



Shropshire Association of Church Bell Ringers

Quarterly Newsletter - September 2020

Calendar of Events			
Date	Event	Venue	Time
October 3rd	Association Practice	Virtual (Zoom)	7 - 8:30PM
October 24 th	Virtual Meeting and Virtual Striking Competition. Stay for a 'Bring your own tea' and catch-up	Virtual (Zoom)	7 - 8:30PM
November 7 th	6 Bell Association Practice	Virtual (Zoom)	7 - 8:30PM
November 14 th	8 Bell Association Practice	Virtual (Zoom)	7 - 8:30PM
December 12 th	Winter Social and Christmas themed quiz	Virtual (Zoom)	7:30PM

Dear members and friends,

Since I last wrote, some of us have made a welcome albeit restricted return to ringing. At Lilleshall we have been ringing for Sunday morning services. We are limited to single family sessions as our ropes fall less than 2 metres apart, but nevertheless we are making a noise and the bells are once again sounding out across the village. It is heartening to hear villagers tell us how much the bells have been missed.

With Covid-19 infection rates rising and new measures to restrict the spread of the virus being introduced, it seems that a return to 'normal' ringing is as far off as ever. As frustrating and disheartening as this is, it is important that we follow the guidance agreed by the Church of England and the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers about how and when we can ring (no 'cleverdickery or whataboutery' required).

We are continuing to organise a calendar of 'virtual' events. It would be fantastic to see some new people at one of our Ringing Room practices. These are informal sessions that are open to all, so why not give one a try. We'd be happy to run a further introductory session on virtual ringing, please get in touch if you are interested.

There is some concern about how many ringers will lapse before we can return to unrestricted ringing. Towers may need to run a post pandemic recruitment drive, recruitment and retention of ringers was one of the major challenges prior to the current pandemic. The 100th year anniversary of the Association is rapidly approaching. We have the opportunity to use the anniversary to coordinate an Association wide recruitment drive, and think of ways of how we can work together to create a vibrant and supportive learning environment supported by high quality teaching to help sustainable ringing for the next 100 years. We may need do things differently but we don't need to reinvent the wheel. There are so many fantastic examples of what can be done out there.

Watch this space.

Best wishes

Matt Lawrence
Ringling Master

Virtual Social Gathering

Following the success of our last virtual social event, Vicki is planning a Winter Social event - a Christmas-themed quiz. This will be held over Zoom again. Why not come and join us when the nights are getting cold and dark for an evening of friendly chat and quizzing!

For more information, or if you would like to enter a team, please email Vicki at socsec@sacbr.org.uk. Don't forget your mince pies and mulled wine!

Guidance on using Zoom

If you would like some help and guidance on using Zoom to make videocalls, please email Shaun at pro@sacbr.org.uk. Shaun has produced a useful step-by-step guide to help members from setting up a Zoom account to making video calls.

Virtual Meeting, Tea and Striking Competition

We'll be holding a short business meeting at 7pm via Zoom.

The meeting will be followed by a 'virtual' ringers tea (a chance to catch up with ringing friends over a cup of tea and slice of cake (BYO)) and striking competition. We'll be using Ringing Room for the 'Striking Competition'. The competition is open to all SACBR members with an emphasis on fun (additional faults will be awarded to anyone taking it too seriously) with teams and 'test piece' decided in advance by the 'Officer in charge'. To book your place, please email master@sacbr.org.uk.

St. Chad Norton-in-Hales - An update...

Following an article in the March edition of the newsletter, the restoration work on the carillon has now started. The whole story and the description of the project with photos and video link appeared in Ringing World Sept 12 issue, and it will also be featured in the Treble's Going website . Fundraising has so far produced £18000 towards the total £22500 cost, aided by a £5000 grant offer from Shropshire Historic Churches Trust, and £3000 from Church Care , recognising that the installation is of national importance. Night silencing is to be added to forestall any future complaints.

Jim Vallings

Your SACBR Report

The 2019 Report with 2020 Handbook was ready for distribution at the Monthly Meeting held on the 14th March. Unfortunately, at that date we were already careering towards lockdown and attendance was low. The lovely volunteers who took away bundles of reports were then unable to distribute them and I'm aware that many members have not yet received their personal copy, which I can assure you is in a safe place with your name on it... Luckily, there is always the Website and Newsletters to keep you abreast of what is going on. Looking ahead, there has been so little ringing possible in 2020 that it is proposed to combine a 2020 report with the one to be published in 2021, thus fulfilling our obligation to publish an annual report but without wasting a lot of money. Therefore, I shall not be sending out the usual November request for tower reports. On the other hand, I do hope that tower correspondents and captains will have noted anything of importance so that it can be included in due course. If anyone wants to send me copy to keep on file please go ahead.

Membership subs will fall due in the normal manner, I'm afraid, so I shall be sending out letters about that; and you will also receive information about the format for the January 2021 AGM. May I ask all tower correspondents to do their best to pass all of this on to their tower members.

