

**THE  
YORKSHIRE ASSOCIATION  
OF  
CHANGE RINGERS**



***NEWSLETTER – WINTER 2009/10***

## **EDITORIAL**

Very many thanks to the numerous contributors who have sent articles for this edition. We are amazed at the variety of ringing activities which have taken place across the County during the past six months. To save space and cost of printing, all photographs are on the central pages of this edition.

We apologise for the late arrival of this newsletter, which was due to pressure of work on Anne at the usual production time. This situation is likely to continue so we are looking for a new co-editor – please see the advert on page

For those reading the Newsletter on line, paper copies are available from your Branch Secretary, who has one for every Branch tower with Association members.

*Robert Cater ([robert@thecaters.org.uk](mailto:robert@thecaters.org.uk))  
Anne Deebank ([anne.deebank@virgin.net](mailto:anne.deebank@virgin.net))*

*Editors.*

## **ASSOCIATION NEWS**

### **Association General Meeting at Mytholmroyd, 19 September**

The September meeting was held on a warm Autumn day in the steep and delightful hill country of the Central Pennines. A country where ancient villages perch on the shoulder of valleys oversteepened into gorges by glacial meltwaters. And where the remains of small industrial revolution towns, now mostly shorn of their mills, jostle for space between the intertwined canals, railways and trunk road along the valley floor.

Ringing during the day was at Walsden, Sowerby, Todmorden, Heptonstall, Halifax and Mytholmroyd, with the Service of Evensong being led by the new Vicar. Around 60 people sat down to a carefully assembled and swiftly served tea, kindly provided by the local company.

At the business meeting, the two most memorable events were the results of the Sunday Service Striking Contest Final and the presentation of a splendid new trophy to the Association.

Members however firstly stood in memory of recently departed members - Alan Jewitt of Barnby Dunn, Raymond Horne of Roundhay & Collingham and William Jackson, originally from the Doncaster area. Several new local members were elected, including the Vicar of Mytholmroyd Rev. Martin MacDonald and his wife, Victoria, both proficient ringers. A small sub-committee was elected to see if any changes are desired to the rules of the Sunday Service Striking Contest. £117 including tax relief was donated to the BRF.

The Striking Contest had been held earlier in the day at Oxenhope, with Barry Peachey of Lincolnshire judging. Teams representing seven Branches entered - Silkstone, Skipton, Tadcaster, Leeds Parish Church, Sheffield and Ripon Cathedrals

and York Minster. Barry declared the York Minster team to be the winners and the trophy was received by Kevin Atkinson on behalf of the band.

After that the Association President, Barrie Dove, performed the rôle of conjurer by slowly withdrawing a magnificent, solid silver presentation cup from its wooden case. It had been presented to the Association for use as the Inter-Branch Striking Contest trophy by Ruth Curtis (née Richardson), late of Dewsbury. Ruth learned to ring there under the tutelage of Vernon and Jean Bottomley in the 1960s. She had found the cup in the artefacts of her late father, Geoffrey, and had passed it to David Potter, the Association's librarian, who had then had it additionally engraved, mounted on a plinth and had its case made.

It was the original property of the now-defunct Yorkshire Heavy Woollen District Association, whose title is engraved on the cup. The engraving says 'Heavy Woollen District Eight Contest', with the date 1894. Was there another '6-bell' contest, perhaps? I've also heard that Dewsbury might have won the cup that year. It's now back in Yorkshire doing the job for which it was intended.

*Bob Cater*

*Does anyone know the history of the Heavy Woollen District Association? The area covers Ossett, Earlsheaton, Dewsbury, Batley and the Spens Valley around Liversedge, Heckmondwike, Cleckheaton and Birstall. It would be good to have an article about the Association in a future Newsletter.*  
*Editors.*

### **Letter read out at the Meeting**

Dear Barrie & Members of the Association,

Many of you will not have heard of me and many of you will remember me from when I learned to ring at Dewsbury many years ago!!

I was taught to ring when the bells at Dewsbury were re-hung, under the tuition of Vernon & Jeanne Bottomley. I was encouraged by my father, Geoffrey Richardson, who sadly passed away over 19 years ago.

When the bells at Dewsbury were refurbished and the belfry redecorated, my father took into his possession the Challenge Cup for safe keeping. It was wrapped in tissue and a cloth bag and put in a safe place in the house for future use and/or display.

My mother, Barbara, who many of you knew for her famous Dewsbury ringers teas (her claim to fame being that on one occasion, when serving apple pie & ice cream, her scoop of vanilla that was meant for the plate of Ron Warford promptly landed down his neck!!) had the necessity to move into a flat. When sorting out her belongings I came across a package I did not remember about. I asked Mum what was in the package and she simply said "It's a ringing cup". I opened it to discover the Silver Cup which I now believe is sitting in front of you.

I decided that as there are not many active ringers at Dewsbury now, this very ornate cup should once again be part of the Yorkshire Association and I proceeded to pass the cup to David Potter as the Association Librarian. I have since learned that the cup has been valued and placed on a plinth to enable it to be used again.

I am sorry that I cannot be at your meeting to present the Cup personally but I am absolutely delighted that the Cup has been rediscovered and is going to be used as it was intended for the Association Inter-Branch Striking Competition.

Best wishes to you, Barrie, and all members of the Association that will now have a connection with this wonderful and worthy trophy.

Happy Ringing!! Ruth Curtis (née Richardson)

## **Bell Repair Fund**

Deborah Thorley kindly organised a 'Tower Grab' of nearly 50 towers in central Yorkshire over a few days in early October, essentially for ringers from outside the County. For those readers unfamiliar with such events, ringers donate a requested sum to ring briefly at each tower, or buy a 'day ticket' entitling them to ring at all the towers available that day. All the proceeds were for the BRF and £449 was raised.

This is the second year Deborah has organised a 'Grab' and she now wishes to hand the baton to someone else. If you're willing to do the organising of the towers, please make contact with her at Silsden Church to find out how it's done, if you're unfamiliar with this task, and then do please promote the event early and widely.

*Bob Cater*

## **Gift Aid Donations for the BRF at Branch Meetings**

The Bell Repair Fund (BRF) is a registered charity, so that donations by individuals who pay UK tax can be tax effective. For every pound donated to the Fund, the charity can obtain a repayment from HM Revenue & Customs of 28p, although this will reduce to 25p from April 2011.

Donations to the BRF from PCCs and ringing bands are always very welcome, but there are obvious tax advantages from donations by individuals, which can be made in three ways:

- a) using the gift aid envelopes distributed at Branch meetings
- b) one-off donations
- c) payments made under standing order

Many of you will be familiar with the blue envelope scheme at meetings. Forms relating to the other two types of payment can either be downloaded from the Association website or obtained from me.

At present however, only three of the Association's Branches - namely Scarborough, Selby and Western - are using the envelope scheme at meetings. Particular mention must be made of the fund-raising efforts of the Scarborough Branch which, despite its relatively small size, contributed the largest amount to the BRF in 2008. The other Branches are encouraged to follow suit please.

It is appreciated that it can be difficult to make charitable donations in the current economic climate, but even relatively small amounts are welcome please.

*Tony Stamp, Gift Aid Officer*  
*tony@stampawdon.plus.com*  
*0113 250 2488*

## **Education Committee**

### **Twenty Five Years of the Whirlow Grange Ringing Course**

After making a short speech of thanks to everyone present during an interval at the Barn Dance on Saturday evening, I was taken completely by surprise when our President, Barrie Dove proceeded to make a speech of thanks and presentation to Dinah Rhymer, Elaine Scott and myself in recognition of our work in organising the Course. Dinah and Elaine both received gift vouchers. My presentation was for a footplate ride on a steam locomotive on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway and several vouchers for Dining Trains on that railway. I am looking forward to taking a dining trip with Dinah and Elaine and Peter Scott as my guests as my way of saying 'thank you' to a great supporting team. Altogether, I estimate a gift to the value of something around £500! So, thank you very much, once again. I am humbled by the generosity of all those who contributed.

The Course started off relatively small in 1985, when we had three groups and a total of twelve students. In those days, we were only allowed half of the accommodation available at Whirlow, having to share with other groups until we proved our financial viability. I remember sharing with a group of embroiderers who seemed to be at their sewing machines from 6am to midnight, only stopping very briefly for meals. They could not be persuaded to embroider a method into any of their garments!

Student numbers have varied over the years, being as great as 37 students in seven groups on at least one occasion, but seem to have settled to a number somewhere in the twenties, which makes for less pressure on numbers of towers and students needed.

