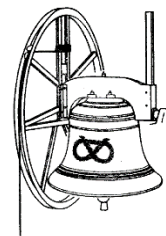


Clappertrappings

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



www.nsacr.org.uk

Spring 2023

GOODBYE WINTER HELLO SPRING!



We hope you enjoy this combined edition of Clappertrappings for Winter 22 and Spring 23, which comes, as ever, with our grateful thanks to everyone who supports us by contributing.

Helen Thurstan & Charlie Ernest, Editors.

NSACR PROGRAMME FOR 2023

Keep up-to-date with events online at www.nsacr.org.uk. When attending events where tea is served, please email your details to teas@nsacr.org.uk

Upcoming Events

For all events, please see the website for further information.

Tuesday 14th March, 7.45pm to 9.15pm

This is a monthly Surprise Major practice at Eccleshall, (ST21 6BY) (8 bells), organised

by Selwyn Jones and Chris Adams. Methods range from Cambridge upwards.

Please contact the group leaders before attending for the first time.

Saturday 1st April, 2pm-4pm,
Afternoon Association meeting at Cheadle,
St Giles RC (ST10 1ED) (8 bells)

Parking is available at the Tape Street Pay & Display (ST10 1UE), £1.70 for 2 hours, free after 3pm.

Prior to the meeting there is a walk around the Cheadle area and a pub lunch, organised by the Ring and Ramble activity group. The walk starts at 10am, meeting to boot up for the walk (meeting point tba), 10.15am and the 3.5 mile walk around Cheadle will commence, culminating at 1.30pm for the pub lunch. Again, details to be confirmed.

See NSACR website for further information.

Tuesday 11th April, 7.45- 9.15pm at Eccleshall

Monthly Surprise Major Practice

Saturday, 29th April, Association Tour

Taking place in the Penkridge area – details to follow. See website for further information.

NSACR UPDATES

Alton Bells

On the same day as the walk, lunch and meeting with afternoon ringing at Gnosall on Saturday 4th March came the joyous news that the 10 Alton bells had arrived home. We were all invited to see them whilst they were in situ in the nave of the church, before being hung. Alton had a steady stream of visitors, some of whom had a trip up the bell tower. The bells were blessed on the 5th March 2023.

The ringers are very hopeful that they will be ringing the bells by Easter. I know we wish them all well, and we hope that timetable stays true!



Alan Walters, TC, Alton



Jackie Kent & Gill Smith from Dihorne



Stafford Bells

More great news, this time from Stafford, in that all the bells there are now in place,



and each was tested individually.

They were finally rung on 7th March 2023 and it sounded terrific. (Those of you with Facebook accounts will know...) And those of you ringing obviously know too; it must have been such a joy to finally



ring the bells after such a long time.

There are more photos on the NSACR website, and you can hear the bells in action on the Stafford Facebook site.

The sound control and work on the new clock is yet to be completed however, more about that to follow.

Barton-under-Needwood

It is planned that the present ring of 8 be refurbished and augmented to 10. This will provide a light front 6. The total cost of the project is £131,000. Funds of £127,000 may have been raised if all applications are successful. We wish them well!

RIP David Midgley

This is a slightly extended version of the eulogy which Phil Gay will deliver at David's funeral on March 13th.

David was born in 1941 and learned to ring at Newcastle in the fifties. He rang the first of his 409 peals in 1960 and was soon ringing peals regularly with Norman Sherratt's band. He gave up ringing in the mid-eighties but more recently he had started to help at Madeley, where he lived. He died in hospital on February 1st following an operation for bowel cancer.

