

THE HULL HANDBELL PROJECT

Promoting double-handed change ringing throughout East Yorkshire

Newsletter Number 1, November 2016.

About the Hull project by Peter Church.

The ripples from a pebble, cast into the water, never end, even if they are hard to see.

Which pebble?

Was it Simon Humphrey chalking up Bob Doubles on the blackboard at school in 1965? Or Roddy Horton's "coffee club with bells on" in 2015? Or the Handbells workshop in October 2016 at North Cave?

The essence of bellringing is sharing and teamwork, and those values make for an enjoyable lifestyle. So having had my love of handbell ringing re-awoken in 2015, I felt the need to share the enjoyment and increase the number of ringers with some double-handed change ringing skills. And selfishly, I would then be able to do more handbell ringing. Chris Church and Lesley Davies were willing if innocent participants in this quest, and the learning points are captured in the project website¹.

Having made some progress in the summer of 2016 we had achieved:

120 Plain Bob Minor (WHWH)
1-2 Lesley Davies
3-4 Peter Church (C)
5-6 Chris Church
1-2 First touch. 5-6 first touch since 1985.

Inspired by the Scottish Association blog², Simon Plows and I agreed to hold a handbells workshop at the Ringing Centre at North Cave. And in the process we (Pete and Chris) met with Chris Munday with his Abel Simulator / Handbell Manager system, and we had a ring with Heather and Barry Peachey on their Robert Wells bells (glorious sound). With Chris Munday we (i.e. with Chris Church) managed three leads of Kent TB minor and some touches of Plain Bob Minor; with

Heather and Barry we rang some Plain Bob, Little Bob, Bastow LB all on 6 bells, and had a go at Plain Bob Major. The latter proved a challenge too far for the "Churchies", next time . . . and Heather mentioned Cambridge.

At the October 2016 workshop:

There were 15 ringers covering a spectrum of abilities and experience. The 15 split evenly between people with some change ringing experience on towerbells and little handbell experience, against an equal number who had more handbells experience, and one poor soul who was a handbell tune ringer.

The clear objective was to move people on one step in their handbells knowledge.

We worked through three sessions of tutorial followed by breakout into three groups for practise, and we tackled the obvious skills, handling the bells and R&C, plain hunting and plain bob.

Peter Church led the tutorials and Chris Munday, Heather Peachey, and Barry Peachey led the practise sessions, ably supported by James Blackburn, Chris Church and Lesley Davies.

Suffice to say, much fun was had, much ringing was done, and much progress was made. The declared objective was achieved.

Our final session before departing was a plotting of "What happens next?". The outcome of this is fourfold:

The North Cave trio will look for a meeting day to establish a regular practise, and help was offered with that.

Market Weighton looks set to become another focal point and will incorporate the Lynn Hall family axis.

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As Heather and Barry Peachey get on top of the work of moving into their new home opportunities for handbell practise will be sought.

The Tuesday morning meeting in Hull is set to continue.

We owe a huge thank you to Chris Munday, Heather and Barry Peachey, James Blackburn, Chris Church and Lesley Davies, their contribution was fundamental to the workshop.

A further outcome from the October 2016 workshop is the intention to have another handbells day at the end of January 2017. Discussions have started on the purpose and format of the day, but your views on what we want to do on that day would be welcomed.

Computer Simulators

At the October workshop Chris Munday demonstrated a laptop with two "motion controllers". The controllers were linked through a piece of software from Graham John called "Handbell Manager", and behind that was Abel.

This is a very interesting facility. Peter Church now also has the same facility installed on a desktop machine at home.

What does it do?

The computer rings the method and all of the bells except the pair you choose to ring. You choose the method, the speed, and the touch, you move your hands (holding the motion controller) up and the computer goes "bing" for your handstroke, and move them down (bing) for the backstroke. You press a little button to start ringing, and another for "Go". The computer calls the bobs and singles, *all*

you have to do is wave your hands up and down at the right moment.

The computer tracks how well you rang your bells and gives you an instant report at the end of the touch. (It is confirmed, my left hand is more oddstruck than my right hand).

The system has it's quirks and foibles. It is relentless. It doesn't make ringing mistakes. It doesn't laugh or cry.

The system is endlessly patient, time and again you can ring the same touch and see where you went wrong.

What it doesn't do:

- It does not relieve you of the task of learning the method. With or without a simulator, you need to:
- Learn the spacing in Plain Hunting
- Picture the scissors dodges
- Know where the treble is
- Know how the places relate to the work of the treble
- Know when the hunting pattern changes, and when it does not.

What the simulator does do:

is to help you consolidate that learning, so that when you get to meet with your friends round a set of bells, you can get the most out of the time together.

Congratulations:

Zem Roddaway: Ringing Plain hunting on a coursing pair, no previous ringing experience.

Karen Lane, Lynn Hall, Gwyn Moffat, Bill Lennox, Simon Plows, Carolyn Bailey, for being brave enough to have a go at Bob Minor either for the first time, or for the first time in decades, Sheena Bayliss for just "having a go".

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Handbell Change ringers wanted:

Do you want to start handbell change ringing at your tower? And don't know how to start? Drop me a line, we can help.

Handbells Journalists wanted

The October 2016 handbells workshop was the easy bit, keeping on going is harder, but more important.

Please send any November news snippets, articles, questions to: Peter@pchurch.org.uk

Handbell change ringing:

Who, what, when, where, why, how, what's the story?

References:

1 Hull Handbell Project Website: www.handbellringing.org.uk

2 Learning to Ring Handbells: www.handbellringing.co.uk/topic/handbell-days