In the late eighties a lot of building work took place and the amount of accommodation increased significantly. Again, more building works in 2005 transformed Whirlow into what it is now, an ideal venue which gives the Course somewhere to relax and socialise between frenzied bouts of activity during our practical sessions and lectures. We still need more accommodation, a good sign that student places are still in demand in spite of the recent rapidly increasing costs.

The Course has celebrated other milestones along the way: the 10th anniversary in 1994, with a barbecue, games and a quiz, the Millennium with a Barn Dance in a real barn, the 21st in 2005 with a barbecue and mini-ring.

I never expected to be 'in charge' 25 years on. There have been many changes during that time. There are more changes planned which will hopefully lead to an increase in student numbers and we hope that Whirlow Grange will continue to be our base for the next 25 years.

My thanks, once again, to all those who have helped make the Course what it is. In particular, I remember the inspiration, encouragement and support which the late Wilfrid Moreton provided to me and the Course in large quantities.

*Neil Donovan*

### **'It's Whirlow Again' - Travails of an Organiser**

For more years than I can remember, though not the full 25 years, I have been assisting with the Whirlow course; first as a helper, then as badge provider, tower organiser, hand bell organiser and the last two years as a group-leader, sharing this last responsibility with Peter, my husband. It has all been fun, but in different ways. Unlike Neil & Gerry Bacon (treasurer) who start work a year in advance by booking Whirlow, and Dinah who starts asking for students and helpers early in the new year, my work doesn't really begin until May when I check with Neil to find out how many groups there will be, and on how many bells they want to ring. Usually there are five groups ringing 6 or 8 bells. Once we had seven groups, and this year we needed 10 bells for one group. Each group requires four practice sessions; Friday night, Saturday morning and afternoon, and Sunday afternoon, so that's at least twenty tower sessions to book. There may also be a tower for general ringing on Saturday evening and this year, for the first time, an outing during the day on Friday. Of course, each tower must have good access, space for helpers to stand behind, easy-to-handle bells of the right weight for a small nine year old and a large fifty year old etc. Oh, and I should mention they have to be near Whirlow and not too far apart on Saturday to fit in with a pub lunch at a good hostelry.

Fellow tower-outing organisers will sympathise that this is not as easy as it might sound. Choirs practise on Friday evenings, couples, unaccountably, want to marry on Saturdays, and once or twice there have been christenings and funerals during Whirlow weekend. We decide upon a programme of towers, write or email them all, then wait for replies. Then comes the exciting bits: juggling around those who say yes with those who say no and working out suitable substitutes.

In the end we arrive at the final list, which Dinah can send to helpers and students. Hopefully there will be no last-minute changes (only one this year). When we return to Whirlow on Sunday afternoon and find that there have been no insurmountable problems with the towers, there's a big collective sigh-of-relief. Each year I think I will stop doing this, but I always find myself volunteering once more next year. It is really great fun. Many thanks to all the towers we have rung at over the years.

*Elaine Scott*

## **Bell Maintenance Course**

A Bell Maintenance Course was held in the Sheffield area on 12 September in the Sheffield area under the guidance of Brian Sanders. Five people attended, the maximum number which can be effectively accommodated - Andy Dunkley *Treeton*, John Prebble *St Maries Sheffield*, Matthew Vause, Ben Newsam and Michael Harris *All from St Mary's Walkley*.

We had a half hour theory session at Treeton church then we went up the tower and had a look at the bells. These were old fittings which are due some work as they are worn. Before leaving Treeton we rang the bells and for most of us this was a grab. After lunch we then went to Walkley church and looked at these bells. Walkley bells were rehung by Hayward Mills Associates in autumn 2006 so are very easy to check. We rang Walkley bells then sat in the organ loft repairing bell ropes and spent the rest of the day learning about rope splicing. This was very useful for the Walkley ringers as they made their smallest ringer a rope extension for the tail end.

I really liked it because I learnt all about the bells and checking them to keep the belfry in a safe working order. Also I learnt how to do the rope splicing and checking for rope wear in the ceiling bosses and garter holes. Thank you to Brian Sanders and Pete McCoy for organizing the day and the vicars of St Helen's Treeton and St Mary's Walkley for letting us use their belfries.

*Michael Harris*

## **Child Protection Update: Anticipating the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 - Implementation Date: 12<sup>th</sup> October 2009**

You need to know that from October 2009 new legislation came into effect. Some of it will make life simpler, but things will be different. A new body, the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) has been created, which will register individuals after their details have been checked at the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). The CRB continues as an independent body and will issue Disclosure Certificates. Registration with the ISA of existing CRB certified persons will be phased in over a five year period. All CRB checking and ISA registration will be free of charge to voluntary bodies. They will also be valid for all areas of voluntary work undertaken by holders, so these are two major steps forward. The terms of reference have been extended to include vulnerable adults as well as children, but this is restricted to those social agencies providing targeted services to such adults and will not affect ringing. Children, however, means all youngsters up to their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

### **What does this mean for ringers after October?**

Most ringing takes place at parish level, so it means that if you are involved in direct face to face teaching of young learners at your own or another tower, eventually you will have to become ISA-registered. This should be secured through your parish's own Child Protection Officer (CPO), unless you become ISA registered through some other body, in which case you should make your parish CPO aware. It may be

desirable for more ringers to become registered according to the teaching workload of the tower but it is not compulsory for all tower members to be so treated.

YACR will have to ensure that all organisers of its training events, and all lead trainers are registered. This does not mean that ringers who attend such events in order to make up bands to ring around learners must each be registered, but the trainers themselves will have to be. The YACR CPO will have authority to check that trainers have been registered and to check the credentials of the trainers involved. This activity cannot be delegated. The current YACR CP Policy has an upper age limit of 16 years, so this will have to revert to 18 years.

It would seem desirable for all YACR Principal Officers and Branch Officers to become ISA-registered, as these people are generally the ones involved in organising and running YACR events but this should not be a condition of office. Branch Meetings, although frequently attended by young learners, are exempt from any CRB requirements.

In short, there will be no requirement for ringers to become registered simply because they are ringers, but **those involved in teaching at Parish and/or Association level will have to be.**

### **What will happen now?**

Those ringers already holding CRB Disclosure Certificates will not need to register with ISA until further notice, as new applicants will be dealt with first with effect from July 2010. If you're not already a CRB certificate holder you do not need to apply unless you are going to undertake face to face teaching and this should be done through your Parish CPO.

Unattached members are advised to wait, as YACR is currently ineligible to process CRB applications, and would have to channel them through Bradford Diocese, by whom a £10 charge would be levied, unless you're prepared to fund it yourself.

I am currently working on recommendations to the YACR Committee for a Child & Vulnerable Persons Policy to be in place for inclusion in the 2009 Annual Report.

*Robert Appleby Child Protection Officer*  
01274 223753/07966 234849 [belappy@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:belappy@blueyonder.co.uk)

### **Lifers on Parole - The 2009 Life Members Gathering**

On Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> August the good burghers of Hemsworth were treated to the sound of bells from within the parish church of St Helen. The occasion was the third Annual Gathering of the YACR Life Members, about thirty-five of whom met up. A varied programme of ringing was enjoyed, and conversation and reminiscences continued between times. At 4.00 pm the Rector, who declared himself to be a member of the Lancashire Association of Change Ringers, conducted a short service, during which the lesson was read by the President of YACR, Barrie Dove.



Tea had been arranged at the Beverley Arms, Ackworth. Members discovered an additional bonus in that meals were offered at two for the price of one, which suited the renowned Yorkshire temperament well! It has to be said that it took some time for the food to appear despite the numbers and requirements having been given in advance, but the wait was assuaged by opportunities to catch up with acquaintances.

After tea, Barrie entertained the gathering by revealing the identities of the longest-serving members; Doyen of us all is Colin Ashworth, of Heptonstall, who joined in 1944. It transpires that Colin is not a Life Member. No doubt there'll be a proposal put to the General Committee in 2010! Barrie concluded his remarks with the hope that he'll see us all again next year, and was rewarded with a spontaneous and heartfelt cry of "so do we!!!!!"

Jeffery Cooper, one of the few with sixty years' membership, gave a vote of thanks to Barrie (and Janine) for organisation, to Brian Sanders for running the ringing and assisting waiting staff at the Beverley to match up meals with members, and to the Rector of Hemsworth for use of the bells and conducting the Service.

*Robert Appleby*

## **The Snowdon Dinner**

The newly-refurbished Ballroom of the Midland Hotel in Bradford was the most splendid setting for the Snowdon Dinner for many years. Around 130 members and friends attended on 17 October, perhaps drawn by the chance of expending surplus energy to the strains of 'The Well-Dressed Band' during the ceilidh, which followed the formal part of the evening.

