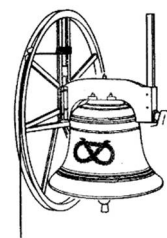


Clappertrappings

Newsletter of the North Staffordshire Association of Change Ringers
Ringing the changes across the county



www.nsacr.org.uk

Autumn 2022

Welcome to the Autumn edition of Clappertrappings

Thank you to everybody for their updates, photos and news. This edition was edited solely by Lydia Ernest. A massive thank you to her for a job really well done.

A BELL RINGER ABROAD Helen Thurstan

When the news broke of Her Majesty's death on 8th September, I was on holiday in Spain having finally gotten around to our Andalusian adventure which had been put off because of Covid. The nearest I got to bells were those at La Giralda Tower, part of the amazing Cathedral in Sevilla. And so it was too, when it came to the Queen's funeral, I was still away. Sadly, I could not be part of that moment in history when collectively, bell ringers came together to contribute to the most beautiful soundtrack of one of the greatest events in this country.



bells at Giralda Tower, Seville

The pageantry, ceremony, the sounds of the drums, trumpets, bagpipes, choirs (and more), the horses hooves, the thousands of people ... so quiet, but most especially, our



bells, all created that very special soundscape. We pealed, called changes, tolled, in cathedrals and small churches up and down the country. We rang with full muffles with the tenor half muffled, creating that beautiful sound that only says one thing - we are marking the passing of a monarch. Tower captains went above and beyond organising the special ringing for those two weeks in honour of our wonderful Queen. And every single bell ringer stepped up, ringing with pride, enthusiasm and skill across the two weeks from the time the Monarch's death was announced, to her final laying to rest at Windsor.

What an incredible honour and privilege to be able to bell ring on that momentous occasion. The whole day, from what I could see from the snippets of videos on BBC News, looked to be the most extraordinary, spectacular and moving event, a wonderful tribute to our departed Monarch. An exceptional and inspiring woman, clearly loved and admired by so many people at home and abroad.

It was a wonderful event, albeit very sombre, full of pageantry, itself preceded by a memorable 2 weeks. So much outpouring of emotion, a country coming together with so many other people around the world,

all mourning the passing of a very special and remarkable lady. And we bellringers were key to the whole spectacle.



RIP Queen Elizabeth II

Caverswall, St Peter's Church & Dilhorne, All Saints Church

Monday, 19th September, saw the bell ringers start the day at Caverswall at 9.30am with 5 ringers from Caverswall and 4 from Dilhorne. The ringing was superb! We rang Queens and Kings, Hunted and rang Tittums and Back Rounds. It was so nice to have so many friends together to ring for Her Majesty.

The Dilhorne ringers left for their tower which meant there were 3 ringers pulling down, doing it superbly. Then a strange thing happened....the lights flickered, everyone looked at one another. Margaret, looking at the stones of the wall, suddenly had an image revealed to her; lo and behold she could see a dog in the stone. Everyone agreed it looked like a Corgi!! All were amazed!!! A fitting image to finish up with perhaps?

At Dilhorne, at 10am, there were 6 ringers until 10:15am, when 3 ringers left for other towers; then 3 ringers rang until 10:30am; for

the last ten minutes there was ringing with 5 ringers as some had arrived from Caverswall. Each ringer took it in turn to toll the tenor 96 times.

The ringers finished by sharing tea and cake with Her Majesty!

Some great ringing and sharing expertise across local towers so that the bells could be heard on this saddest of occasions.



God bless her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II



Stoke Minster ringers practising for the Queen's funeral

COMMEMORATIVE BADGES

Sally Brown, Leicester Diocesan Guild

07778 269081

Following the sad news on Thursday 8th September, bells were ringing out all over the world to mark the passing of HM Queen Elizabeth II.



To commemorate the ringing for this historic event, members from the Leicester Diocesan Guild have commissioned some bellringing badges to mark the occasion. The proposed design is one specially commissioned from Rebecca Banner, who also designed a badge to mark the ringing for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee (which was purple - see photo and end of article if you'd like to order one). These new badges would be a gold-coloured base metal with black enamel - see photo. The badge will cost only £5, including P&P, with the profits being donated to the Leicester Diocesan Guild Bell Repair Fund and the All Saints, Loughborough tower fund. The badges were ordered from the manufacturer on September 15th and will take approximately 3-4 weeks for production.

ED: *I know a number of folk from the North Staffs Association have said they'd like a badge, and so I offered to put the information in Clappertrappings in case you wanted to take advantage of them.*

Please could you email your order to bellbadges@gmail.com so that Sally has a copy of your email address. Remember to include your address for delivery. Following that, Sally will give you bank details and/or address for payment/cheques.

