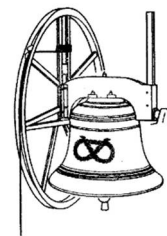


Clappertrappings



Newsletter of the North Staffordshire Association of Change Ringers

www.nsacr.org.uk

Winter 2023



Helen Thurstan

It is almost new year, and we are nearing the end of 2023, so this is the last Clappertrappings. It is not only the last for this year, but my last as Editor. I retire, as mentioned at the AGM, at the end of this year.

I have had a terrific time as Editor, meeting so many fantastic people, hearing such interesting stories, watching promising beginnings grow into something really quite special. I know I will miss doing this role, but it is time to look at new ways of communicating.

I would like especially to thank Phil Gay and Margaret Carnall for being my staunchest supporters with Clappertrappings. They have always had something interesting (and in Margaret's case, fullsome or yummy) to go into the next edition, without fail; and Charlie Ernest

helped enormously too. But thanks to all of you who contributed to Clappertrappings over the years, we loved reading your stories and successes.

So, failing finding a new editor immediately, in the meantime, the web gives us much of the information we need, and our Facebook page is getting more usage. If you do have some news that you are happy to go on Facebook, please send it to newsletter@nsacr.org.uk

The committee will post it. This newsfeed is also displayed on the website for all to see.

AGM DECEMBER 2023

The AGM was held at St Mary's Stafford, on Saturday 2nd December 2023, and it was good to see so many people there, even though the weather was challenging.



North Staffs Assn Ringers – AGM Dec 2023 @ St Mary's Stafford

There were many ringers all keen to try out (or try again) the new bells, which sounded fantastic. The tea was a success (especially the cakes), thank you to everyone involved; and we raised an excellent amount on the raffle (thank you to Margaret Carnall for organising that). Everyone scooted home, just missing the snow.

The AGM will be held at the same time next year, so watch out for that notification.

PEAL BOARDS PROJECT

Phil Gay

We need your help!

A recent *Ringling World* contained an article about a project to put together an archive of interesting and significant peal boards. This can mean several things – a significant performance in terms of what was rung or who was in the band, or possibly an interesting board in terms of its material or the way it is written.

The committee has asked me to co-ordinate our response to this initiative, but I need help. Clearly it is not possible for me to visit every tower to see what is there, so I would like every band to have a look at the walls of their ringing chamber and let me know what is there, ideally by taking photos of any boards which they think should be included in the archive.

My first thoughts are that although our area was not in the forefront of early peal ringing, we do have some interesting boards. There was a peal at St Modwen's

Burton in the 1790s, but I can't remember if there is a board for it. But from the 1880s onwards we have quite a lot of interesting boards. The six-bell towers on the north side of Stoke were among the most advanced in the country in the first half of the twentieth century, and some of their peal boards were produced by a member of the band who was a monumental mason. There is a board at Wolstanton recording about ten peals rung around the turn of the twentieth century, almost all called by William Fitchford who conducted most of our eight-bell peals at that time. The Wolstanton band rang their only peal of minor at Keele, the first peal on the bells, in 1911, which is recorded in a framed piece of calligraphy. The band at St Paul's Burton rang a number of significant peals in methods up to London Major around the same time, with a band that sometimes included Sir Arthur Heywood, founder of the Central Council.

So please have a look at your walls and let me know what you find.

CONGRATULATIONS TO...

More exciting news about the accomplishments of North Staffs Assn ringers found Chris Fitzpatrick undertaking their first Quarter Peal at Barlaston on the 17th November. It was Chris's first chance to try a quarter peal of Bob Doubles on the 4th bell.

Chris, who reports that they were very well supported by Ray, and the rest of the band, was thrilled to complete that quarter peal. The rest of the band in support was:

1. Lizanne Pettit
2. Margaret Carnall
3. David Crump
4. Chris Fitzpatrick
5. Ray Daw
6. Wendy Daw



Chris Fitzpatrick from Caverswall

Chris has also been working hard on behalf of a charity – raising much needed funds for Headway of Cobridge, who support people with brain injuries.

First, Chris had a haircut – a very severe one, hence the trendy headgear. The hair was sent to the Little Princess Trust for

children's wigs and the effort raised just under £300.

Chris thanked everyone who donated and went on to say that they had been painting and decorating at Headway for two weeks, transforming a loading bay/storage area into a cosy and practical outdoor space for activities, including providing hot drinks for ambulance drivers transporting service users to and from the day centre.

And Chris's claim to fame (although not the first appearance), is that the very noble deed (hair cut) and the charity hands on work was noted on BBC Midlands today – you may have seen it?

Many congratulations Chris!