To give plenty of time for the dancing, the customary speeches were held in the short period between guests taking their places at table and the meal being served. After Barrie Dove proposed the Loyal Toast, Charles Morrish regaled members with his experiences as a signaller at the lonely box at Bleamoor on the Settle to Carlisle railway and then proposed a toast to The Church.

This was responded to by The Revd. Monsignor Philip Moger, Dean of St. Anne's RC Cathedral in Leeds. Robert Appleby then proposed the customary toast to Jasper Whitfield Snowdon and all visitors present, which was responded to by the now traditional touch on handbells, led by James Holdsworth. Finally Tony Smith, the President of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers, responded on behalf of the visitors and extolled the virtues of the Association. All the speeches were delightfully witty, informative and entertaining.

The band then struck up. The Western Branch Committee had taken a calculated gamble in organising a ceilidh as an innovative format for the occasion, but in the event any concerns they had were unfounded. It proved a roaring success with energetic dancing continuing into the small hours. A raffle during a brief interval in the dancing raised some £230 for the 25 sumptuous prizes donated by the Committee members.

This is the last year the Dinner is to be arranged by the Branches in rotation, as a centrally organised committee will take over from 2010. They have a hard act to follow.

*Bob Cater*

A celebratory peal was rung on the morning of the Dinner at Halifax Parish Church -

Halifax St. John the Baptist, in 3 hours 14 minutes, tenor 28 cwt:  
5008 Spliced Plain & Little Bob Maximus, Comp. J W Holdsworth,

- |                             |                     |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 James W Holdsworth (Cond) | 2 Roger G Green     |
| 3 Gail L Randall            | 4 Gail Cater        |
| 5 Lorraine Trebble          | 6 C Sally Williams  |
| 7 Kevin R Haseldine         | 8 Andrew N Fawbert, |
| 9 R Andrew Sutherland       | 10 Oliver M Austin  |
| 11 Alan M Trebble           | 12 Jeff Brannen     |
- 1<sup>st</sup> of Maximus 6, 1<sup>st</sup> of Spliced Maximus 5, 7 & 8.

## **Central Council Meeting 2009**

### **My Impression of the Meeting - by Neil Donovan**

This year the Central Council Meeting was hosted by the Worcester & Districts Association in the City of Worcester. There were the usual towers open for ringing, opportunities to ring peals, an 'Open Meeting', which was a presentation by the Ringing Foundation, and a Civic Reception and Dinner at the local rugby football ground. The main reason for the weekend is the Annual Meeting of the Central Council and I was in attendance with nine other members of the Council who reside in Yorkshire. For the record, that is five representing the YACR, two from Beverley & District Society, one from Leeds University Soc, one from University of Bristol Soc and one Honorary Member. Also, for the record, four of us ring at the same tower though we do represent two different Societies!

The Annual Meeting day is, for me, the least pleasurable day of the year. It is duty not pleasure! It is a day of debating various motions, receiving reports of the work of each committee and electing new committee members. It is a day when the Council often seems to be set on a course towards self-destruction in the name of reform. By contrast, serving on a committee, which seven of those present from Yorkshire do, or were doing up to this meeting, is far more rewarding and a useful service to ringing.

There were four motions for debate. One was a very minor change to rules about Honorary Members, the others were as follows:

The Peal Compositions Committee was renamed the Compositions Committee, losing the reference to peals. (Note that there are still no rules for quarter peals).

This may be a step towards improving the quality of composition in general. We shall see!

The Biographies Committee had its remit widened to include 'past and present ringers' and not just members or past Members of the Council. This raises a lot of problems for the Committee in deciding how to proceed with collecting information on ringers and who to 'choose'. Potentially they should be collecting data on every ringer, so why not send them your cv now!

The one motion which was lost was an attempt to reduce the status of Honorary members by not allowing them to become Chairs of Committees. Honorary Members are people who do not represent any Society but are elected because it is believed that they have some special skill which is of use to the Council. The motion, if carried, would have caused lots of problems in connection with other rules. There were more than half the members in favour of this change, but not the necessary two-thirds required. This one will definitely come back another year and is seen by many as part of the reform of the Council.

This is just a taste of what went on at the Meeting and is my personal view alone. For the full version, see the report in *The Ringing World* or view the CCCBR website to read the minutes. Better still, come and sit in the public gallery at the next meeting or even become a Member of the Council!

### **My Impression as a Guest – by Bob Cater**

I have attended some 30 Annual Meetings of the CC (now 118 years old), either as a Representative Member for another Society (plus one year as a YACR Rep) or as Gail's guest when she became a Representative Member and then an Honorary Member when we moved back to Yorkshire. This was Gail's and my last attendance. I can endorse Neil's impression of it needing a stout heart to endure the Meeting itself. As a guest I can leave the room for the most tedious bits!

I can hardly detect any change in the way the Meeting is conducted these days from how it went 30 years ago. And this is in what is supposed to be a time of change. The CC recognises that if a new body was being set up today to codify ringing and promote it in all its various ways, 'it wouldn't start from here'. The challenge is 'how does the CC change to get to what's really needed?' The complexity of its Rules certainly hampers bringing in change, with different majorities being needed to adopt motions on different aspects of its work. Further, some Members (too many?), I feel, simply do not recognise when it's time to go. Some tend to hang on year after year, often making very little or no contribution to the Exercise, but seemingly blocking change all the way. (Which is something I hope I didn't do!)

The CC Committees still essentially do valuable work for the Exercise, but even then there is dead wood on some of them. The CC Officers and Members in general have a lot of work to do in getting themselves into a position to prevent the CC's effectiveness being diminished.

## **12-BELL STRIKING COMPETITIONS**

### **The White Rose Shield Striking Competition**

As many of you will know, Yorkshire currently has the most regular teams in the National 12-bell Striking Competition outside the London area. Indeed, Yorkshire teams have won three out of the last six eliminators, although none of them has, recently, managed to reign supreme, (York Minster was the last to do it in 2002).

So it was that a Yorkshire based 12-bell competition came about. It was to be based loosely on the National 12-bell format but be solely for Yorkshire-based ringers and teams. The rules were not to be so strict as to discourage bands from entering, and the emphasis of the day was "fun". However, there were some bragging rights up for grabs!

The date was chosen as the 22<sup>nd</sup> August and the ringers at Ripon Cathedral (our newest 12) had kindly agreed to host this embryonic competition. Six teams entered and the Judges were Neil Bennett and Rev. Brian Harris, who both have good pedigree when it comes to judging 12-bell ringing. The test piece was deliberately easy – Plain and Little Bob Cinques. This immediately caught the judges out, as they had prepared their mark sheets for Maximus!! However, this small problem was soon overcome thanks to the powers of the internet.

The teams gathered at 11am and were welcomed with tea, coffee and bacon butties. The draw for places was made by the Revd. Canon Paul Greenwell of Ripon, and the first team performed at 12 noon.

During the next three hours, whilst the various teams rang their test pieces, their many supporters, families and friends tucked into barrels of Ossett beer in the 'Deer Park'. This proved to be a wonderful arena for socialising, playing football, frisbee, drinking real ale and, most importantly, listening to the ringing taking place. *[Get the priorities right! - Ed.]*

At 3pm a traditional English cream tea was served as we all awaited the judges' results. Neil and Brian chose an informal, friendly and constructive style of commenting which was greatly appreciated, reflecting the aims of the competition. The placings were as follows: York Minster 91%, Leeds Parish Church Ladies 87%, Stockton on Tees 86%, Leeds Lads 84%, Bradford Cathedral 80% and Ripon Cathedral 77%.

The whole day was an enormous success, with about 100 ringers all enjoying good ringing and good socialising. Congratulations go to York Minster for winning the Shield, which was presented to them by the Reverend Prebendary Keith Jukes, Dean of Ripon. Most importantly, thanks are due to the ringers of Ripon Cathedral, especially Andrew Aspland, Jo Mitchell and their helpers, who put on a fine day's hospitality. They worked tirelessly throughout the day and provided everything which could have been wanted.

It's hoped a couple more Yorkshire teams, who were unable to compete this year, will be able to do so in 2010.

*Steve Ollerton [Whose brainchild the Competition was - Ed]*

### **Never Underestimate the Leeds Lasses!**

When Steve Ollerton realised that the 24 LPC volunteers to ring in the 2009 White Rose Shield were a 50/50 male/female split, the Leeds Lasses were eager to take up the challenge. They promptly press-ganged a captain into service and designed the essential team T-shirts. Despite most of the band rarely competing, this unusual angle appealed and good-humoured inter-band rivalry began to heat up!

A ladies-only practice at Ossett was a great help, but the socialising in the pub afterwards was even better. A slight hitch occurred at Leeds next evening when the twerp of a ladies captain put the last bob in a whole pull early but her trusty band rightly ignored her, possibly lulling the Leeds Lads into complacency!

