

Northern News



The Northern District Newsletter - June 2020

Although churches may now open for supervised private prayer, it is likely to be some time before tower bell ringing will be allowed in mainland UK. However, revised government guidelines allow up to 6 people to meet outdoors so long as they maintain at least 2 metres distance from each other. This allows - somewhat distanced - handbell ringing to restart. So, a step in the right direction and in the meantime, this is another, albeit shorter, newsletter to keep us all a little more in tune with each other.

How to keep Ringing during Lockdown

Remote Ringing Platforms

In the previous edition of *Northern News*, we provided an overview of some of the online platforms that have been developed to enable some form of ringing during the current restrictions. Since then, there have been further developments and improvements...

Ringin' Room: this is a website for "distributed ringing", for tower bell or handbell ringing. Ringin' Room is being continuously developed, with new features and more stability. Confused about how to use it? No problem - James Ramsbottom has written an [easy-to-understand users' guide](#). For those looking for a "tower" or practice to join, there is a [Facebook group called "Ringin' Room Take-Hold Lounge"](#). The SCACR Committee is planning to trial running some Association Ringing Room practices, at various levels - if you have any requests or suggestions, please get in touch (sec-north@scacr.org)!

Handbell Stadium: this software runs on PCs and Macs running Windows, Linux or OSX. It provides a 3D visualisation of a handbell circle and a real-life perspective of the other bells in the circle, while you ring your pair using dummy handbell motion controllers in a realistic up and down motion. You can practise with it on your own while the computer rings the other bells, or you can practise/perform over the internet with other ringers. If you are interested in giving it a go, I suggest you read this helpful [blog about Handbell Stadium](#). Handbell stadium requires electronic motion controllers (the "bells") - [here are some instructions about how to make your own](#). You can watch a [video of Handbell Stadium in action](#).

Association News - Update from the "Alternative" AGM

As the SCACR Annual General Meeting couldn't be held in its usual form in May, the Steering Group worked hard to find an alternative format that would allow as many people as possible to participate. A secure, online voting form was set up, and paper voting slips posted to those people who aren't on email. Reports were circulated in advance, with the opportunity to ask questions ahead of voting. No queries were received!

A record 269 votes were cast; 230 were online and 39 were postal votes. All Officers were elected, and we're delighted that **Alan Collings was also elected Honorary Life Member** of the Association. Alan has been a very active and supportive member of SCACR since moving to Sussex 18 years ago. His mini-ring, Dewbys Bells, has been made freely available for a range of events, including the South of England Show. He is also known for his Handbell Recovery

business, and for generously sharing his expertise and enthusiasm for the restoration of handbells! [Read the full citation.](#)

Position	Elected Office-Holder
Master	Rob Lane
General Secretary	Hamish McNaughton
Treasurer	Sue Gadd
Bell Restoration Fund Secretary	Graham Hills
Trustee	Mark Dawkins
Safeguarding Officer	Sue Child
Eastern District CCCBR Rep	Alison Everett

The General Committee has made an initial review of this information. The follow observations were made:

- Many members liked the [electronic Annual Report](#). Whilst it is not the intention to replace the printed copy, the General Committee will look at ways that an electronic version might become part of our future offering.
- The level of participation in the vote far exceeds anything that could have been expected at a traditional AGM (usually a good turn-out is around 50 people!). Again, the General Committee is resolved to look for ways of encouraging this level of engagement by the membership in future years.
- The General Committee will also look at the ways that other associations have increased inclusion and participation in their AGMs.

You can [read the full report of the AGM](#) on the SCACR website.

Updates from around the District

Val Atkins



We bid fairwell to Val Atkins of St Margaret's Warnham this Spring as she married and moved out of the district. As well as being a long time member of the St Margaret's band, Val was instrumental in teaching a new band at Itchingfield in 1999. She continued as a member of both bands for the last 20 years, and for the last 10 of those has been a Trustee of the Association.

Val taught Charles (her husband to be) to handle a bell so that they could ring together for their wedding in February. Once lockdown is over they intend to continue their ringing careers in Rutland where they have bought a house just a stone's throw from their local tower. *Thanks to Elaine Farrow, Rusper.*

What are Northern District Towers doing to stay connected?

Update from Balcombe

We keep in touch with our ringing friends in Balcombe and elsewhere in this area by e-mail and telephone with news from the association etc. and St Mary's keeps in touch with us with news from the Church and all the other people in the church. We're a bit fed up that we can't ring,

and also that we don't know when we can. Saw the item on the BBC news the other night; nice of the BBC to broadcast something about ringing - even if they do get it wrong. (Tenors Going.....!!)

