



Oyez

North West Region of Handbell Ringers of Great Britain
Registered Charity Numbers 298945 (England) and SC038918 (Scotland)

Summer 2016

Number 13

National Rally at Newton Rigg College April 2016

Members of the Committee taking a break - while Derek and Martin ran the rally!



Chairman's Corner

What a start to 2016! As I'm sure you can imagine, the NW Committee have been incredibly busy so far this year and have met a lot more frequently than normal as we completed final preparations for the National Rally at Newton Rigg College at the start of April.

Before that though was the NW AGM. It has to be said, it was rather a quiet event with not many in attendance, despite us attempting to encourage people with the offer of free food! I also missed the AGM due to illness, but Martin kindly stepped in. There have been some changes to the committee, with Martin stepping down as Treasurer and Chris changing rôle from Secretary to Treasurer. We are also very happy to welcome Irene Merson back on the committee as Secretary. Mavis Green has also stepped down. I would like to take this opportunity to thank both Martin and Mavis for their hard work, dedication and commitment over the past few years. The weekend of the 1st-3rd April was the culmination of nearly 2 years work by the NW Committee. However, we owe a huge 'Thank You' to everybody who contributed time and/or equipment to the event. Over the weekend we had people acting as stewards, manning the information desk and the tombola, moving equipment, setting up rooms for workshops and much more. If that was you, please accept our thanks! The weekend would not have been such a success without you!

And it is safe to say, the event was a huge success. We have received a lot of positive feedback and, despite the weather, the NW Region proved to be an excellent host. I personally was particularly pleased that there were 3 youth teams who participated; Bishops' Bells, Bamford Bells and the Mini Minims. All performed in the rally on the Sunday morning and were a credit to their leaders, representing our region extremely well.

Time to look forward now; there is our Summer Event on 18th June, hosted by Gresford. I'm sure that everybody who is able to make this will have a great time. There will also be two mini rallies in the autumn as usual.

Next year is the Golden Jubilee of HRGB. Please, please watch this space for upcoming events and dates for your diaries. The NW was the founding region of the society and we would like to celebrate this landmark. If you have any ideas or are planning any events then please do get in touch and let us know!

Beth McCord

A Newbie's Impressions of the National Rally

Having been part of the Greystoke Handbell ringing group for a whole year my husband and I thought we could take on a bit of a challenge and attend the National Rally at Newton Rigg.

What a massive feat of organisation it must have been to make it all run so smoothly. Thank you for those goody bags – now I won't have to borrow my neighbour's highlighters any more. Individual timetables on the back of our name tags, plus a map, helped us to get to our different workshops promptly. Someone somewhere had been working very hard to make sure that we all knew what we were doing and where we were going. Well done committee. We wondered how on earth you managed to get all the bells to where they were needed. From our point of view it all seemed to run seamlessly. As a steward, I had to scoot about a bit to find extra mallets for one workshop, but a neighbouring group was very helpful. When there were still not enough someone cleverly suggested that a mallet and a pencil made an effective mallet click.

Highlights that will remain with us were the thrill of seeing the complete range of bells. Our little group does not have those bucket sized bells - yet. One of the techniques in Aidan's workshop was to make a bell sing using a plastic coated stick. Having arrived rather late, I found myself lumbered with a huge bell, but it produced such a beautiful, hypnotic sound that I could have kept up making it sing for the next hour or two. It was also interesting to see different instruments like the belleplates and the cymbelles. Performances which will stay in my head were Aidan Fozard showing us how he practises and the immaculate Beverley Town group. Guess what – you are on You Tube!

We were not able to join in the final rally on Sunday morning due to other commitments, but enjoyed an inspiring service of morning prayer. What an uplifting way to finish a fantastic weekend.

Lesley Hall



At the end of the National Rally there was a collection box in the Restaurant for the Catering Staff. Chris Ellison has sent through this message from them all:

Rally Feedback.