Being drawn fifth at Ripon challenged our nerves but once alone in the belfry we relaxed, producing a good flowing piece of ringing with some excellent rhythm. Relief took over and we were delighted with the positive feedback from everyone outside.

We were nonetheless astounded not just to beat the Leeds Lads, but to come second in a tough competition. Roll on next year!

*Moral courtesy of Eleanor Roosevelt:*

"A woman is like a tea bag. You can't tell how strong she is until she's in hot water".

*Wendy Bloom, Leeds Parish Church*

## **The Final of the National 12-Bell Striking Competition 2009**

### **The Leeds Experience**

July 4th arrived and it was time for us all to converge on the City of London - St. Paul's Cathedral. This is what we have trained for. We arrived in London at about 9.15am. Just seeing that huge dome (even though the bells aren't in there) sends a shiver down your spine. I had this feeling of destiny awaiting (not sure why). This is the big one - the tenor after all does weigh 62 cwt. May be the most prestigious Final I will ever ring in. Who knows?

We went for a quick practice at nearby St. Sepulchre's at 10 o'clock and we were quite pleased with our two renditions of the test piece. Then we headed to the crypt of St Paul's.

300 people crammed into the St. Faith Chapel to await the draw.

We were drawn third, which was almost perfect, apart from it being straight after St. Paul's own band and Birmingham - two of the hot favourites. Still, our time came. We climbed the impressive spiral staircase in the South West tower (the one you've

seen in Harry Potter films) and waited outside the ringing room. Four of the band had to go for an emergency toilet break!! Nerves were setting in.

Finally we got in and got started. We rang the first half of the test piece and nearly fired out. Two more attempts also went badly. I had a great sense of foreboding, but there was nothing we could do - we just had to get on with it.

We set off into the piece and rang OK but there was too much nervousness and hesitancy and we rang far too slowly. The final bobs were rung and we finished. There was a great sense of relief: six months' hard work were now finished. However, we knew the piece we had just rung was nowhere near good enough. I was deflated so had to go and drink!!

Regardless of the poor test piece we managed to celebrate all afternoon and even had two bottles of champagne in Paternoster Square. We received a few comments about us being a bit premature!! We didn't care - we were there to enjoy the occasion.

Finally the time came to hear the results in St. Mary le Bow church nearby. We knew from the general comments given about the ringing in general throughout the day that our performance had not been very well received - no shock there.

The judge reading the actual scores went really quickly! I had about two seconds of elation that we hadn't come last. Then BANG - we had come eighth. 'I was gutted', as they say. I could not hide my disappointment but was glad we gave it a go. Looking back I think the result was fair. We probably were the eighth best band on paper - but you always feel you can pull yourself up the table if you ring out of your skins. We did not! Ho hum.

The venue and setting were wonderful and it was a very well organised day. All in all we had a smashing day and thoroughly enjoyed mixing with the finest ringers in the world. We feel we belong here, but we have some work to do. Watch out for us next year. We will not be eighth!!

*Steve Ollerton*

*Out of the nine teams participating, York Minster came fifth and Stockton on Tees came ninth. The winners were St. Paul's own band - it does help to be ringing on your own bells! - with Birmingham second and the Ancient Society of College Youths (which also practises regularly at St. Paul's) third. - Ed.*

## **BARNSELY & DISTRICT SOCIETY CENTENARY**

The Society celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2009 and a splendid Centenary Dinner for some 70 members and friends was held in Silkstone on 10<sup>th</sup> October. More about the Centenary was given in the Spring Newsletter.

## **NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES**

### **Cleveland and North Yorkshire**

We have now instituted a programme of evening practices in addition to the midweek (daytime) practices. These are proving very successful with good attendances. We are actively considering joint practices with the Southern branch of the Durham and Newcastle.

Earlier this year we held our annual Striking Competition. This year it was held at Boroughbridge and followed by a BBQ. As usual we had a "2 section" approach, one for Sunday Service bands and the other for "Fun" bands (which can be made up from several towers). Numbers were down on last year, but the standard of ringing was improved and there were plenty of people who attended the BBQ; altogether it was a good event.

The Sunday Service section was won by Ripon by half a point from Stokesley and the Fun section was won by Boroughbridge.

*Gerry Parsons*

### **Central Branch**

#### **Outing with the Barnsley & District Society**

The day chosen for the outing turned out to be a classic example of the best of an English summer - blue sky with 'fair-weather', white, fluffy clouds and long, clear views. And the locations matched the weather - steep Pennine valleys clothed in green and dotted with farms.

The day was Saturday 25 July and the venues were the Rossendale valley in Lancashire and the upper Calder valley in Yorkshire. The towers visited by the thirty or so fortunate ringers present were Ramsbottom, Haslingden, Newchurch in Rossendale, Todmorden and Mytholmroyd.

An unfortunate incident at Haslingden, where it is thought there is very little local ringing, was that the two halves of the tenor bell wheel came apart as the bells were being rung up, necessitating ringing on the minor seven and the front six.

*Bob Cater*

#### **A North Yorkshire Seaside Car Outing**

Early morning, Saturday 20 June, saw eighteen people making their way to St. Nicholas, Guisborough for the first tower of the day. The weather appeared reasonably promising despite some drizzle, but unfortunately that wasn't to be the case for the whole day.

What a cosy galleried ringing room it is at St Nicholas! We managed to ring something for everyone, from Rounds to Treble Bob methods and it was a very positive start to the day.

Our next stop was St. Mark's at Marske-by-the-Sea where we found a light ring of 8 – but don't let that put you off visiting! They ring beautifully. Methods here included, amongst others, Grandsire Triples and Stedman Triples.

Lunch in Saltburn was our next stop where some chose to paddle in the sea and have their lunches on the beach and others went to a pub on the cliff top. Two of our number managed to scrounge a tower grab at Saltburn, despite there being a wedding.

All Saints' at Skelton in Cleveland was our next stop and what majestic bells they are! Our thanks must go to the Tower Captain at St. Botolph's, Carlton in Cleveland for allowing us to use the bells at very short notice.

Finally to St. Peter & St. Paul at Stokesley – no standing around outside the church here as the rain was coming down in stair rods! We were most grateful to John Groom for joining us in the ringing room and enabling those more able in the band to ring 4 spliced (Rutland, Lincolnshire, Yorkshire and Cambridge).

The excellent day out was rounded off with a meal in Thirsk, where we all crowded into a cellar area at Wetherspoons. Unfortunately, we weren't the only ones in the eatery on a Saturday evening, and one of our number all but wasted away waiting for his meal ..... details of the memorial peal to be advised via the Central Branch website.

*Sue Earnshaw, Secretary Central Branch*

## **Leeds & District Branch**

This year's Leeds & District Branch outing was planned around a trip to the seaside (as I like visiting the seaside) – and the fact that there was a small cluster of towers in East Yorkshire which I had not rung at before. If I'm arranging an outing then I might as well get a few new towers and go somewhere I fancy! The plan was to start the day at Kilham (special request because the Branch Chairman had not rung there before) and then to ring at a few towers on the way down to Withernsea, where we could sunbathe on the beach at lunchtime, before a few more towers on the way into Hull to finish up on the 12 at Holy Trinity.

However not everything went quite to plan! The first problem was that we couldn't ring at Rise – I don't think many people ring there these days, as the reason we couldn't ring was that jackdaws nest in the belfry and the mess hadn't been cleared out that year and wouldn't be done by July (I phoned in May!). I had already got several of the other towers by then so I thought I'd substitute Roos instead. Good plan but I should have altered the timing as it takes considerably longer to travel from North Frodingham (the second tower) to Roos than it would have done to get to Rise.



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Kevin Atkinson receives the Sunday Service Striking Competition Trophy from Barry Peachey at the Mytholmroyd General Meeting

The late Yorkshire Heavy Wollen District Association Cup presented to the Association by Ruth Curtis.

*Taking a photograph of the Cup was not an easy task, as reflection from the camera flash destroy the image. In the end the set-up used was quite impressive - the Cup was stood on a base of white card, surrounded 360 degrees by a circle of white card with a small hole cut for the camera lens, and lit by ring lighting from above. It was all achieved courtesy of Janine Jones.*





Left - Early Days of the Whirlow Grange Course – probably 1986

Below - Group A outside Dore. l to r - Ken Pearce, Neil Donovan, Richard Farnsworth, Gillian Moreton, Adrian Moreton, John Thorpe, Dinah Rhymer, John Atkinson, Rosie Hall, Elizabeth Mason, Tom Johnson, Brenda Pearce.