Anyway, we're otherwise ok, thinking of taking up cycling to get some exercise in the absence of ringing, except I haven't got a bike, and can't easily get one while all the shops are shut! Anyway, only another week before the shops are open. I've just heard, from Iain Davy in Crawley, that one of his ringing friends in New Zealand has just told him that ringing has started again there. Lucky ringers!. Bit too far to go for ring, that's the problem for us, always assuming that they would let us in! *Thanks to John Moore, St Mary's Ringers, Balcombe*

Update from Rusper

We are pleased to report that after a long and rather complicated battle with Covid-19, **Peter Marriott** is now home and being spoiled rotten by his family. He says he will definitely be back ringing as soon as we can all start again. *Thanks to Elaine Farrow, Rusper*

Update from Horsham

With long queues for supermarkets and difficulties in getting grocery deliveries, many ringers have resorted to rummaging in the back of their cupboards to rediscover old bottles of spirits... Mike Cattell even found some Babysam (when did you last see that in the shops?! Risking the awful prospect of gaining a reputation for being "lushes", the Horsham ringers bring you ... recipes for their favourite quarantine cocktails - or quarantinies!



- Lockdown Headbanger: Galliano liqueur, vodka, orange juice
- Limone Royale: creme de cassis, white wine, lemonade, lemon garnish
- Sick Note: light rum and ginger beer
- I call this white wine: a glass of white wine
- Penny Special: gin, apple juice, elderflower cordial, ice & lemon slice
- I thought it was going to be awful: Tia Maria, milk, Cointreau, Gran Marnier
- Quarantini Clementini: gin, orange juice, orange and lemon garnish
- One annoyed cock: a cock's tail

Quiz: match the ringer to their concoction innovation (hint - the photo may or may not help!)

Thanks to Steph and Richard Pendlebury, Horsham

Why, When, Where and How? Interviews with ...

This series of interviews turns the spotlight on individual ringers. This time our intrepid reporter, Steph Pendlebury, shines the light on Rosie Gregory and Michael Lickiss.

Rosie Gregory

Rosie retired from nursing at Haywards Heath hospital 7 years ago. Having learned to ring as a child but stopped in her 20s, she came back to ringing within a few years of retirement. She loves retirement!



Where and when did you start ringing?

Aged 10, in 1961, at St John's Crawley.

Where do you ring now?

Slaugham

How did you get into ringing?

My big brother Tim took me up the tower - George Jennings, who was a well-known character in the 1960s - taught me to ring. He was a highly respected ringer, who was well known at the time - but I didn't know that then! He was a bit scary, actually. But then, after 18 years, I got too busy working shifts nursing, and stopped ringing. I came back to it 28 years later! I could ring a bell no problem after the break, but ropesight took some time... I had rung several quarter peals when younger, including one in

Australia, but I have very little memory of them - unless I'd found my records, I would have forgotten all about it.

What do you enjoy most about ringing?

Coming back to ringing from retirement, the social side of ringing has been great. You could - if you wanted to - ring every night of the week; I don't - three times a week is quite enough!

What do you find challenging?

I can ring a plain course of Stedman Triples now, but in order to progress, I'd have to do more practise! I've reached a level where I'm happy.

Who or what inspires you?

My brother died 9 years ago, in Australia - he was my inspiration in ringing. I had the satisfaction, after a long break, of being able to ring a quarter peal with him in Australia.

Michael Lickiss

Michael is pictured below together with his fellow Horsham Ringing Remembers' recruits. He is an independent GP Practice Manager who does a lot of trouble-shooting - so he's rather busy at the moment.



When and where did you start ringing?

Late July 2018, at St Mary's Horsham.

Where do you ring now?

Horsham

How did you get into ringing?

I was bored! I was in-between jobs and jobs were few and far between at the time. I had already done the house up, and I was looking for something else to do. I heard about the Ringing

Remembers campaign and remembered that my son had enjoyed ringing, so I thought I'd give it a go...

What do you like most about ringing?

What I'm enjoying is that it's more difficult than I thought it would be - you have to concentrate to get it right, so it gets your brain working. I've very much enjoyed going round different towers with Codgers (luckily my job allows me to be flexible). And I've enjoyed meeting new people; I knew a few from church, but now I know them much better, and have met other people too.

What do you find most challenging?

Ropesight! I like to learn a sequence, so I'm tempted to learn by numbers but that's not what you're meant to do.

Who or what inspires you?

I am inspired by the variety of people who are ringers - people of all age groups, including teenagers, keen to help me!

News from the wider world of ringing...

Resources for Ringers during Shutdown

The Association of Ringing Teachers (ART) has produced a [summary of resources for ringers during shutdown](#), including ways to ring with others, keep in touch, and practise at home. There's also a list of online training resources, helpful YouTube videos, blogs and podcasts.

YouTube Ringing Video Competition

As we announced in the previous edition of *Northern News*, the Central Council is running a [monthly competition to find the best ringing videos on YouTube](#). The [winning videos from May's round \(for best striking\)](#) have been announced - call changes at Kenn, Devon won first place; Delight Minor on handbells and half-muffled Doubles at Great Gransden were awarded Highly Commended. There were 28 entries and the judge was looking for sustained, consistent, rhythmical and accurate ringing throughout the entire recording. As Rob Lane, SCACR Master, commented, "The winning call changes piece is great to watch and listen to, and it goes to show that good ringing doesn't have to involve complicated methods, only good striking!"

