

Northern News



The Northern District Newsletter - September 2020

Return to Ringing - Updated Guidance

The Central Council President has been meeting with representatives from the Church of England to discuss a gradual lifting of some restrictions on ringing. The CC has submitted draft amended guidance to the CofE to try and reduce the separation between ringers to 1m plus mitigations, in line with guidance in other areas. The CC team is also taking on board many comments received directly about how we can move further forward.

The [Covid guidance](#) pages on the Central Council website have been reorganised so that a history of updates can be included (rather than the latest news at the top). It should work better on phones as well. The guidance is updated every Friday.

What's On

District Events - Call for Ideas

It seems unlikely that we will be able to return to any kind of in-person events with "normal" ringing in the near future. However, that doesn't mean that we can't do anything together! I would like to put together a programme of monthly District events for the next few months. Do you have ideas for (suitably socially distanced) gatherings or virtual events? If so, please [get in touch!](#) Walks, quizzes, pub gatherings, handbell practices, online ringing via Ringing Room (or other platforms) - what would you like?

Association Events

**Save the Date - Next Change Ringing Handbell Morning - Saturday 28th November
Via Zoom and Ringing Room**

Following on from the very successful first handbell online handbell morning on 19th September. Here's what Ali Lucas had to say about it...

In all 23 ringers aged from 8 to 90 signed in nice and early, keen for the morning ahead. Those brand new to handbells joined with more seasoned ringers to increase skills and confidence.

The morning resulted in some great progress. There are a few people who have now rung plain hunt, and indeed even Kent TB Major on virtual bells, but not yet had the opportunity to ring on real ones. Seasoned RingingRoom users rang two bells for the first time, and ringers who have been practising handbells for a while responded just as you should to the unexpected call of 'single!' The use of the 'shared screen' allowed for theory as well as practical learning. Breakout rooms allowed us to split into smaller groups to focus on the learning ambitions that had been shared.

Still a sociable event too, there was time for a chat in the coffee break and the chance to see faces not seen for a while during this somewhat surreal year.

Huge thanks are owed to Hamish and Jonathan for arranging the morning and to all the experts who offered their time to support it. It looks like lockdown and virtual ringing is going to be with us for quite a few months to come, so this won't be the last handbell morning. The next Handbell event will be on 28th November 2020.

Updates from around the District

Marking VJ Day on Saturday 15th August



The bells at St. Mary's, Horsham were rung for 15 minutes on Saturday 15 August 2020 at 11:00 to mark VJ Day, the end of WW2 and in memory of those who paid the ultimate sacrifice to maintain the freedom of all nations; may they rest in peace. Ringers (from the left), Tom White, Mike Cattell, Val Burgess (Tower Captain), David Capewell, and Ian Smith. Thanks Ian.

Summer gatherings in Horsham Park

A number of socially distanced gatherings were held in Horsham Park over the summer organised by Graham Burling with ringers connected with Lower Beeding. Bring your own and take away fish and chips were the order of the day. Photos are from June and September gatherings. Thanks Nigel and apologies for not publishing months ago.



Further Update from Worth

Work continues on the tower at Worth as these photographs from 20th August show. No ringing has taken place yet as you can imagine, but our 10.00 am Sunday services have started and the arriving congregation have been greeted by the sound of Worth bells using a 1983 recording of a quarter peal (which I have on my phone) and a Bluetooth speaker. We also used the same arrangement to ring out a wedding at the start of August. One of our ringers has asked if that means that they are permanently "furloughed". Let us hope not! *Thanks to Neil Dobson.*



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 Margaret Dancy and Tom Bance.

Margaret Dancy

Margaret started ringing as a teenager then took it up again in retirement, and is (normally) a stalwart Sunday service ringer.

When and where did you start ringing?

I rang for approximately a year when I was about 15, at Lower Beeding. And then I gave it up, partly because I had exams coming up - ringing was Thursday evenings and Latin was Thursday evenings. And also, all the other ringers were older gentlemen. And I had to cycle in all weathers in the dark from Crabtree.

Where do you ring now?

Lower Beeding



How did you get back into ringing?

When I retired, 45 years later, there was an open afternoon at Lower Beeding for those interested in ringing. Mandy (now also a ringer at Lower Beeding) went with me. There were about 8 visitors, plus Richard Tilley and a lot of Horsham ringers there. At the next session, Mandy and I were the only two learners who turned up! This was in October, and I was ringing rounds by Christmas. I was very fortunate to be surrounded by good ringers, so if I kept counting I had a hard job to go wrong. Margaret Thomas in particular was a great help to me, as a teacher.

What do you like most about ringing?

I like the company. I like a bit of a challenge. You meet some very interesting and talented people. If I had a good practice, it was wonderful.

What do you find most challenging?

Trying to learn Stedman!

What inspires you?

A lot of talented ringers, who give up their time to teach.

Tom Bance

Although Tom has rung a quarter peal (covering, on a mini-ring), he doesn't really count himself as a ringer. He's a "ringing widower" (to Kate, at Horsham) who's very happy to get involved in the social side of things...