## The White Rose Shield Striking Competition



## The Leeds Lasses Team



York Minster's winning team - Front Row (l - r) Mike Pollard, Giles Galley, Simon Rudd, Rachel Storr, Tina Walker, Emma Coles, Back Row (l - r) Christine Potter, Kevin Atkinson, Rob Lee, Tim Bradley, David Potter (C), John Potter.

The White Rose Shield Striking Competition – Jo Moreton enjoying a pint.



Below - 'Up and coming young bloods'(?), doing what all students spend lots of time on learning.



## The Snowdon Dinner



Above - The Revd. Monsignor Philip Moger, Robert Appleby, Barrie Dove, Charles Morrish and Tony Smith.

Below - A Maelstrom of Dancers at the Dinner.





Central Branch and Barnsley District  
Outing

Chloe Marples of Bradfield, aged 10,  
ringing at Haslingden, with proud  
mum looking on.

Sheffield Branch Outing at Manchester Cathedral



York Colleges Guild teaching school pupils.

From left to right: Louise (teacher), John, Joe, William, Ted, Kevin (teacher), Andrew, Tom, Hugh, Lilah (teacher), Sam (teacher), Emma (teacher).



Toseef and his Guide Dog, Pedro, outside Kirkheaton church







Rededication of the three Bells at Long Preston

Left to right – Robert Cater, Gail Cater, the Bishop of Bradford, Barrie Dove

The Penistone Outing

“...a cold day with sleet...”



L to r: back row: John Barden, John Hobson, Malcolm Wild, Mark Everett, Paul Rogers  
 3<sup>rd</sup> row: Ken Loxley, Alan Shelbourn, Ted Hoole, Naomi Marples, Matthew Baines  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Row: Anita Loxley, Claire Rogers, Jean Doman, David Micklethwaite, John Marples, Derrick Moorhouse, Sue Holden  
 Front Row: Chloe Marples, Jack Marples

First pealers....

Rosie Reading at Sheffield Cathedral



the peal band without the treble ringer & cameraman - Simon Reading (father).  
Anti-clockwise from left front: Alan Reading (brother, C), Rosie Reading, Judith Reading (mother), David Jackson, Brian Sanders, Adrian Moreton, Michael Platt.

Fraser Murray at Halifax



L to r: James Holdsworth (C), Lorraine Trebble, Fraser Murray, Neil Murray, Paul Brook, Alan Trebble

## The Carillon at York Minster



Above: The carillon bells were installed above the ringing peal in the south-west tower.

Left: David & Christine Potter at the clavier.



The late Douglas Raymond Horne (Ray) of Roundhay and Collingham

#### Barnsley and District Society Centenary Dinner



Victoria Pagdin, the youngest member present, along with Brian Heppenstall, the Society President. The trophies on display are (l to r) the Marsden Trophy for Sunday Service attendance, the Hoylandswaine Cup, the Barnsley Shield and the Novice Contest Shield. The Barnsley Shield was made in 1926 at a cost of £11.10.0 - some £400 at present day prices. The Barnsley Jug is in the foreground and was used to dispense aperitifs before the Dinner.

Anyway I'm getting ahead of myself here! The day started well with a small group of ringers arriving ahead of time at Kilham where we enjoyed a selection of methods. The second tower was the three at North Frodingham. These were listed as ringable on online Dove and the local ringers were keen for us to go – but said bring a torch and the rope on the tenor is not too good and only one bell has a stay! A couple of intrepid three-bell grabbers left early from Kilham with an old Chapel Allerton rope (and torch) to go and investigate. They put a new rope on the tenor and found that only one bell had no stay, so we were in business. The bells were fine and the local ringers were pleased to see us (their first visitors) and made cups of tea. We left the rope on so that if other ringers want to visit they can and I think they will be made very welcome.

This did however mean that we were a bit late leaving North Frodingham (dedication St Elgin – seemingly the only church with this dedication and nobody knows who St Elgin was either!) and there was a lot of traffic, so at the due start time there were no Branch ringers at Roos. Fortunately though we had some visitors from the Central Branch and from London who rang while the rest of us were getting there and we were able to stay a bit longer so that everyone had a ring – thanks to Peter Cook for meeting us and letting us stay.

Then it was lunch time – Iona and I did go for a paddle (chilly!) and others did have lunch on the beach but there wasn't a lot of sun and then it threw it down so we got a bit wet but not as wet as the Association ringing master who got caught by a wave – serves him right though as he had been threatening to throw people in the sea. Withernsea bells are also not rung a lot but we had no problems here and then moved on to Burstwick, Hedon, and Hull Lowgate. We rang a variety of methods to suit everyone, ranging from Plain Bob to Surprise. We then moved onto Holy Trinity where security issues meant that we all had to go in together, be locked in and then leave together. Some Central Branch group had managed to fit in a quick pint between the two Hull towers. They need to ask our Branch ringing master how to do it – he managed a pint during the ringing at Lowgate – organised a couple of touches – dashed to the pub and then was back to organise the next touch!

We all enjoyed our ring on 12 and rang some Stedman Cinques as well as rounds and plain hunt. We even rang rounds on 14 which did sound rather strange but was fun. We then had an extra tower by popular demand as the key holder for Sutton had joined us for the afternoon and a number of ringers were keen to ring there. We finally finished the day with a meal at a local carvery (very cheap, lots to eat and good) – just what we needed after a long day, nine towers in total.

The journey home took rather longer than anticipated as well, due to the start of the M62 being closed for roadworks! Everyone seemed to have had a grand day out despite the lack of sunshine, the long distance between some towers, with not enough time to do it in and the roadworks. I got my towers and had a paddle, we all had some good ringing, some laughs, some beer, plenty of food and good company. I'm not arranging next year's outing though!

*Penny Thorley*

## **Sheffield & District Branch**

### **100 Club**

The Committee has received two requests for grants from the 100 Club to put towards their respective projects. Firstly Beighton for the replacement of clock chimes which had to be removed after the re-hanging of their bells in 1995. Secondly Ecclesfield, towards the work to repair and augment their ring from 8 to 10 bells. The Committee has suggested a donation of £500 be given to Beighton from the 100 Club funds, which will be put to Branch members at the monthly meeting in November. The Ecclesfield request is still under review.

### **Outing to Manchester**

Originally eleven of us met on the blustery morning of Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> October outside the impressive Stockport St. George church. Kindly invited in out of the wind by the members of the congregation who were preparing for Harvest Festival we waited a short while before being led up a lot of stairs to the vast ringing chamber. We were joined by two further Branch members who made the number up to a disappointing thirteen - and later another member. However as is usually the case those who did make the journey enjoyed the day immensely. After a trip through Manchester traffic for some of us, others choosing the quicker option of the motorway, we arrived at Eccles church just in time to enjoy a cup of coffee with biscuits or toasted teacakes, being served in the church. The conversation centred on the benefits of sat nav's and maps and navigation in general!

We went our separate ways for lunch, some finding pub food while others were well prepared with sandwiches. We managed to meet up at Sacred Trinity, Salford eventually and were met by Malcolm Murphy who let us make a cup of tea to go with our chocolate biscuits after the ringing and we enjoyed a cosy chat hearing some entertaining stories of ringing in times gone by from some of the longer standing members of the Branch. We also found the notice on the door to the ringing chamber highly amusing *'Please do not poke the ringers they are concentrating really hard'*.

We were able to walk to Manchester Cathedral from here and were taken in the back way through cellar corridors full of heating systems etc to ring on the 10. Methods rung during the day included Rounds and Call Changes, Plain Hunting on 10, Plain Bob Royal and Major, Grandsire Caters and Triples, Stedman Triples and Cambridge S Major. Thanks go to Pete McCoy for organising the day and to those who met us and let us in at the towers, especially Malcolm Murphy who gave up several hours of his time letting us in at two towers.

### **Annual Striking Competition**

Seven teams competed in our Sunday Service band competition this year at Thrybergh on Saturday May 16th. The judges Neil and Ann Westerman listened to three change ringing teams and four call change ringing teams. The difference this

year was that there was a cup given by the Branch in memory of Chris Munday for the best call change team. The rain held off whilst ringers listened to each other's performances and enjoyed cups of tea and biscuits provided by the Thrybergh ringers.

The results were given by the judges to the assembled group in the church afterwards and were as follows: Winners by a close margin were Sheffield Cathedral, 2<sup>nd</sup> Walkley A, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ecclesfield, 4<sup>th</sup> Rotherham, 5<sup>th</sup> Walkley B, 6<sup>th</sup> Thrybergh, 7<sup>th</sup> Handsworth. Rotherham were the Call Change band winners.

Rev Alan Isaacson, Vicar at Bradfield, had kindly agreed to present the trophies as he had known Chris Munday during his time as vicar of Treeton. Thanks go to him for his time and interest. Thanks go to all who participated in the competition.