One of the things I have discovered over the years when attending funerals is that one always discovers something new about the person being commemorated. I expect many are aware that David was a bellringer, but I suspect some of you won't know how good a bellringer he was. He was very good, and paradoxically that was why, in his prime, he stopped doing it. In the sixties, seventies and early eighties David was very active as a ringer, not just locally at St Giles Newcastle but over a

wider field. He was a member of several peal bands – invited groups who ring three-hour performances for recreation, because experience has shown that this is one of the best ways of taking part in top-quality ringing. David rang with two peal bands in this area and one in Cheshire which travelled all over the country in search of good bells and good ringing. He was an excellent ringer of big bells, which are important for setting a good rhythm, essential if a good standard is to be achieved. He found he was being asked to ring in more peals than he wanted, and, unwilling to accept only some of the invitations, he decided to decline all of them. He dropped out of ringing altogether, and only started a few years ago when the band at Madeley fell on hard times and he became a much-valued member of it.

David was a very modest person and would never seek to hold any kind of office, but in the sixties, he was for several years secretary of the North Staffordshire Association of Change Ringers, which came about in a rather unusual way. His predecessor, a fellow member of the Newcastle band, decided to emigrate without telling anyone except David, simply handing over all the files to him the day before he left, ostensibly for Canada but actually for Australia.

Although he stopped ringing, he didn't lose touch with his ringing friends, and had regular outings with Ralph Mitchell to visit railways, in which they had a shared interest. This was not just train-spotting, they both had workshops in which they built miniature locomotives, which were not always completed. I think when David's garage is cleared, those doing it will find an almost complete five-inch gauge locomotive. He also put together a

collection of ready-made gauge one live steam locomotives which he took to a garden railway in Keele to operate. His workshop was not used exclusively for locomotives – thirty years ago when I was constructing a small ring of bells in my garage David very helpfully made some components for me on his lathe. In pursuance of his railway interests, David was a member of the Ffestiniog Railway Society, and he went there as a volunteer. To make this easier he bought a log cabin in a nearby forest.

Over the years David owned an interesting selection of cars. When I first knew him, he drove an Austin A35, and in January 1965, it took us to Bristol for a ringing dinner, with me being allowed to share the driving in the days before most of the M5 was open. After that he owned a Triumph Vitesse, which was a sporty version of the Herald. Even sportier was the Sunbeam Tiger he owned in the early seventies, and David Danby has told me of an exciting journey which they and his new wife made to Inveraray in Scotland to ring a peal. More recently he drove more conventional family cars and was looking forward to getting another one.

Everyone I have spoken to has good memories of David, a really terrific bloke and a great pal.

I will always remember him with affection for his self-effacing, modest and mildly eccentric character.

A gentle person and a good ringer. We will all miss him very much.

An in-memoriam peal was rung at Woodlands on February 15th. The band included friends who had known him for sixty years and had rung many peals with him.

Woodlands Wednesday

[Keele, Staffordshire](#)

Woodlands

Wednesday, 15 February 2023 in 2h 11 (0–3–19 in A#)

5056 Cambridge Surprise Major

Donald F Morrison (No 2420)

1 Philip W Gay

2 Frank R Morton

3 Harold Dowler

4 Josie R Martin

5 Alan P Walters

6 Paul J Atkins

7 Stephen G Askew

8 Michael Wilshaw (C)

Rung as an affectionate tribute to the life and achievements of David J Midgley, of Madeley, Staffs. Dave was a mainstay of peal bands based in north Staffordshire and south Cheshire in the 1960's, 1970's and 1980's and, more recently, has been very much valued in helping to maintain ringing at Madeley. This peal was rung by some of his many ringing friends who have all enjoyed his company over the years and will miss his presence.

RIP YVONNE PYNENBURG

We regret to report the death of Yvonne Pynenburg of Swynnerton on Saturday, 4th March 2023.

Yvonne and her husband, Frank, learnt to ring at Swynnerton in the 1980s and Yvonne was Tower Captain until quite recently. She rang several quarters, mainly at Swynnerton and Seighford.

In recent years, Yvonne ran the local Swynnerton Post Office, until forced to retire due to ill-health.

Funeral details will be published on the website when known.