Thanks to your appreciation, the 'Tips Tin' overflowed with £189 for the Newton Rigg's Catering Staff. They were overwhelmed by your generosity, and told me that they wish all the 'outside groups' that they cook for were as pleasant, happy, and reasonable as everyone was in our very large group, (the largest they've ever looked after!)

Many, many thanks to all who contributed. C E.

National Handbell Rally - As Seen by the Mini Minims

The junior team of the Maghull Parish Handbell Ringers, the Mini Minims, took six of their members to the National Rally at Newton Rigg. It was the first time we had attended this event. We arrived in time for tea on Friday after school, making the not too long journey up the motorway to Penrith. There were two sittings but we chose the latter sitting so that we could all eat together. We had jacket potato with coleslaw and salad. There were other choices but we enjoyed ours.

We were then treated to a concert by the Northern Bell Orchestra on Friday evening and after a bit of relaxation went to bed to be ready for a busy day.

After an early start and a lovely cooked breakfast we started our workshops. Our first was:

Chimes:

This was quite similar to handbells but a different sound.

Tea and coffee leading into:

Percussion with Handbells:

Instruments included a gong, a jembay drum, triangle, bass drum, African and Latin maracas, cow bells, cymbals, thunder. There were many different sounds and rhythms to try out and it was very interesting.

Lunch - buffet followed by:

Wedding Bells:

We did not have music for this workshop, we rang by numbers. We rang rounds, Kings and Queens, Whittingtons and Tittums. Some were harder than others but all sounded good once we got them almost right!

Novelty:

We had to say silly rhymes and use our hands and feet to do different rhythms; this was a bit confusing but got better with practice. Trying to convince all four limbs to beat a different rhythm is not that easy!

Tea and coffee and then our final workshop:

Steel drums:

This involved playing the different drums to a tune the leaders were teaching us and we had to swap partners every now and then. The sound was fantastic, each drum is tuned and each drum has different notes on it enabling us to play different chords.

After a very busy day we finally had tea which was chicken tagine with rice followed by fruit.

Our evening entertainment was masterclass performances from the classes that had gone on through the day, including belleplates and handbells and it was amazing.

After a fairly late night we were up early again for another lovely breakfast and a short service for those who wanted to attend. And then we were packing. 9:30am was the start of the Rally and a few more teams joined us just for the day, there were sixteen teams in all. There was a fabulous variety of music to listen to and realise almost anything is possible.

We played 'Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory'. We think it went well and was well received. Some of our parents even managed to come and listen to us. Sadly once the rally was over there was just time to pack up, eat a Sunday lunch and then go home.

We had a truly wonderful time and thank all those involved in the organisation. We are looking forward to the next rally and would love to go to a National Rally again in the future.

Elizabeth and Catherine Roche - Mini Minims

More from the Mini Minims

I had a great time the whole weekend but my favourite was the handchime workshop. The food was great, the tombola was good fun and I would love to do it again!
Nieve Mannion

It was my first time at a National Rally so I was very excited and loved all the free stuff! I really enjoyed meeting all the other teams and listening to them play. All the workshops were new and as I had never done any of the things I tried it was really interesting. In conclusion my first national rally was an amazing experience and I can't wait to go again! My absolute favourite part was the belleplate tree at the concert.
Mia Timmins

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

SUMMER RING AT GRESFORD—18TH JUNE

You should have had an initial letter about this by now—if not, please contact Sue Chadwick—sue@thechadwicks.net. Please send your replies to Sue as soon as possible. See you there!

AUTUMN RALLIES

Dates and venues will be forwarded to you soon.

Will you be in London in June?

Then here are two events that may be of interest to you.

The Whitechapel Bell Foundry
is delighted to welcome
America's premier handbell performance group

The Raleigh Ringers

7.30pm 9th June 2016 at the Harlequin Theatre
The Quadrant Redhill Surrey RH1 1NN

7.30pm 10th June 2016 at LSO St Luke's
161 Old Street London EC1V 9NG

For further information contact Keith Rowland
07912-352634 keith@acorncottage.org.uk

Editor's Note: This announcement was missed from "Reverberations" and regions have been asked to publish it to their members.