*Helen Turner*

## **York Colleges Guild**

### **Students Teach School Pupils to Ring**

Summer term is always exceptionally busy for members of York Colleges Guild with exams fitting around Dinner Day weekend and summer excursions, but this year an extra challenge loomed. Since Christmas a plan had been in the pipeline to teach pupils from Bootham School in York to ring. The Activities Co-ordinator of this Quaker school approached us to ask if we'd be interested in running a session for a mixture of their students once a week for eight weeks. Many e-mails later, the bells at St Olave's were acquired for use every Wednesday afternoon, the risk assessments and CRB checks were carried out, and an army of tower and hand bell teachers (all current members of the student Guild) were ready to go.

As such an activity had never been offered by the school before, and as the hobby is unfortunately regarded as 'uncool' by many of the younger generation, it was decided that if we wanted kids to teach we'd have to go and find them! The Guild ringing master, Lilah, and I devised a presentation involving a true or false quiz aimed at dispelling common myths, used a model bell for a demonstration and emphasised the huge social and intellectual benefits the hobby can provide. After two impassioned presentations to year 7 and 8 music classes, we had eight boys sign up!

And so in late April we embarked on the first of the eight sessions which involved a guided tour of the Minster. After some moaning about the number of steps up the south west tower, the boys were all fascinated to see the carillon in action whilst walking over the top of the bells, before climbing up the see their teacher swing the clapper of Great Peter.

The remaining seven weeks were spent at St Olave's for one hour every Wednesday. Time was tight but two or three boys were able to have individual handling tuition for 15 minutes while the rest were taught to ring tunes on the Guild's hand bells in the adjacent room. The structure proved diverse and kept the students

occupied and interested. We were also pleased to discover that one of the lads could already ring, having learnt at Tadcaster! So we were able to demonstrate Plain Hunt with him to the rest of his classmates. By the end of the seven weeks all pupils were able to handle a bell, with varying degrees of assistance, and all had developed good rhythm and timing in the hand bell tunes.

We hoped the course would act as an introduction to ringing by educating the boys as to what the hobby involves and hopefully by having fun along the way. However, we were delighted to discover that one of the lads wished to continue ringing and has expressed interest in joining the band at St Lawrence's. Furthermore, the school would like to make the course permanent and we'll run a similar arrangement this autumn term, possibly this time with sixth form students.

From the Guild's point of view, the sessions were a lot of hard work but proved a very rewarding experience. Many of our student teachers were beginners themselves at the end of their first year of ringing but they all happily dedicated their time and enthusiasm to help teach hand and tower bells, learning a lot about the process along the way. Particular thanks must go to St Olave's for allowing us to take over their church each week and to Sarah Allen at the school for instigating the sessions. Thanks too to Lilah for running all the sessions and scrambling around the belfry at all times of night fixing any broken stays!

Many may think university societies are all about drinking, ringing and more drinking. Whilst there's no doubt this does occur (just occasionally!), many societies are also closely involved with their local church, the community and the kind of teaching we've been involved in. I think it's an invaluable part of the university bell ringing experience and only helps to build teamwork and friendships. If you're going to university this autumn, get involved, in whatever way you can, and put your society on the map!

*Helen Green*

## **TOWERS' NEWS**

### **Armitage Bridge**

A general inspection of the bells earlier in the year revealed an alarming lateral movement on the clappers of the ring of six. On having a closer look a decision was taken to replace all six bushes as soon as possible. However the worn bushes were puzzling (as the bells are not overused) and would seem to have been damaged very quickly.

Tower Captain Denis Chaffer found out that when the bells were returned from the bell foundry after the fire at the church some years ago, the clappers had been rebushed using a black nylon type material.

At the end of March the clapper out of the 4th was taken to a local engineer who replaced the worn bush with one of bronze. The clapper was put back and the results were immediately obvious. The remaining five clappers were rebushed during Holy Week and the bells were ready to ring on Easter Sunday.



The improvement in the resulting sound was obvious to all. The bells have are much mellower and are more pleasing on the ear, and I am sure are a little easier to ring. As for the nylon bushes, these had gone oval where the weight of the bottom half of the clapper had forced them out of shape. In addition, as this material is not as ductile as bronze, it was felt that the shock of the clapper hitting the bell was not being absorbed as well, creating a sharper louder note.

It's been a worthwhile exercise that has improved both our bells and our knowledge of bell maintenance.

Thanks to James Holdsworth for lending a hand with the lifting and Neil Murray for advice.

*Alan Trebble*

## **Batley**

### **A Batley Application - Eliminating Risks on Day of Big Effort**

An unusual application was heard by the Batley magistrates today, when Herbert Saville, licensee of the Fleece Hotel, (commonly known as The Church Steps, and now the name has been changed to that), which is close to the Tudor Parish Church, whose tower has just been restored, asked for permission to open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., instead of from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., on Saturday, April 7, on the occasion of the recommissioning of the church bells.

In support of his application, Mr. Saville produced a letter from the church bellringers, who stated that on this day ringers from all parts of Yorkshire would attend the church, and that special provision for their accommodation would be a great convenience. The letter added:- As ringing is a task which takes a certain amount of energy, and which causes a great deal of perspiration, it is necessary the ringers not stand about and contract chills and colds.

The police opposed an extension of the morning hours, but did not object to an afternoon extension. The magistrates refused a morning extension but granted an extension from 3 to 5 p.m.

*This is a report in the Batley News in April 1923.*

*Lawrence Sheard*

## **Bingley**

### **Ann and Claire Celebrate Big Ben's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

A chance remark in the pub after Bingley ringing practice resulted in two tickets being drawn for a tour of Big Ben and The Great Westminster Clock on its 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Weekend. One month later, security checks completed and certified as unlikely terrorists, Claire, from Saltaire, and I received a date and time for our tour, along with quite worrying guidance about climbing 334 steps, not suffering from a

range of medical conditions, claustrophobia, vertigo etc. More worrying for me than for Claire, since she is about 20 years younger and 6 stone lighter than me.

On Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2009 we missed ringing and arrived in London by lunchtime on a beautiful, clear, sunny day. Our climb time was 2.30pm and we passed rather importantly through several sets of security to wait in Westminster Great Hall, with our party of 25, to climb the tower. I was please to see a range of ages, sizes and apparent levels of fitness.

Our guide was one of the three master clock makers who work on all the clocks in the Palace of Westminster – some 500+, including the Great Westminster Clock. The guide was interested to know who was there for the clock mechanism and which were the bell ringers, with just the slightest hint of amusement that people might be more interested in Big Ben itself. The beautiful clock mechanism has a Double Three-Legged Gravity Escapement and ability to keep accurate time to within 2 seconds with the aid of pre- decimal coinage, while the bell itself is slightly less technical, in his view!

The climb was no problem, with a relatively wide staircase by bell ringing standards and stops at the information room (120 steps), clock mechanism (200 steps) and bells (334 steps) and a visit behind the clock faces on the way back down, also included at the stops and during some parts of the climb, were amazing views across a picture perfect London in the sun.

A fascinating explanation was given at each stage with plenty of humour and interesting anecdotes, including why the lights on the outside have green filters, how birds of prey benefit the clock faces, what happened when the clock makers sent a spoof e mail about using euros to keep the mechanism accurate, the series of unfortunate events associated with the bell from its first conception to the final hanging of the second bell and why there is a square hole the size of a pocket diary in Big Ben itself.

The trip included ensuring we were at Big Ben itself when it chimed the hour. Wanting the full experience and to give the impression bell ringers can handle it, we did not use the ear plugs provided. We then had the privilege of both watching and hearing the 5 (yes 5) hammers ring the quarters and the 200kg hammer strike the 13.7 tonnes, 2.7 metre diameter, 2.2 metre high Big Ben without any sound proofing – a fantastic experience.

Each visitor received souvenir badges to commemorate the occasion, and postcards to take away, as no photography was allowed in the tower. In the next parliamentary year tours of the tower are likely to be bookable through your MP – well worth a trip if you are in London.

*Ann Cossavella*

## **Ecclesfield**

The church of St Mary the Virgin, Ecclesfield has been granted Ringing Centre status by the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers. This recognises Ecclesfield as a “centre of good practice in the promotion and teaching of bell ringing”. The announcement came following the installation of an 8-bell ringing simulator and equipment that allows the movement of the bells to be seen from the ringing

chamber via a video link. Weekly practices are held on the open bells on Tuesdays 19:30 – 21:00 and on the simulator on Fridays at 19:30 – 21:00.

The award by the CCCBR coincides with the launch of an ambitious appeal branded as the “Ecclesfield Peal Appeal” to raise £60,000 for essential maintenance to the bells and the addition of two new bells to create a ring of 10. Fund raising events are already in the pipeline including concerts, coffee mornings and wine tasting.