Note: *If you'd like a Jubilee Badge, there are still some available, contact Rebecca Banner via her email address: ringing@thebanners.uk*

SAD NEWS

Regretfully, we must report the death of David Simpson of Stone, on Sunday, 2nd October. Our thoughts and prayers are with Margaret and with David's family at this time.

Dave has been a much-loved character of North Staffs ringing for many years. He was in charge at Stafford until work commitments intervened and directed things at Stone when he again had time. This included taking a large part in the project to rehang the bells and augment them to ten.

Behind the scenes of the association, Dave was very active, being both membership secretary and peal recorder. He was also joint webmaster and a great friend who will be greatly missed. Our condolences to Margaret and his family.

Funeral

David's funeral will take place at St Michael, Stone on Monday 17th October at 1:30pm. Ringing before the service starts at 12:30pm and there will be ringing after the service.

Wake

The wake will be at the Boat House, Aston Marina ST15 8QU. Please email Margaret Simpson if you are intending to go, so she can get an idea of numbers.

simpson.margaret@virginmedia.com



Margaret and David Simpson

SAFEGUARDING LEADERSHIP COURSE

Report from Peter Burgess Stone Bell Ringers

In July five people from the North Staffordshire Association of Changer Ringers attended the Lichfield Diocese Safeguarding Leadership course.

It gave a good insight into the responsibilities and process that anyone in a Leadership position should be aware of relating to Safeguarding.

Lichfield Diocese expect at least all tower captains to have completed the Leadership course and be DBS checked, with other members of the tower recommended to complete the Basic Awareness and Foundation online courses.

<https://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org/>

***Margaret Carnall* REPORTING ON THE FUNNY GOINGS ON AT STOKE MINSTER**

Eerie happenings at the Minster. After Sunday ringing a few weeks ago, everyone went home and all was quiet and peaceful, until 2.35 am when the church warden answered the telephone! The caller said: "the church bells are ringing". Why are they ringing so late?" The caller told the church warden that it was a joke!!! The church warden was completely baffled to say the least. Of course, no-one would be ringing at that time of night. But the caller was right, there was a bell ringing. And no, it wasn't a joke! Or even a



terrible prank!! And it wasn't ghosts, although what a great story that would have been! The stay on the third bell, which was waiting to be changed, decided to snap! So, number 3 bell simply rang itself.

Thanks to Ray for making the stay, and Andy for fitting it, all was well for Saturday ringing school.

Wobbly CLAPPERS at SANDON ALL SAINTS

For some years now we have had wobbly clappers in 3 of the bells which has made

them difficult to ring. They have been refurbished and now all is well, as they are easier to ring and sound a true note, (as you can now doubt hear).

The bearings were greased annually which helped, but 60 years since the last re-bushing had meant that the pivot/bearings had worn considerably.

Bells 2, 3 and 4 had become difficult to ring and after the Platinum Jubilee the clappers were unbolted from the top of the bells and taken to John Taylor & Co of Loughborough, bell founders, who refaced and built-up the clapper ball faces, grinding them back to their original spherical shape, fully furnace annealed the clappers and re-bushed the clapper tops with resiliently mounted precision oilite bushes and refitted them. The cost was £718 plus vat, but thanks to a grant of £200 from the North Staffordshire Association of Changeringers, Bell Restoration Fund, for which we are very grateful, it was possible to have this work done.

Ken Pemberton, Tower Captain.

ST PETER'S ALTON



The lovely 22cwt 8 at Alton were cast and installed in 1959 and are now in need of a full overhaul of

the fittings and also cleaning and repainting of the frame. After much

discussion we are now well on

the way with a project to remove all the bells and frame from the tower and to augment to 10. This

will have the advantage that the steel and iron frame can be shot blasted and galvanized before painting, the headstocks can be fitted with clapper adjustment screws and, importantly, we will add

two bells to give us a light 6. While the bells go well, the back 6 are a bit of a handful for the less



experienced and the front 6, in the words of the DAC bell advisor, yields "a musical scale that defies easy description and a sub-optimal aural experience for the listener".



We will, of course, still have the lovely 8 as well as a lovely 10.

From the Mobile Belfry at the County Show and through the publicity about our project locally we have had a big influx of new ringers in the last 12 months, which is really good. We can now get up to 10 new ringers at rounds and simple call changes at a practice so, if we can keep making progress while the bells are out, we should at least be able to ring call changes on all the bells when they are back.



The last peal before augmentation was rung on 23rd August and by ringing the tenor I circled the tower to peals – just in the nick of time!