NSACR 100 CLUB

Our latest draw took place at the AGM on Saturday 2nd December. The lucky winners were:

- 1st Jenny Beech - Stone
- 2nd Geoff Horritt - Non-Resident
- 3rd Barry Gooding - Rolleston
- 4th Jim Nixon - Penkridge

The next draw will take place at the New Members meeting in February 2024.

If you haven't joined, please do have a look on the website and chat to Chris Adams from Eccleshall about it.

NEWS FROM KEELE

The first week in June was a busy time, as June 7th was my 80th birthday. It was a Wednesday, so there was going to be ringing, but a bit more than usual. Two peals were planned, one in the garage and one on handbells, both conducted by Simon. I was in neither, but hoped to be able to put together a band for a quarter from the others who would be there, as we were having a party. In the event, there were three quarters, as both of the peals were lost, but we had a good time, shared with over fifty friends over the course of the day.

Woodlands Wednesday

Keele, Staffordshire

Woodlands

Wednesday, 7 June 2023 in 32m (0–3–19 in A#)

1280 Plain and Little Bob Minor

1 Raymond H Daw

2 Dennis Latham

3 Philip W Gay

4 Stephen W Horton

5 Stefan R Zientek

6 Timothy M Davis (C)

Celebrating Phil Gay's 80th birthday today.

Woodlands Wednesday

Keele, Staffordshire

Woodlands

Wednesday, 7 June 2023 (0–3–19 in A#)

1280 Yorkshire Surprise Major

1 Frank R Morton

2 Harold Dowler

3 Raymond J Ballard

4 Timothy C Hine

5 Michael Wilshaw

6 Stephen G Askew

7 Simon J Gay (C)

8 Timothy M Davis

Celebrating Phil Gay's 80th birthday today.

Woodlands Wednesday

Keele, Staffordshire

Woodlands

Wednesday, 7 June 2023

1280 Yorkshire Surprise Major

1–2 Paul Jopp

3–4 Simon C Humphrey

5–6 Simon J Gay (C)

7–8 Ruth Jopp

Celebrating Phil Gay's 80th birthday today.

Other ringing continued much as usual - on June 14th a quarter after a lost peal, and on June 21st a peal of Yorkshire. All of my learners continued to do well. The three at Whitmore are all handling on their own and moving on to ringing with another bell, and the group at Keele, which includes two

teenagers, are also making good progress, moving on to call changes.

Sunday ringing at Keele has been maintained, usually on all of the bells, but we had to cancel a couple of practices when people were away. Stays continue to sell well, with 150 sold since last October. On July 2nd we had two visitors for Sunday ringing which greatly enhanced what we could do, and our ringing consisted entirely of Stedman and Cambridge. My daughter in law Tina Stoecklin was here with her daughter who had been visiting university open days, and Kerry Mellor was visiting her parents. She now rings only when visiting, but like many lapsed ringers is impressively good.

On July 30th I went to Alton for the dedication of the bells. It was good to see our former president, but I was one of only six non-Alton ringers present. I was able to ring on the ten and the front six, and was impressed with both. The front six are about the same weight as our six at Keele, but very different, not least because a front six has different weight distribution and is hung differently and therefore feels different to ring.

On September 20th I started a new learner, a teenager who has chosen ringing as a skill for DofE. I now have ten learners at various stages from handling to hunting, plus a returned lapsed ringer, and all are doing well. I am currently doing four sessions a week with learners. The three Whitmore learners are on track to enable a Whitmore band to ring all six bells for Christmas, and

Madeley is also working towards having a Sunday band again. On September 22nd I went to Madeley to ring for the start of the Papyrus walk.

On Wednesday November 1st my newest learner came to the Keele practice and rang rounds on six very nicely, his first ringing on an open bell. He is my second DofE learner, but has said he will continue ringing beyond that as a member of the Madeley band. In the morning Woodlands Wednesday rang our first peal for two months. The last four losses had all been as a result of handling mishaps, three of them mine, so I was very pleased and somewhat relieved that we got the peal. Two days later we tested the new Whitmore muffles at the learners' practice, and two of the learners, who are now beginning to ring call changes, had their first experience of ringing with muffles, including diminishing rounds, which they did very well.

The Keele muffles revealed themselves as unacceptably inadequate on November 12th, so I am in the process of ordering a new set. We will keep the old set to enable full muffling when required. On November 19th we had our usual peal attempts for Cumberlands peal weekend, but it was lost with a handling mishap (not mine) after half an hour. We are getting very close to the 500th peal on the bells, but progress is disappointingly slow on the last lap.

On November 15th I was in my first peal attempt on big bells for quite a while. Not very big, as I had arranged to go to Whitmore so that Howard Smith could ring

the tenor for his first peal. He rang very well, but the rest of the band were not so good and we lost it. Afterwards we rang a quarter of Bob Doubles for Howard to ring his first inside, so not a wasted morning.