Last Bedford-Style Harddraw Gathering

**Friday Eve 30th September - Sunday 2nd October 2016,
The Green Dragon Inn and Heritage Centre
Harddraw, Hawes, N. Yorkshire, DL8 3LZ**

Practise up your party pieces to ring solo
Massed ringing from numbers or staff notation music which will be sent out
beforehand

Workshops

Soiree-style concert

Individual ringers welcome. Some spare bells & chimes will be available.

Registration: adults (HRGB) £8, (non-HRGB) £12, juniors £3. Please bring a raffle prize for the charity raffle. Massed ringing music, tea, coffee, cordials and water are included in the registration fee, lunches & dinners, at an additional cost, are being made available by the Green Dragon.

Please bring your own foam and other equipment. Some tables are available but if you have your own that would be helpful too.

Accommodation is available at the Green Dragon Inn on a first booked first served basis from £14 to £50 per person per night, bunk beds to luxury en-suite doubles with sitting room. Also camping available at £10 pppn. See Green Dragon website for description of accommodation: <http://www.greendragonharddraw.com/contact.html>, and book your accommodation by phoning Martin on 01969 667392 and say you are part of the Handbell Gathering - or make your own accommodation arrangements either in Harddraw or in nearby Hawes.

There is limited ringing space available so regrettably only applications for the first 70 ringing spaces can be accepted.

A preliminary email expressing interest in attending the Gathering by 1st May would be super. Email Don Bedford for a registration form < dondingdong@boompa.plus.com > or telephone 01834 869061

Final Thoughts on the National Rally

PUTTING ON A BIT OF A DO

The North West Committee came to a decision –
In 2016 we would make it our mission
At Newton Rigg College to put on a spree,
A National Rally, for HRGB.

We all got involved with planning the do,
The workshops, the rally and AGM too,
Two evening concerts, a bar, registration
And meals, tea and coffee to stave off starvation.

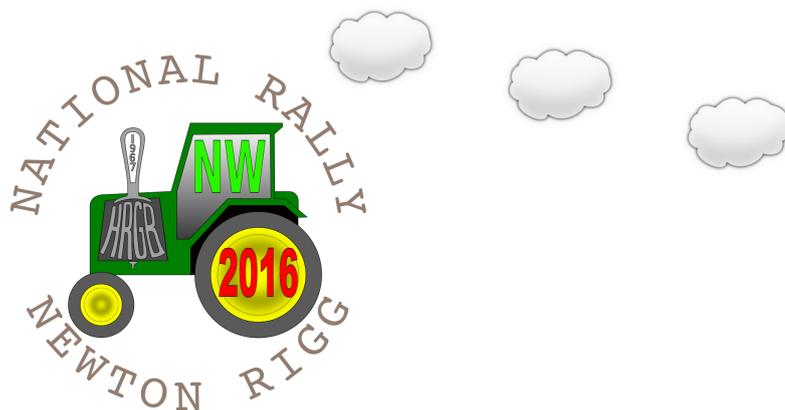
The goodies by Derek were carefully chosen,
Jennifer said our sweatshirts just had to be golden!
The badges were Margaret's, logistics were Alan's,
And Irene got numbers in workshops to balance.

The planning was finished, the music was posted,
At last the day dawned – All Fools Day, we noted.
With Beth's expert guidance we all did our best
To welcome two hundred and forty two guests.
*(Cows, sheep, goats, horses, chickens and camels –
thank you, Linda, for this bright idea!)*

The weekend itself just went by in a blur.
On our heads, on our heels, did we know where we were?
Sunday afternoon was the target we set,
And the bits we remember, we'll never forget!

The ringing and friendship that made it worthwhile,
Chris - with scooter and hooter she travelled in style
Beth making a puddle (of fluff!) on the floor,
Anne with key round her neck – and stuck in the door!

AND MARTIN – SO SMART IN HIS SUIT!



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REMEMBER TO LOOK AT THE NORTH WEST WEBSITE!

<http://nw.hrgb.org.uk> - Info to irene@mersons.co.uk