On 25th August we had a trip to Loughborough for a tour of the foundry and to see the two new trebles being cast. We also had a ring on the bells at the foundry and did better than we might have expected given that they are like our front 3 with 9 extra trebles.

We have started stripping down the 7th and Tenor and all the bells and frame are due to go to the foundry in October and we hope they will be back in the tower to ring for Easter next year.

Alan Walters, Tower Captain.

AN INVITATION TO YOU FROM STAFFORD

There will be a blessing service with all the bells on the church floor. This is going to take place Tuesday 22nd November at 5:30pm.

Please let Nigel Horritt know if you would like to be there:

nigelhorritt@yahoo.co.uk

NEWS FROM KEELE 11

In June, we rang our second quarter of the month.

St John, Keele, Staffordshire

Saturday, 25 June 2022 (8–0–2 in G#)

1280 Doubles (2m)

Grandsire and Plain Bob

1 Phil Gay (C)

2 Ray Daw

3 Roland Wakefield

4 Wendy Daw

5 Steve Mellor

6 Tom Boulton

First attempt for Tom.

Rung during a garden party, held within earshot of the bells, organised by Dr Robin Studd in memory of his wife Angela who died in December 2021 in her eightieth year. Angela was a great appreciator and supporter of our ringing over many years Ray and Wendy were invited to join the four locals because Tom, who rang very well for his first quarter, was taught to ring at Stoke Minster ten years ago. He has just graduated from

Keele, but we hope he will continue to ring with us.

Woodlands Wednesday has again had mixed fortunes. On June 22nd we lost a peal but rang a quarter as a farewell to Geoff Pick

Keele, Staffordshire

Woodlands

Wednesday, 22 June 2022 (0–3–19 in A#)

1250 Yorkshire Surprise Major

1 Philip W Gay

2 Paul Jopp

3 Michael Wilshaw

4 S Geoffrey Pick (C)

5 Simon JL Linford

6 Stephen G Askew

7 Timothy M Davis

8 Gordon R Birks

Geoff and Linda Pick came to Staffordshire in the late sixties and over the succeeding fifty

years made a huge contribution to ringing in the area, particularly at Cannock. Earlier this

year they decided to move to the North Bristol area to be near their daughter Jenny. Geoff

has been an occasional member of the Woodlands Wednesday band since 1997, always willing to ring when needed and happy to help us out at short notice, so we decided that his departure should be marked in an appropriate way. His last appearance as a

Staffordshire resident was to be on June 22nd, and we managed to put together an

appropriate band, mostly from our regular squad but with a guest appearance from Simon Linford, who was taught to ring at Cannock by Geoff when his father was incumbent there.

The band included Steve Askew, one of Geoff's successors as secretary of the Lichfield and Walsall Archdeaconries Society, and another successor, Jean Nixon, was originally in the band but had to withdraw

because of illness and she wishes to be associated with this quarter peal.

The band's combined peal total with Geoff was 267, not that high but not trivial. Similarly, Geoff's total at Woodlands was 24, which made us his third most popular tower after

Cannock and Bloxwich. But he is noted not so much for the number he has rung at any one tower, but for the number of towers, 378 in all, and he is the only ringer to have rung peals in all 141 towers in traditionally defined Staffordshire. We suggested that Geoff should choose the method, and when he told us he would like to ring old-fashioned five-spliced we were slightly concerned that Simon might be disappointed that there were no new pickled egg methods, but he declared himself happy with the choice. We had two ringers who had not rung a peal at Woodlands, Simon Linford and Gordon Birks. We did not manage a peal, but Geoff called a quarter of Yorkshire before we went to the pub. This was our only ringing during June, and the practices fared little better because of holidays and illness. But we managed to maintain Sunday ringing, although not always on all six.

On July 2nd, on the morning of the meeting at Madeley, a visiting band rang a peal at Keele, the first peal on the bells since December 2017. Woodlands Wednesday continued to have mixed success, with two peals in July and two in August.

During August I paid two visits to Loughborough with Simon Lingford to view progress on the new mobile belfry, which has continued to be slow, as a result of which we decided it was not ready to be launched at the Roadshow on September 4th. As a substitute the Lichfield mobile was booked to go, and on the day I spent most of my time supervising the ringing. Taylors worked hard on the new one, and decided it was ready after all, albeit in a very incomplete state. Still very much work in progress, but the bells were ringable and tried by a large number of people, some of whom told me that the bells didn't handle

as well as those on the Lichfield. This was significant, as one of the objectives of the new mobile is for the bells to handle as much like full-size ones as possible.

One of the features of the Roadshow was an exhibition of interesting items associated with ringing, and I took a North Staffs peal book, one of the few still written up in the grand manner, in our case by Norman Sharp.