Biff Patterson, Report Editor

Gender Equality in Ringing

It recently fell to me to complete a survey on this topic for the CCCBR: admittedly, a bit of a snapshot. We are a small association with plenty of female ringers, and women taking what CCCBR refers to as key roles.

Nevertheless, I was surprised by the actual numbers:

It's been agreed in committee that maybe we should be doing more to encourage female members to be more active in roles of authority, and to develop their skills in calling, conducting, running practices and volunteering to hold office. What do you think?

Biff Patterson, Membership Secretary

1) Key Officers			
Master of the Association		General Secretary	
2020 = Male	2010 = Male	2020 = Female	2010 = Female
1) Key Roles			
Tower Captain		Tower Correspondent	
2020 =	2010 =	2020 =	2010 =
81% M / 19% F	80% M / 20% F	62% M / 38% F	67% M / 33% F
1) Overall membership			
2020 = 56% M and 44% F		2010 = 67% M and 33% F	

Books for bellringers

As towers make a start ringing again, here's a selection of books to brush up on your ringing skills. They are available from the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers and can be ordered from the website at www.cccbr.org.uk/pubs. Postage and packing is included in the price. It is worth taking a look at the Shop section of the website as this is just a selection and there are some items which can even be downloaded for free!

Pam Copson One-per-learner book

Sherbourne £5 for a pack of 5

Originally written for 9 - 14 year old learners at Sherbourne, this has been rewritten to make it suitable for adults too. A lot is packed into a very small book which is intended as a personal record of achievement - you can tick off progress on a list. Well illustrated with many little drawings. Some may find the "handwritten" style of the text difficult to read but a bargain at the price.

Pam Copson Follow-on book

Sherbourne £5 for a pack of 5

Full of drawings showing everything from making places to splicing ropes. As with One-per-learner it is "handwritten" and every page is crammed with information so will reward those who have the patience to study its pages.

A. Waddington Beginners' Grandsire

Central Council £1.50

Another pocket sized booklet with additional notes on bell control and plain hunting. No frills but good for a quick run-through of the method.

Jad Bienek

A maintenance message to pin up in the tower...

Advice on bell maintenance for when ringing returns

As towers look at returning to ringing, here's a reminder of the maintenance message from the Bell Advisor... I am sure that everyone is looking forward to returning to bell ringing again when the COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted. After a break in ringing for several months, I would suggest performing some maintenance checks before you start ringing.

The warmer weather of the summer months causes wood to shrink and bearing lubrication to dry out. Joints in wooden structures i.e. bell frames, bell wheels, headstocks and stays, may have loosened so check that the various retaining bolts are securely in place and tighten them if required. Check the lubrication of plain gudgeon bearings, pulley bearings and clapper bearings. Try cleaning off old surplus grease and lubrication and apply fresh oil or lubricate as required.

If the wire mesh protection on louvred windows has holes then birds may have taken the opportunity to create a nest in the belfry.

May I suggest you look to declutter and clean the ringing room to reduce the number of items that could harbour the COVID-19 virus.

You may wish to look at Central Council advice on web link - <https://ccabr.org.uk/2020/05/29/stewardship-management-workgroup-when-we-ring-again/>

A below shows a suggested Table of Maintenance Tasks.

*Geoff. Harding,
Bell Advisor*

Task	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Annually
Lubricate plain bearings	x			
Check lighting throughout tower	x			
Lubricate plain bearings rollers (pulleys)		x		
Check ropes		x		
Check stays for looseness and cracks		x		
Check for loose clappers/staples		x		
Test emergency lighting		x		
Grease ball bearing rollers (pulleys)			x	
Clean and check sliders and runner boards			x	
Grease clappers (if applicable)			x	
Check for tower roof drainage			x	
Check for ingress of water			x	
Check rollers for wear and free rotation			x	
Check "spider" cord			x	
Clean ringing chamber			x	
Check frame bolts			x	
Check headstock bolts			x	
Check bearing bolts			x	
Check for worn clapper bearings			x	
Check for loose/missing wheel bolts			x	
Check clock hammer(s) and spring(s)			x	
Check chiming hammers			x	
Check all chiming hammer ropes for fraying			x	
Check for ingress of birds			x	
Check access stairs/ladders/traps			x	
Check safety of sound control system			x	
Check bell chamber				x
Check rope chutes/bosses/guides				x
PAT test all portable electrical appliances				x
Check clock hammer wires				x
Check clock weights/wires/pulleys				x
Check tower or spire structure				x
Clean out dirt and rubbish				x
Treat rust outbreaks				x

Do you have a piece you think should be included in the next Newsletter or on the Facebook page? Please send all suggestions to Shaun at pro@sacbr.org.uk. All suggestions welcome!

DEADLINE for the December edition of the Newsletter: **Friday 18th December, 2020.**