When and where did you start ringing?

I rang my first mini-ring in a pub near Durham about 3 years ago.

Where do you ring now?

I try to avoid ringing at all costs! I prefer beer.

How did you get into ringing?

I was happily enjoying a pint in the afore-mentioned pub, when I was asked if I would like to have a go on a bell. After enough peer pressure, I was forced to put my beer down and take some lessons.

What do you like most about ringing?

The beer. And the fact that a lot of ringers are borderline alcoholics. Most non-ringers wouldn't even consider drinking three or four pints on a school night! I've finally found the crowd to match my drinking habits 😊

What do you find most challenging?

Trying to steer the conversation away from detailed ringing stuff.

What inspires you?

I'm inspired by the older ringers who've had a fruitful and enjoyable life - and have lots of good stories to tell in the pub! I want to be like that when I'm older...

Correction from last interview with Stella Bianca

Stella was describing how she got into ringing and wants to make clear that whilst she didn't attempt to gain her Guide ringer's badge, her friend Frances Gilbert did! Many apologies to Stella and Frances Gilbert.



News from the wider world of ringing...

YouTube Competition

The September round, "Best showcase of school or university ringing", will soon be open for entries - [more info, including how to make a video, and how to submit your entry](#).

June's competition was for "most interesting/unusual YouTube video". There were 40 entries covering a huge range of topics and styles from more than 30 ringers from across the country and beyond... The judging panel - mostly teenagers - chose "[Tim Handbell Robot](#)" by Tim Hart as the winner; "[Blindfolded ringing on handbells](#)" and "[Stedman Caters set to music](#)" were runners-up, with "[Surprise Minor Tapped on Glasses](#)" and "[Pyro Hunt Minimus](#)" ("It's a fun and unique way of making plain hunt on 4 *actually* interesting 😊😊") highly commended.

The prize for the July YouTube competition, **best striking on eight bells or more**, once again goes to Devon. The judges commented "the Devon Call Changes showcased were superbly rung, almost faultless for the first half of what was by far the longest video submitted and hypnotic in their consistent excellence." [Watch the winning submission](#).

The results of August's competition - "Best video demonstrating change ringing not on tower bells" - will be announced soon...

Gender Imbalance in Ringing - please contribute your experiences

The Central Council has sponsored a research project into the question: Why is it that there is an even gender balance among ringers in the early stages of ringing, but the gender distribution changes at more "advanced levels"? A [new working party](#) is looking at this question, so that we can better understand why - although around 50% of new learners are female - there are so few women conductors, few women in senior leadership roles (e.g. ringing masters), fewer female peal-ringers, etc.

They have started collecting and analysing data, which can be viewed on the website: [womeninringing.info/](#) The group would love to hear your views and **invite you to share your experiences in this area via the website**; your stories are an important part of the research and outreach.

Dove's Guide update

The transfer to a new software platform has hugely increased the potential power of [Dove](#). The next stage is transferring in all the data about individual bells (the prototype National Bell Register). A new system of classifying towers into regions (whether geographical, ecclesiastical, or by ringing association) has been introduced, and the recording of practice nights has been rationalised. A new admin system for capturing change requests and workflow (Dove Tickets) has been set up and tested for use by the Dove Team.

Volunteering Opportunities

The many benefits of volunteering have been well documented. It can help you make friends, learn new skills, advance your university application or career, and even help you feel happier and healthier by connecting you with others and your community. For some it enables them to bring their skills and experience to the service of the wider ringing community, whilst for others it enables them to branch out and use skills which may previously have been under-employed.

There are many opportunities to volunteer on activities and initiatives to support ringing and ringers via the [Central Council](#). Anyone can volunteer with the CC, not just reps. At the moment, there are particular opportunities around events planning, organisation and management - if you're interested, get in touch with Council Rep Steph Pendlebury (sec-north@scacr.org). For a

full list of the various workgroups and stewardship teams, with contact details, see the [news article on the SCACR website](#).

Brief summary of the Central Council and Ringing World annual meetings (Saturday 5th September)

The motion to allow smaller societies (<50 members) to register with the Council and take part in (but not vote at) meetings was passed. The "forward plan" for the coming year was summarised, with an emphasis on moving towards a direct membership central ringing organisation, and reducing the size of the Council...

The 2021 RWNYC is pencilled in for 10th July, at Worcester.

The motion to change the Ringing World to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation was not passed, more due to poor preparation and lack of communication rather than because of strong objection to the motion itself.

The 2021 CCCBR meeting is planned to be held in Nottingham in September, but sadly will not include a roadshow (due to the uncertainties about what might be allowed in terms of gatherings/events).

The Council meeting was live-streamed and the recording is [available to watch on YouTube](#).

.....
Welcome back to postal subscribers! We'll post out tower copies to tower correspondents once normal ringing practices resume...
.....

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 for the next issue of Northern News...