

# OYEZ



MAY 2021

NUMBER 24

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## FROM OUR REGIONAL CHAIR



### Chatter from the Chair

Hello everyone and welcome to this Spring edition of 'Oyez'.

I hope that, like me, the lengthening days, milder temperatures, brighter sunshine and the improving state of affairs are all contributing to you feeling more hopeful about the future both in the short and longer term. As I'm writing this we are hearing that the next part of the lifting of restrictions is going ahead as planned. It will be good to slowly get back to some non-essential shopping but even more exciting will be a much needed haircut! How glorious it is to meet a friend in a garden, particularly for those of us in a Tier 4 area (remember those?) who haven't been able to do that since 31<sup>st</sup> July last year.

How long it will be before we get to meet up inside with our handbell team-mates and actually get back to ringing (not necessarily the same thing) will depend on our individual circumstances. However, you will read in another article in this edition that there are plans to do something in the meantime. I do hope you will feel inspired to take up Beth's ideas in 'A Virtual New World' and let us know what you would like to take part in. The possibilities are endless, the technology isn't the barrier it may have been twelve months ago and the talents of those taking the lead know no bounds!

So, don't delay – jump in to something you probably had never even considered before...

You will be hearing shortly from Irene Merson, the North West Region Secretary, about our AGM which is being conducted in the same way as last year. It would be exceptionally good to have more of you on the NW Committee, so please don't dismiss it out of hand. Do get in touch with either Irene or myself if you would like more information to help you come to a decision and say, 'Go on then, I'll give it a go.'

As with all groups, organizations, choirs and the like we are waiting to see how the Government restrictions and guidelines change to allow us to make plans for later in the year. At the moment, we are thinking that most of us will feel more confident coming to an event with just a few teams and starting in small way. It's very tempting to think about a great celebration for us all meeting together but I think we'll leave that until we're a bit further down the line and into 2022!

Finally, thank you to all teams and individual members who have renewed your HRGB membership for 2021. Well done you!!

With best wishes, as we see an improving picture in the coming weeks. Do take care and stay safe.

*Linda Parkinson*

### **A Virtual New World**

We have all been surrounded this past year by new words, new facts and new technologies. Some fill us with dread, some have become our only way of staying in touch with friends and families. Everybody will have had their own experiences this year and each handbell team will have their own story; whether waiting for the day we can pick up a bell again or meeting on a virtual platform even more regularly than you did beforehand!

I personally have had to move to recording lessons to send in to schools, supervising Teams home learning for my 5 year old, attending National Executive Committee meetings on Zoom and 'meeting' up with members of Maghull Parish Ringers....mainly for a social event but also to look at some music together.

So, with things starting to look more positive in the future, as a regional committee we are still trying to be realistic about when we might be able to get together in person. The idea of a large group of people travelling to meet up in a hall still seems quite alien, however as a committee we want to offer the North West Region members an opportunity to join an online 'event'. This has already been done successfully in Scotland and other regions have similar plans. There have also been two webinars about virtual rehearsals run by HRGB, which have been very well attended and I hear rumours about one focusing on techniques in the pipeline. Obviously, we accept it is not the same as getting together face to face, but

we would do our best to make it an entertaining and enjoyable session. It would certainly not be a full day event, rather we would aim for 1-1.5hours.

We want you to know that the committee is still here for you and we will always endeavour to help with bell related matters in any way we can. With that thought in mind we would like to offer the opportunity to have a specified committee member as your first point of contact. There is no pressure or expectation for all teams to want or need this, but if you think this is something which could be beneficial to you or your team then let us know!