CORONATION OF KING CHARLES III

The crowning of the King inside Westminster Abbey is set to be an historic occasion, featuring regalia and highly symbolic ceremonies that have not been seen for 70 years. And it is not just about Charles, Camilla as Queen Consort will also be key to the celebrations.



The Archbishop of Canterbury will conduct the “solemn religious service” of King Charles and Queen Consort Camilla's coronation, which will take place in the morning and will be

televised by the BBC. A worldwide audience of hundreds of millions is expected to watch. The BBC have waived their rights to the ceremony, so churches have been given the go-ahead, if they wish, to televise the ceremony.

In 1953, when Queen Elizabeth's coronation was advertised as being aired on TV, it sparked an explosion of television ownership around Britain. Around 27 million people watched the ceremony, with a further 11 million listening on the radio.

What will the numbers be like this time around?

We are all still awaiting times for the service and further information (at the

time of writing anyway), but I know that things are happening and hopefully we will find out soon, in order that we can all make our plans.

Queen Elizabeth II's ceremony lasted three hours, beginning at 11.15am.

We had notice that there would be a webinar (Thursday 9th March, middle of the working day, so not much use), and we also discovered that there were a number of resources for churches – see:

[Resources for churches | The Church of England](#)

For some Towers, there have been several new recruits, translating into new members for the Association, which is great news. Now it is just getting them Coronation-ready to ring for the King.



On Facebook, on 'Bellringing' account I spotted there is another notification of

the production of badges – this time, celebrating the King's Coronation. If you would like to order any, please email Sally on bellbadges@gmail.com. They cost £5 each.

(All profits from badge sales will be donated to the Leicester Diocesan Guild Bell Restoration Fund and other bell restoration, recruitment, and education causes.)

NEW MEMBERS MEETING

Stoke Minster – 4th Feb

Welcome to our new members!

5 new members from Alton (Nicky Green, Ian Mosley, Carole Higgs, Alexander Higgs, Moira Mosley)

1 from Ipstones (Judith Ward)

2 from Sandon (Carole Pilling & Irene Larkin)

2 from Kidsgrove (Julie Salisbury & Samantha Bradley)

I popped along to Stoke Minster on the 4th to see what was going on, and to hopefully meet a few new members – and I did meet a few who had popped down for some tea and found themselves inextricably discussing the whys and wherefores as to their reasoning for trying bell ringing. I did not meet all, because quite a number were in the tower ringing, and did not come down whilst I was there – which was all well and good, that's what they were there for after all. But the few I managed to button-hole were delightful, enthusiastic, sometimes a little apprehensive and always very modest about their new bell ringing hobby and their achievements. But it was great to meet them, and I wish them all well (along with the ones I didn't see).

Here's a little bit about the ones I did meet.

Seren, who told me she has been ringing at Stone for 6-9 months, was the least phased



Seren, age 9, one of Stone's newest members

by this woman asking her about ringing. And when reminded by Margaret Carnall that she was supposed to be helping with the raffle, she simply said "but I'm being interviewed!" Enough said! A star is born.

She told me that she can ring rounds now, she has a giant box to stand on. Her Nanny, (Jenny Beech, also of Stone) stays with her and she really enjoys it. She told me she had rung for the Queen and that she was looking forward now to ringing for the King.

When asked what her friends thought of her being able to ring such huge bells, she paused for a moment, and told me that her friends don't really know about it. I was surprised, because she has done so well, for such a young ringer. Her reticence may be down to a perception that perhaps bell ringing isn't really the coolest of hobbies.....

I met another younger member, Ed Brocklebank, who is 15, and in Y10 at the moment. He joined Stone Ringers in 2022 initially because he wanted to do his Silver in the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

(The DofE Scheme itself has three levels; Bronze, Silver and Gold, the suggested timescales for achieving each of these can be found on the DofE Website but I can tell you that the skills section will take Ed up to 9 months in total. The majority of candidates will be looking to use Bellringing to achieve an award in the 'Skill' section of the Award Scheme – Bellringing can be found under the Music heading; it may be possible for them to achieve in the Volunteering Section as well under either of the 'Helping a charity or community organisation' or 'Coaching, teaching and leadership' headings.)