June's competition is for "most unusual or interesting ringing video". There is plenty of scope here to bring interesting things to the attention of fellow ringers. It might be ringing at a particularly unusual tower, an amazing handbell performance, a talk on an aspect of ringing, or something that few will have seen. There is a £25 prize to be won, so get your thinking cap on! The deadline is the end of the month; more information [here](#).

Ringling History and Churchyard Mapping Project

Are you interested the history of ringing? The Church of England is working, through the Church Buildings Council, with a number of national partners to develop an on-line resource combining maps, registers and images relating to burial grounds. A team of ringers is trying to find out more about the ringers of the past and organise that information into something useful. Fancy contributing? [More information about how you can get involved](#).

Churches Conservation Trust Talks

The Churches Conservation Trust is running a [series of online talks and lectures exploring different topics](#) connected to the churches in their care. One that may be of particular interest is "An introductory canter across the centuries, exploring aspects of church bells and bellringing", at 1 pm on Thursday 9th July.

Ringling (and Ringing Room) on BBC News

For those of you who missed it, an [excellent piece about ringing during lockdown and Ringing Room](#) was aired at the end of the main BBC1 news bulletin on Saturday 30th May.

Updates to Dove's Guide Online

Many of us enjoy visiting other towers and keeping a record of when we rang at one of the 5000+ places listed. "Dove" is the shorthand description for "Dove's Guide to Church Bell Ringers". The first list of all change ringing towers in the world was published in a book by Ronald H Dove in 1950.

The data was digitised and made accessible via a [website](#). John Baldwin, its digital creator, is stepping back after 20+ years and now [a project is currently underway to migrate and organise the data on to a more robust, sustainable, and accessible platform](#). There is already a new platform and database and other data is being transferred. New systems are planned to incorporate mini-rings, former bell towers (e.g. St Paul's, Brighton) and tuning figures. There will be a login system (connected to BellBoard logins) for people to note their own collections and browse patterns and maps. Other plans include a new website and an app for mobile devices, but not all at once

The Dove [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) feeds provide regular updates on the project's progress. You can continue to submit updates about your tower, but they won't appear until the new database goes live on 1st October. See the Website: dove@cccbr.org.uk

CCCBR's Strategic Priorities No.5

You may have seen the discussion in The Ringing World (15 May & 5 June) regarding the CCCBR's new Strategic Priorities No. 5: the pursuit of method ringing is not the only measure of success for a ringer. Many of us are familiar with the high standards set by West Country Call Change ringers and Call Changes are often rung everywhere for special occasions, especially weddings, so that the ringing and striking are reliably good. However, the thinking behind SP No. 5 is that we primarily ring bells for Sunday services and that we should 'recognise' that not everyone aims to spend more time learning, when they are already capable and successful ringers. Pressure to progress onto method ringing is not necessarily for everyone and could be why some people give up feeling disappointed. It would be interesting for thoughts to be shared in our newsletter.

Personal Ropes

Philip Sealey (Warwick) has written a Letter to the Editor of The Ringing World suggesting "Personal ropes" to overcome associated risks re Covid-19. He admits it is an Aunt Sally of an idea(!), but this is an extract:

"I was connecting two lengths of hosepipe in my garden and wondered about applying the same principle to bell ropes. I imagined driving to my home tower to ring. In the car I had brought part of a rope comprising a tail end and a sally, above which is a snap connector. I climb the tower with my bit of rope and exchange pleasantries with the band, all of whom have their own rope pieces with them. Dangling above our heads (tower keepers look away now) are cut-off ropes, minus sallies and tail ends, each with a universal connector. The captain calls for a piece of ringing and the band connect their personal ropes to the corresponding tower ropes. At the end of the touch, ropes are uncoupled (unless you are to ring that bell again) and at the end of the session, ropes are taken home. Ideally, personal ropes should be machine washable. This may be a big ask for rope makers."

He goes onto mention some of the difficulties and hoops that would have to be overcome, but I thought it was worth sharing! Let's hope it doesn't come to this ...

Thanks to Stella Bianco, Cowfold and Steph Pendlebury, Horsham for summarising some interesting bits and pieces from Ringing World and elsewhere.

Coronavirus Guidance

The UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy is [available online](#).

The latest guidance from the Church of England is [available on their website](#).

The latest guidance from the Central Council (CCCBR) is always available at: <https://cccbr.org.uk/coronavirus/>. The [Central Council's document](#) clearly explains the risks and proposes several possible mitigation options. None of the suggestions can be implemented of course at present as we are not allowed to ring.

Keep well, keep safe and let's hope we are all ringing and socialising again soon!

Don't forget to send updates, photos, anecdotes and jokes to news-north@scacr.org by early July for the next issue of Northern News...

Website - for news, events and information: www.scacr.org

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