Information about the facilities at the Ecclesfield Ringing Centre and of the Ecclesfield Peal Appeal can be found at: [www.ecclesfieldtower.org.uk](http://www.ecclesfieldtower.org.uk)

## Halifax

Fraser Murray rang his first peal on 28th June of Cambridge S Minor at Halifax, having learned to ring there less than two years ago. Fraser has only rung five quarter peals – two of Bob Doubles and three of Bob Minor – but is already capable of ringing 4-Surprise Major methods inside without assistance.

As well as ringing very well in this peal, he went on to repeat the performance in an equally excellent peal at Saltaire, only six days later, on 4th July. He's only 11 years old - keep it up!

*James Holdsworth*

Halifax, 28 June 2009, 5040 Cambridge S Minor,

- |     |                      |    |                  |
|-----|----------------------|----|------------------|
| 1.  | James Holdsworth (C) | 2. | Lorraine Trebble |
| 3.. | Fraser Murray        | 4. | Neil Murray      |
| 5.  | Paul Brook           | 6. | Alan Trebble     |

## Kirkheaton - A Ringing Endorsement for a new Guide Dog

I would like to give a big thank you to the ringers who came to my tower of St. John the Baptist, Kirkheaton, on Friday 12 June. They had come so that my guide dog instructor (David) could see how my new guide dog (Pedro) would respond in the ringing chamber and to get him used to the idea of me bell ringing.

I first started to learn how to ring in Spring 2005 under the tuition of the Captain, Richard Senior. He had to be very patient with me and alter his teaching methods, as I have no vision (I am blind due to a degenerative condition called Retinitis Pigmentosa). At that time, Ellie was my Guide Dog and she was already used to coming to church. For her, it was not a problem to be in the tower, she would often curl up in a corner and snooze until ringing had finished.

However, as these things often happen, Ellie had aged and come to the end of her working life. This usually is when dogs are between 9 and 10 years old. Ellie went into retirement with a lovely couple a few miles away.

Unlike Ellie, who was small for a yellow Labrador, Pedro is a lot larger, possibly because he is a cross between a black Labrador and a Golden Retriever. Hence, my concerns were whether he would be alright going up the spiral stairs; once in the ringing chamber, where would he stay and how would he react to the sound of the bells – after all, dogs have a much better sense of hearing. Well, I need not have worried: he did struggle a bit going up the stairs but once up there he settled down and he just about managed to fit where Ellie used to stay. Also, once the ringing started, Pedro did not bat as much as an eyelid. Perfect! Nor did he mind when I got up to ring; he remained lying down and waited for me to finish. Pedro's behaviour in the tower was faultless (which is more than can be said about my ringing/striking).

It's just a shame he can't be taught how to handle a bell though!

*Toseef Ahmed*

*[Toseef is also the Secretary of the Halifax Archdeaconry Society - Ed.]*

## **Long Preston - Restoration of the Bells**

The restored three bells at Long Preston were rededicated by the Bishop of Bradford on Sunday 10 May. For those who have never rung at Long Preston, the church itself dates from the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, although the lower parts of the tower are possibly Norman. It is one of the ancient churches of the Yorkshire Dales and is well recognised as a 'gem'.

The tower is not an open structure as normal down which the bell ropes can hang. It is solid, with a spiral staircase up through it. The belfry is slightly bigger than the tower and overhangs the nave, the belfry wall resting on four corbels. The three bells are lined up on the nave side of the belfry and the ropes hang vertically without deviation down the open 'slot' into the nave about a foot from its walls. It may well be that the layout at Long Preston is unique: the bells cannot be augmented.

The bells were cast by Whitechapel in 1760, with at least one replacing an earlier bell cast in 1630. They were then rehung in late Victorian times by Mallaby of Masham. Two bells had since developed short hairline cracks emanating from their crown staples, their 'go' had become very difficult and full-circle ringing had to cease.

The restoration included welding the cracked bells and rehanging them all with modern fittings in the Mallaby frame, under which new supporting beams were placed. Hayward Mills Associates carried out the work. No tuning was contemplated, as the bells are pleasant sounding. A new Ellacombe Chiming Apparatus has been constructed so that the bells can be sounded Sunday by Sunday when experienced ringers are no longer readily available.

The bulk of the finance came from The Heritage Lottery Fund, with a significant contribution from the Yorkshire Association. Other donors were the Church Buildings Council, the Lancashire Association and local parishioners.

*Bob Cater*

## **Penistone - Ringers' Outing**

We had planned a leisurely day - Saturday 28 March - one tower in the morning to be followed by a pub lunch and one tower in the afternoon. The weather forecast wasn't too good, a cold day with sleet is not ideal for travel 'over the hill' and across Saddleworth Moor but it wasn't bad at all and the weather added to the drama of the wonderful Pennine landscape.

The first tower was Christ Church, Friezland and we were warmly welcomed with tea and coffee. Although some of us had not rung at Friezland before, we felt rather at home in this tower. Friezland has had a long association with the Barnsley & District Society of which most of us are members. In the past Friezland has won the Barnsley Shield striking competition on several occasions practising closed lead ringing, as does the Barnsley & District Society. We put the six bells here to good use and then made our way to the lunchtime venue.

We had decided on The Church Inn at Uppermill for lunch because of its close proximity to the afternoon tower, or could it be something to do with its reputation for special ales? We had plenty of time for lunch and the good food and chat made for a convivial atmosphere.

A gentle stroll over the road led us to our next tower St Chad's, Saddleworth. We very much enjoyed ringing the eight bells here, ringing call changes, Kent Major, Yorkshire Surprise Major, Cambridge Surprise Major and Stedman Triples. We were joined by two local ringers and the time flew by.

As we left the last tower to make our way home just one question was left to answer - 'when's the next trip?'

*Jean M Doman*

## **Pickering – Handbell Concert**

Pickering Ringers organised a handbell concert at SS Peter & Paul, Pickering on 26 September. A packed house sat enthralled by the Beverley Town Handbell Ringers, conducted by John Atkinson, ring a wide range of music 'off-table', ending with Strauss's 'Thunder and Lightning Polka – which produced a standing ovation and an encore. £500 was raised from the sale of tickets and a raffle and many of the audience are already looking forward to another visit by this talented team. Thanks are due to Gerry Bacon and Pam Robb for organising the evening.

*Anne Deebank*

## **Ranmoor - Installation of the 10 in 1934**

On Easter Eve Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> March 1934 a service of dedication of the bells led by the Bishop of Sheffield took place, following the original eight being recast by Messrs Gillett & Johnston, Bell Founders of Croydon, and two new bells added. This year is, of course, their 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Recently a service sheet from 1934 was given to the ringers and a copy of this is now on the wall in the ringing chamber.

During the Service, which was based around Evensong, the Bishop, the Vicar, the Churchwardens, Lieut. Colonel R O Wever and members of the Bells Committee proceeded to the Tower. Mr Cyril Johnston, representing the Bell Founders, handed the bell ropes to Col. Wever who then handed them to the Churchwardens. The Wardens then passed the original eight ropes to the Bishop for the Rededication, followed by the ropes of the two new bells for the dedication of these bells. The Bishop then handed the ropes to the Vicar. The bells were then rung as the Bishop and others left the tower.

I find this part of the Service quite interesting as anyone who has come into the ringing chamber is always told not to touch the ropes in case they inadvertently should pull the bell over from its balance position. With all this passing around of the ropes and as the bells were in their 'raised' position it appears to me to be a miracle there was not an accident! I also assume that the Service was relayed from the tower into the Church so the congregation were aware of what was happening. Another interesting point to note would be all these people going up and down the staircase, which is the same one that is there today, and it is not very wide!

The two new bells are both inscribed:

"This bell was added to the original peal of eight bells by the Sheffield and District Society of Changeringers in memory of Sam Thomas in 1934"

I have a personal interest in this as my grandparents were instrumental in organising the fundraising for the recasting of the original eight bells and every Sunday evening envelopes were opened and the sums of money that parishioners could spare that week were counted up. The bells had been silent for almost two years as ringing had been stopped on 12<sup>th</sup> June 1932 because the bells were unsafe. There must have been great celebrations to hear the bells ringing again.

*Pauline Heath*

### **Sheffield Cathedral -Rosie's first peal**

As the youngest member of a ringing family, it was probably inevitable that Rosie Reading would at some point succumb to an invitation to ring her first peal, but she has successfully resisted the pressure for many years. Her brother has been particularly insistent, and with weeks to go before she leaves home for Cambridge University she finally agreed. The choice of 8-Spliced Surprise Major was hers, the middle eight of her home tower where she learnt to ring at the age of seven (Sheffield Cathedral) was the obvious location and the conductor was inevitably her brother. For once, Alan did not use one of his own compositions, but the excellent one-part palindromic 5024 by John Warboys.

