SINGINGBELL
MARTLIFT
RINGTOUCH
STRIKE

Rachael Schoon
Dronfield Handbell Ringers

Clifton Handbell Ringers at the Brighthouse Arts Festival

A chance mention on Facebook about Brighthouse Arts Festival and the fact that Clifton Handbell Ringers would be performing in a concert led to us travelling over the M62 on a rainy Wednesday evening in late September. The journey was well worth it as the concert, which also featured a local choir, the Flixby Songbirds, was excellent.

Clifton rang a very good selection of tunes to a very high standard and David Sunderland's introduction and commentary about the bells and the history of the team was very informative for the non-ringers in the audience, some of whom had never heard handbell ringing before.

The eight ringers rang a long-set of 140 bells in the traditional Yorkshire off-table style with the expertise and confidence that comes from having rung together as an established team for many years - four of the team have been ringing together since the mid-1970s. Conducting was done by David from the bass table, which meant that there was no conductor blocking the audience's view of the team. In addition, music was on low-rise stands, almost flat on the table, so there was not the barrier of risers and stands between the ringers and the audience.



The opening piece was an Irish jig which increased in speed with each repetition and was a good demonstration of handling tempo changes. This was followed by a lovely gentle Italian piece called 'I Giorni' and the traditional 'English Country Gardens'. The Andrew Lloyd-Webber piece 'Close Every Door' was next and the first half concluded with a complete contrast in 'Pineapple Rag'.



The second half began with another Irish tune, 'Planxty Power', followed by 'Duelling Banjos' which was a delight to watch as well as listen to and involved some tricky footwork as well as skilful bell-handling skills as some of the ringers change places during the piece. Two gentler pieces followed, Tchaikovsky's 'Sleeping Beauty Waltz' and 'Memory'. The concert finished with a lovely rendition of 'Teddy Bears' Picnic'.

All in all, an excellent evening's entertainment – a good varied programme of tunes with audience appeal, well rung and well presented. Thank you Clifton!

Christine and Roger Lazenby
Treble Eight Ringers

Compering at rallies.

I really love compering at rallies. However now is the opportunity for every one of you to enjoy it as well. It really is a unique opportunity to meet friendly like-minded ringers. It doesn't have to be the team leader at all. Anyone who has an interest in handbells, is ideal. In fact, any one of you.

Just suggest to the organisers that you'd like to 'have a go' compering a rally session', not on the day itself, but sometime before the rally

It's not just a case of sitting on the stage and looking down on the sea of faces in front of you, and reading out notes.

The joy of it is that it's necessary to greet people beforehand.

1) Firstly you need to know where they are sitting in the hall. There's nothing worse than, whilst you are giving an introduction, looking to the right at the back right of the hall and then finding that they are in fact standing directly in front of you.

2) Do ask who is their spokesperson and their name; it's likely to be their conductor but not necessarily so. Does the spokesperson wish to speak, or just pass the information to you? As a spokesperson, if you're performing as well, then it's easier if you haven't to think of what you're going to say, as well as which bells you are ringing and how many beats to count in. Having said that, I've always felt that by talking to everyone, then you are connecting with other friends and ringers and not just standing up, playing and sitting down again.

3) Ask which part of the region they're from, how far they've travelled, how long has it taken. How frustrating a journey have they all had? Have they managed to park OK and get everything unloaded?

4) How many bells do they have, who was the founder, how old are the bells?

5) Have they a full team or, as many teams find themselves, ringers away or ill?

6) What kind of year have they had? What have been their highlights and lows?

7) Plans for the future - bell restoration - new music - new ringers!

All this information helps you and the audience understand about the people in that team, who are probably just as nervous as you.

The compere also deals with all the notices, announcing visiting ringers from other regions, individuals who have come without their teams, people looking for some spare bells to join in the massed ringing.

Don't forget to keep mentioning the sales stall and the raffle.

And a last word of advice – keep watching the clock! We always need to give all the teams chance to perform – a gentle reminder is all it takes as to who is on next. The running order and timetable are never set in stone and will always fluctuate as the day goes on.

And afterwards - don't just walk away – everyone loves to tell you how much they've enjoyed it, or whether they've lost their place and would love to ring it again - just to prove they can do it.

Hopefully, I'm not stopping compering, but I'm sure many of you would enjoy meeting others as well.

I feel privileged to have been able to meet and welcome so many of our northern teams and so many enthusiastic handbell ringers.

See you in Beverley – do come and say 'hello'

Hazel Bradley
Ecclesfield handbell Ringers

Forthcoming Events

2015

Saturday 17 October - NE Region Autumn Rally - Beverley

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