We were saddened by the news of the Queen's death on September 8th and did half an hour of half-muffled (we only have one set) ringing at noon on the following day. When we started ringing, I realised that our muffles have become rather thin, so that the contrast was not as great as it should be. Time for a new set!

Phil Gay, Tower Captain.



Keele band who rang in memory of the Queen on September 9th

L-R: Lyndsey Mellor, Pauline Mellor, Roland Wakefield, John Digan, Steve Mellor, Phil Gay, Rowena Gay

EVENTS COMING UP

Up-coming Events

Wed 26th October

[Hoar Cross Monthly Practice](#)

Sat 5th November

[Morning Meeting & Pub Lunch - Seighford](#)

Sat 10th December

[AGM - Tower to be Announced](#)

Sat 7th January

[Afternoon Meeting - Dilhorne](#)

RINGING SURVEY

Message from the Chairman

At the end of 2021 we sent out a survey to gather data about the health of ringing at the towers in our Association. Thank you to those who completed the questionnaire.

The results are summarised below, and I would invite any observations, comments or suggestions you may have. The Committee will meet ahead of the next meeting when we will consider the results and any comments.

Alan Walters

Chairman

Number of bells at your tower:

# Bells	Towers
10	1
8	9
6	12
5	1

Total replies 23 out of about 65

Do you have enough ringers to ring all the bells at practice night?

Yes 13

No 6

N/A 4

Do you have enough ringers to ring all the bells on Sunday mornings?

Yes 8

No 10

No ringing 5

(one is not a church and has no service)

Do you have someone who can teach new ringers in your band?

Yes 18

No 5

Does your band ring:

Methods: 12

Call Changes: 10

Would your band benefit from an occasional experienced ringer, to help progress the band?

Yes: 13

No: 8

N/A 2

Would your band benefit by creating a 'cluster' with other local towers

Yes: 14

No: 7

N/A 2

Approximate percentage of ringers who are over 70

50%

Approximate percentage of ringers under 30

<10%

Number of Ringers under 18?

<2%

Do you have ringers in your band that are NOT members of the North Staffordshire Association of Change Ringers, if so, how many? A small number, mostly learners or from other towers.

Comments:

A number of comments that 'method' ringing towers also ring call changes. Some towers already in clusters and benefit from visitors on practice night. 5 towers wholly dependent on ringers from elsewhere.

NSACR 100 CLUB

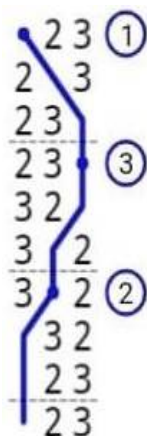
A reminder that the Association runs the 100 Club to raise funds for the Bell Restoration Fund. The way it works is that members pay a subscription of £12 and are entered into 5 draws through the year. There are four prize draws, usually at business meetings, and one Superdraw at the Association's AGM. If fully subscribed the first prize will be £50 at the prize draws and £100 at the super draw.

Joining, and so helping to support the Bell Restoration Fund, is simple. Just click the download and enrolment form from our website, print a copy, fill it in and return the form to the 100 Club Organiser.

Winners for October 2022 – congrats to all!

- 1st Dinah Watts - Caverswall
- 2nd Teresa Boothby - Stoke Minster
- 3rd Steve Askew - Brewood
- 4th Ros Smith - formerly Dilhorne

CHURCHYARD BOB



QUEEN ELIZABETH'S DROP SCONES

In honour of all things ROYAL, drop scones, otherwise known as Scotch Pancakes, Queen Elizabeth II made for President Eisenhower on the occasion of his visit to Balmoral castle in 1959.

According to records Queen Elizabeth II prepared drop scones for the President, using a family recipe. She later sent the President a letter enclosing the recipe. With a suggestion to use treacle instead of caster sugar.

INGREDIENTS

- 150g plain flour
- 1tsp bicarbonate soda
- 1 tsp crème of tartar
- Pinch salt
- 2 eggs
- 50g caster sugar
- 150ml milk
- 2 tablespoons melted butter (for cooking)

METHOD

Beat all the ingredients (minus the butter) together, leave to



stand for a short while.

Add a small knob of butter to the pan (not too high a temperature) and using a table spoon, drop the mixture into the hot butter, using the pointed end of the tablespoon to make rounds.

Cook until larger bubbles appear then turn over.

"I like them with a smear of butter, or jam"....Marg!!

Enjoy, as her Majesty and the President allegedly did.



FURTHER INFORMATION

All information can be found on our website. It is recommended that you check the website regularly in case of any changes to events and updates on the Pandemic and returning to ringing.

Keep up-to-date with events and news online at
<https://www.nsacr.org.uk/>