As well as her brother, Rosie was joined in the peal by her parents - her uncle Paul would also have liked to ring but due to the short notice was not available on the

day. Rosie rang the peal in fine style, with only the occasional word of guidance required, but has not expressed any interest in ringing peals at the rate of her rother or father.

Sunday, 13 September 2009 in 2hrs 58mins, **5024 Spliced Surprise Major (8 Methods)**: 640 each Bristol, Pudsey, Rutland, Superlative, Yorkshire; 608 each Cambridge, Lincolnshire, London; 138 com; atw.

- |    |                  |    |                    |
|----|------------------|----|--------------------|
| 1. | Simon J Reading  | 2. | Alan G Reading (C) |
| 3. | Rosie E Reading  | 4. | Judith M Reading   |
| 5. | David A Jackson  | 6. | Brian A Sanders    |
| 7. | Adrian M Moreton | 8. | Michael J Platt    |

First peal - 3.

With best wishes to Rosie for her forthcoming studies at the University of Cambridge

*Simon Reading*

## **Skipton**

Congratulations go to Gail Cater who rang her 500<sup>th</sup> peal in November - Owd Betts S Major at St. Wilfrid's, Harrogate. Gail's first peal was PB Major in 1967 at Wakefield Cathedral, under the auspices of her tutor, the late Wilf. Moreton. The 500 includes 76 peals in-hand: she learned handbell ringing under Robin Brown (now of Bedale) when pregnant with Julia.

She says peals of note were ringing in the first peal of Stedman Sextuples on the new diatonic fourteen at Winchester Cathedral in 1993 and Stedman Cinques in-hand in Coventry in 1973.

*Bob Cater*

## **York Minster - Carillon Open Day at the Minster**

The British Carillon Society held its Autumn Playing Meeting at York Minster on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> September, and this proved to be a great success.

The carillon at the Minster was installed just over a year ago and has proved to be very popular with both the York community and the numerous visitors who arrive daily in our City. It is the first new carillon to be installed in the British Isles for more than forty years, and the first in any English cathedral. It is played daily by a newly recruited team of carillonners. The Minster's Dean & Chapter encourage its use, not only to announce Evensong but also as part of the City's festivities, and all manner of music chimes forth from the south-west tower as is appropriate to the occasion.

The weather on 26<sup>th</sup> September was absolutely perfect for carillon playing and listening – bright, sunny, still and warm and not a cloud to be seen in the sky from dawn till dusk. Carillonners and supporters from various parts of the Country joined the local team to enjoy playing and listening, eating and socialising, and music

ranging from Abba and Vera Lynn to Mozart chimed forth from the Minster for more than five hours. The meeting concluded with Choral Evensong and a buffet tea at our home opposite the Cathedral, and everyone went home with a big smile on their face.

If I had my way many more cathedrals would have a carillon – they're such fun and engender vast amounts of good will.

*David E Potter.*

## **OBITUARIES**

### **Norina Bond - Kirk Ella**

Norina died on 27 March, sixteen days short of her 103<sup>rd</sup> birthday.

She was made a member of the Association in 1944 and between then and 1960 was a regular Service ringer, ringing quarters of Grandsire, Plain Bob Doubles and the treble to Plain Minor methods.

An accident at work (she was the village postmistress) and then caring for her mother meant she had to give up ringing for a while, but she started again after the augmentation in 1977.

She was a regular Service ringer and 'rang in' the Millennium, but fading health meant that she had stopped ringing by the end of 2002. Since then she always kept her interest in the Kirk Ella band.

*Elizabeth Johnson*

### **Douglas Raymond Horne (Ray) – Roundhay and Collingham**

20 May 1920 to 21 May 2009

For those of you who do not know Ray, he was the Tower Captain of both Roundhay and Collingham, near Leeds. If you didn't know about him, he certainly knew about you, being an avid reader of the 'Ringing World'. It was typical of Ray's tenacity and 'never give up' attitude that he celebrated his 89th Birthday shortly before his death. Even after his stroke in 1998, he still came up the tower and rang briefly.

Ray came to ringing relatively late in life, following his daughter, Judi's, own introduction in the late 1960s. Taught by George Hartley at Thorner, he in turn was able to teach many generations of youngsters. Ray was very practical, and 'twinned' his towers with each other for joint practices to bolster attendance and share learning - later 'twinning' also with Kirk Deighton, Knaresborough and Bramham.

Ray's chosen career was as a draughtsman and Civil Engineering Assistant with John H Haiste, where he met his wife Kathleen. During WW2, Ray served with



distinction in the battles of Dunkirk and El Alamein, as well as in Egypt, Palestine, Levant and Italy.

Ray will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

*Peter Oldfield*

## Peal of Note

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2009 at Chapel  
Allerton  
5040 Surprise Minor (7 methods)

1. C Barrie Dove (C)
2. Janine Jones
3. Andrew Yardley
4. Robert Jordan
5. Nicholas Soanes
6. Ronald Warford

Celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary  
(16/5/1959) of the Conductor's first  
peal (Plain Bob Minor, conducted by  
Irvin Slack) which was rung in this  
tower and on the same bell.



The photograph is taken from an  
article in "The Ringing World" 1964,  
titled "Up and Coming Youngsters"

## ASSOCIATION GARMENTS

There's a new range of garments now available via Dinah Rhymer - sweatshirts, polo shirts, hoodies & zipped hoodies, fleeces, microfleecees and rugby shirts - all in a large variety of colours. They also display the new Association logo which is a bell superimposed onto a Yorkshire rose, and to which can be added the name of your tower if you wish.

To find out more please contact Dinah on 01482 882621 or [drhymer@drhymer.karoo.co.uk](mailto:drhymer@drhymer.karoo.co.uk).

It's hoped the range will be shown on the Association's web site soon - [www.yacr.org.uk](http://www.yacr.org.uk).

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

General Meeting	6 February	C & NY Branch
General Committee Meeting	6 March	
Harrogate Course	9-11 April	
Assoc AGM & Inter-Branch Striking Contest	8 May	Leeds Branch
Whirlow Course	9-11 July	
Life Members Day	21 August	
White Rose Shield 12-bell Striking Contest	4 September	Bradford Cathedral
General Meeting & Sunday Service		
Striking Contest	18 Sept	East Riding Branch
New 10-bell Striking Contest	16 October	Knottingley
Snowdon Lunch	20 November	Ilkley

In addition there will be two one-day Courses on Surprise Royal and Conducting, organised by the Education Committee.

There's also:

The CC Meeting 29-31 May

The Eliminators for the National 12-bell Striking Contest 27 March

The Final of the National 12-bell Striking Contest 26 June

## RINGING JARGON

'Blue line'

In the late nineteenth century Yorkshire's most famous ringer, conductor and first President of the YACR, Jasper Snowdon of Ilkley published 'Diagrams', the first book to show the complete plain courses of all the popular methods of the day. To trace the workings of one bell through a method it was convenient to join up each point where that bell's number was printed in the diagram. Snowdon and his printer used blue ink for this and thus the 'blue line' was born! The effect is to create a very visual pattern of the work of any bell which can be committed to memory and used during ringing to help keep you right.

'Hunting'

Hunting, aka 'Plain Hunting' or 'Original', is usually the first change ringing attempted by the learner who has mastered call changes. If you are familiar with call changes and have been called to move, step by step, from the lead to last place in the row (the 'back') you have already done a kind of slow motion hunting. Hunting is precisely that: a steady progression moving place by place from the lead (first bell to ring in the change) to the back (last bell to ring) or going down the other way from back to lead. In a plain course (q.v.) of hunting each of the bells completes this path smoothly up and down until they return to their starting position in rounds. Hunting is not an end in itself but a vital component in most other methods. Look at any of the

esoteric blue lines towards the back of your tower's copy of 'Diagrams' and you will spot many lengths of hunting.

'The Exercise'

This is the term used to encompass the whole of 'ringingdom'; the collective noun for all ringing and ringers. The use of this word originated in the late eighteenth century when bell ringing became a fashionable pastime amongst certain well-to-do gentlemen. Mental and physical exercise were thought to be derived from ringing, so much so that many had dumb bells (sic) installed at home for what we would now call a work out!

## **WANTED!**

**Joint Editor of this Newsletter to look after the layout and liaison with the commercial Printing Company.**

**You only need reasonable word processing skills and a couple of days (maximum) every 6-monthly edition.**

**For more details please contact me on [anne.deebank@virgin.net](mailto:anne.deebank@virgin.net) or 01751 460274.**

***Anne Deebank***