Phil Gay

STONE NEWS

St Michael and St Wulfad

Sunday, 24 December 2023 (10–0–3 in G)

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

- 1 Susan M Kingman
- 2 Jennifer M Beech
- 3 Peter C Burgess (C)
- 4 Greg J Pearce
- 5 John G Burton
- 6 Sue Boden

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

LEARNERS FROM ST MARY, SWYNNERTON

Lynda Latham, one of our learners shares the experience of her and her family in learning bell ringing, which is being conducted learning in line with the ART programme

“We have been learning to ring, as a family, since January when our teenage daughter commenced learning for her Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award.

We are being taught by David Crump in line with the ART ‘Learning the Ropes’

course and we have found the teaching methods he has employed, very useful. Particularly helpful are the techniques designed to avoid, or address, the forming of bad habits early on, with regard to bell handling. In addition, the resources associated with the course, including books, and videos, are very useful to keep referring to and use in our own time, to reinforce our practical learning sessions.

As a Young Ringer, our daughter has also found these more up to date and inventive teaching methods very enjoyable and she has made great progress.

We each have a Personal Achievement Logbook in which David can record our progress in detail and we look forward to continuing "Learning the Ropes."

Linda Latham

MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM DILHORNE DAMSELS



Dilhorne Ringers at their festive celebration

CONTINUITY WITH CLAPPERS

A message from Phil Gay.

Over the last few years, several towers have had clappers re-bushed at the Baldwins Gate workshop of H E Butters and Co. This workshop has now closed, but Graham Barnes who worked there, now works at Huntaway Engineering Ltd. He will be able to continue with clapper work.

For further information phone Rob Siddall on 01782 791600. An advantage of having the work done locally is that it can usually be fitted in between Sundays, and of course, there is less travelling.

www.huntawayengineering.co.uk



Christmas Eve Ringers at Caverswall

L-R: Edna Durose; Dave Walklate; Charlie Ernest; Helen Thurstan; Margaret Carnall; Chris Fitzgerald. Band rang on Christmas Eve, seen here toasting in a merry Christmas and a happy new year!



Christmas Day Ringers at Dilhorne

The first time the bells have been rung on Christmas Day at Dilhorne in living memory!

L-R: Sue Mason, Dave Walklate, Jackie Kent, Margaret Carnell, Gill Smith, Charlie Ernest.

CHRISTMAS CRUMBLE

Ingredients for the Mince Meat

- 175g raisins
- 175g sultanas
- 175g dried cranberries
- 75g stem ginger chopped
- 150g glacé cherries chopped
- 1 large cooking apple grated
- 100g light brown sugar
- 50g ground almonds, or chopped almonds
- 150g butter
- ½ tsp mixed spice
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- ½ tsp ground ginger
- 1 orange finely grated zest and juiced.

200ml ruby port (or orange juice if preferred)



Method for Mince Meat



Sterilise 3 jars and lids by washing in hot soapy water, rinsing well, then place in a

low oven for 5 minutes.

Place all the ingredients in a large pan, heat gently, stirring until the butter has melted, simmer gently, stirring occasionally, for about 10 minutes.

Remove from the heat; leave to cool slightly. Divide into the sterilised jars, seal and store in a cool place, or the fridge.

Alternatively, you can use a good quality mincemeat from the supermarkets.

Ingredients for the Crumble

100g s/r flour

50g caster sugar

50g butter

50g ground almonds

Method for Christmas Crumble

Put a thick layer of the mincemeat in a baking dish, sprinkle with brandy if liked, add either tinned peaches, or pears or fruit salad, (drained off any juice), or use fresh

fruit of your choice. Rub the butter into the flour, add the sugar and ground almonds, sprinkle on top of the mincemeat and fruit. (I usually dot more butter on top of the crumble).

Set oven at 160 degrees and cook until bubbly and browned on top. Serve with custard, cream or ice cream.

Enjoy 😊



IN CLOSING...we finish with a lovely poem written by Alison Falkonakis, from St Michael's, Stone, which she wrote about her band and which she was happy to share with us.

JOYFUL UNION

We gather in the tower,
mixture of young and old,
some from families of ringers
some are new into the fold.

Each drawn for their own reasons
to this fortress off the ground,
walls of solid sandstone
which sway gently to the sound.

Silent in concentration
to give the church her voice,
peal in joyful union
to herald and rejoice.

Muffled, mournful, comfort
for those missing someone dear,
celebrating unions and
drawing people near.

But the bells don't only ring out
they reverberate inside,
and each method finally mastered
fills me with a sense of pride.

Many hundredweights of history
and I'm here to play my part,
for the bells are in the tower,
but they're also in my heart.

Here's hoping you all had a marvellous Christmas, filled with fun, family, friends and festive ringing.

WISHING YOU ALL A HAPPY NEW YEAR!



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 on ringing, events, recruitment & safeguarding.

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