Ed is going to continue with his bell ringing after he has completed the Duke of Edinburgh Award, as he's really enjoying his new hobby. His recent triumph was ringing a Quarter, which is an excellent



Ed Brocklebank, Stone

achievement. So as far as I can tell, he is well along the road to achieving that Silver Award.....

Chris Johnstone has a deep interest in history, and very much enjoys exploring churches, discovering their history and especially listening to their bells. He said that he felt he would like to have a go at



Chris Johnstone. Stone

bell ringing and so he joined Stone. Pete, the Tower Captain, gave him a few hours of teaching on a 1-1 basis, so that he knew the ropes, understood about bell handling

enough to join the general practice night. Now, he regularly rings for Sunday service and he already has his eyes set on moving onto Methods. He is enjoying the whole prospect of learning the bells, getting more experience and is very excited about moving forwards. Chris has a young family, so can't always make the practice sessions, but he is quite committed to learning. Another new, very promising learner for Stone.

Carol Higgs has been learning to ring at Alton for over a year. Her interest stemmed from simply being fascinated with the way they sounded, the way they were handled. She's always been in church and so thought she'd give it a go.

Talking about her learning, she said that Alan and Wendy have been fantastic teachers, that she had been able to ring at Dilhorne and Rocester, as well as at Alton



Carol Higgs, with her son Alexander

with them, which has given her a great all-round experience and improved her confidence. She is quite confident with call changes and is ringing on Sunday morning at Alton.

Carol went on to say that she talked her son Alexander into having a go also, and he is enjoying it very much. Comfortable with call changes and plans to continue.

My last chat of the day was to Anne Brown who started to learn to ring in late 2022; and she is still in the very early stages of her learning process; her husband Mark has been ringing for a while. She has rung at Barlaston, and at Stoke Minster and at Caverswall, all of which has helped to give her more confidence.



Anne Brown

TALK FROM THE TOWERS

News from Keele 9

Phil Gay

Our Christmas ringing was as usual enhanced by visiting family, and as a result we did the best service ringing for some time. On Boxing Day, a family band rang a

short touch of call changes in the garage, including two who were ringing for the first time since this time last year.

Woodlands Wednesday, with slightly different bands, lost the same peal on three consecutive Wednesdays. Having enjoyed a quarter, Steve Askew suggested that we have a go at the PPE Core Seven, a group of methods suggested by Simon Linford as an alternative to the Standard Eight. Five of the eight, Cambridge, Superlative, Yorkshire, London and Bristol, are retained, with the addition of Cornwall and Lessness. I was on the bench on December 21st, when about a quarter was rung. A week later Simon and Tina were in the band, and I rang inside for the first time in a while, and we very nearly rang it. In the bad old days, some bands might have counted it, as we rang over 5000 changes, losing it through a handling mishap two leads from the end. On January 4th I was back on the treble and we rang about half a peal before the method ringing let us down.

When I went to Dilhorne on January 7th I took three bundles of stays which had been ordered, and also a few extra in case anyone else needed any, two of which I sold. The 120 in my new batch are going well, with over a third of them now sold, but I got the size balance wrong and have almost run out of the smaller sizes so will need to get some more.

In September, helped by Josie Martin and Roland Wakefield, I started to teach a new learner for Whitmore. Lisa Gillis made spectacular progress and by the end of the year was ready to ring for a wedding. On January 11th she came to the Keele practice, and adapted well to the extra weight, ringing rounds on six for the first time and then call changes. The Keele

practice has been getting busier since Christmas, and on January 25th there were thirteen, including regular and occasional visitors. On the following day I collected the additional stay timber, which was converted into stays on the Saturday. I took three which had been ordered and several others to the New Members' Meeting,

On January 31st I went with Harold to John Scott's funeral at Audlem. A few years ago, John was a regular member of our Woodlands band, and he rang 41 peals on the bells.

Two days later we received the sad news that David Midgley had died. He was a good friend for sixty years and in the sixties, seventies and eighties had been a very active member of the Association, including several years as secretary. More recently he had been a valued member of the band at Madeley.

More sad news on February 3rd when we heard of the death of Bob Smith. Best known as the conductor of the extent of major in 1963 and the founder of bellhangers Eayre and Smith, he became a good friend as a result of his support for the Woodlands belfry project in the early nineties, when he supplied us with two of the bells and came to conduct the first peal in 1992.

Woodlands Wednesday has rung two peals so far this year, the first of which enabled Frank Morton to become the third person to have conducted peals on tower and handbells on all the dates of the year. We rang a peal in memory of Bob Smith on February 13th:

Woodlands Wednesday

[Keele, Staffordshire](#)

Woodlands

Monday, 13 February 2023 in 2h 2 (0–3–19 in A#)

5040 Surprise Minor (7m)

London; Wells; Beverley; Surfleet; Bourne; Ipswich; Cambridge

1 Stephen G Askew

2 Harold Dowler

3 Philip W Gay

4 Nicholas J Green

5 Stephen W Horton

6 Michael Wilshaw (C)

A celebration of the life of Bob Smith. He was very supportive of the Woodlands project, supplying two excellent bells, one new and one second hand, the current seventh and tenor, and conducting the first peal in December 1992. Rowena Gay, who rang in that peal, wishes to be associated with this performance.

Two days later we rang a peal in memory of David Midgley.



COFFEE & WALNUT CHEESECAKE

Recipe:

200g digestive biscuits processed to crumbs

25g walnuts processed to crumbs

100g butter

Filling

2 dessert spoons instant coffee powder mixed with 2 tbs's hot water, let it cool;

250g mascarpone or other soft cheese;

40g icing sugar;

1/2 tsp vanilla extract;

150g double cream;

Whipped double cream and walnuts to decorate.

Method

Melt butter slowly in a saucepan, add the biscuits and walnuts.

Whip the mascarpone and icing sugar and cooled coffee together with the vanilla extract.

Whip the double cream until it thickens, mix together with the mascarpone.

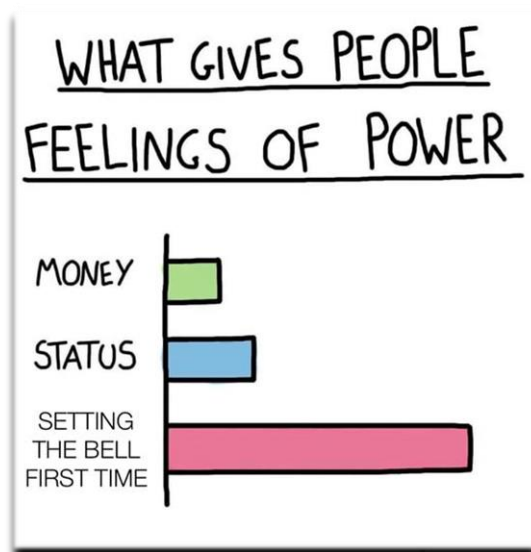
Put into a prepared spring form tiny biscuit mixture level off with a wooden spoon.

Let it cool. Spread the mascarpone mixture on top of cooled biscuits.

Decorate with whipped cream and walnuts.

Enjoy!

You can alter this mixture using 2 dessert spoons lemon juice instead of coffee, (add another 20g icing sugar), decorate with grated lemon peel.



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 the programme and updates.

<https://www.nsacr.org.uk/>

For you articles, photographs and exciting news, please email:

newsletter@nsacr.org.uk