### **Now it's over to you....**

**For a virtual event our ideas include:**

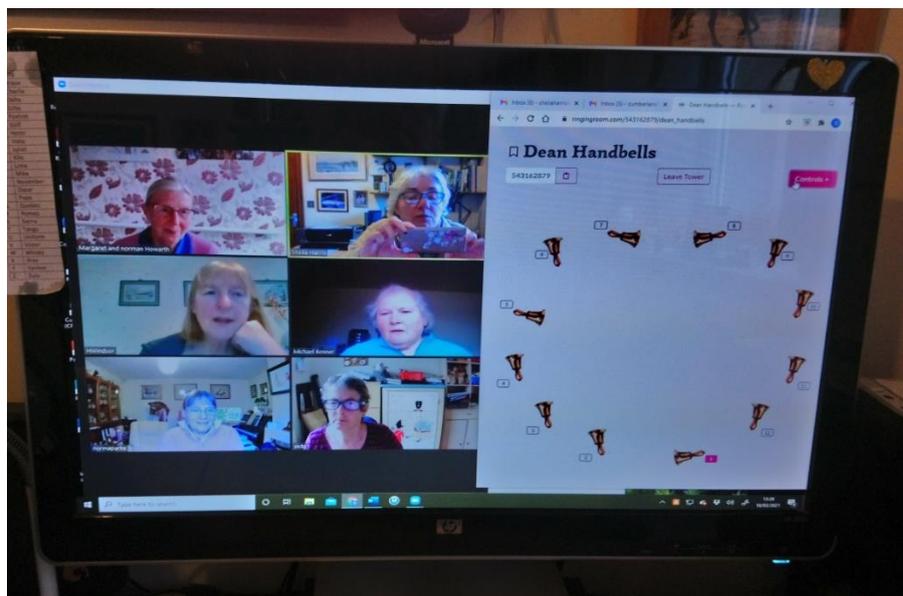
- **A quiz (bell/music related of course)**
- **'Air ringing' along to a piece of handbell music (massed ringing without bells!)**
- **A short presentation on healthy ringing**

**It would be really helpful if you could send a quick email to Irene ([irene@mersons.co.uk](mailto:irene@mersons.co.uk)) with an answer to the following questions...**

- 1. Would you or anyone in your team be interested in attending such an event?**
- 2. Is there anything you would like us to include in an event of this type?**
- 3. Would you like a designated committee member to act as first point of contact for you or your team?**

By Beth McCord

## VIRTUAL RINGING – DEAN HANDBELLS



## LOCKDOWN RINGING

What a year we have all had. Who would have thought, when we were busy going out and going to our normal Christmas concerts, that over a year later we wouldn't be ringing as a normal group. Our bells have been packed away and the boxes are gathering dust. However, it has given us time to go through our music and see what we have in all 12 files!

We managed to ring with 6 people and 12 bells outside in the garden, 2 metres apart. We rang in hand and all bought tall music stands so that we didn't have to sterilise tables and foams, we had our own music books, which meant some photocopying!

We managed, we had laughs, dug out music for 12 bells, and realised that there is quite a lot. The only problem we found was the weather. If it was sunny it was great making music in the sunshine, but we often started to ring, felt a few drops of rain then madly packed everything away.

But as we all know things got worse. A lot of us more "senior" people stopped going out, so we wanted to do something. Luckily, Jane Holland from Tantony bells came up with the answer, on-line ringing with bells, well not the ones we know. She introduced us to Ringing Room. Marron Valley are now also using Ringing Room.

Ringing Room is a site developed in America for Tower Bell ringers but it also has handbells. You have a choice of 4 bells to 12 bells, middle C to G above line, (English 15C to 4G, American C5 to G6), six of us ring 2 bells each. It's a simple matter of either clicking on bell or using keyboard. We use Zoom, but any video conferencing site can be used. We have some laughs, sometimes internet connection is a bit dodgy sometimes Hilary's cat joins us or my dogs start barking, usually someone loses their place (that's nothing new).

There are a few things you can't do, you can't hold a note on, there is no difference between loud and soft, shaking a bell is interesting to say the least.

Why do we do it? It fills the time in especially when weather is dismal, we catch up with rest of team and we certainly have laughs.

Sheila Harris

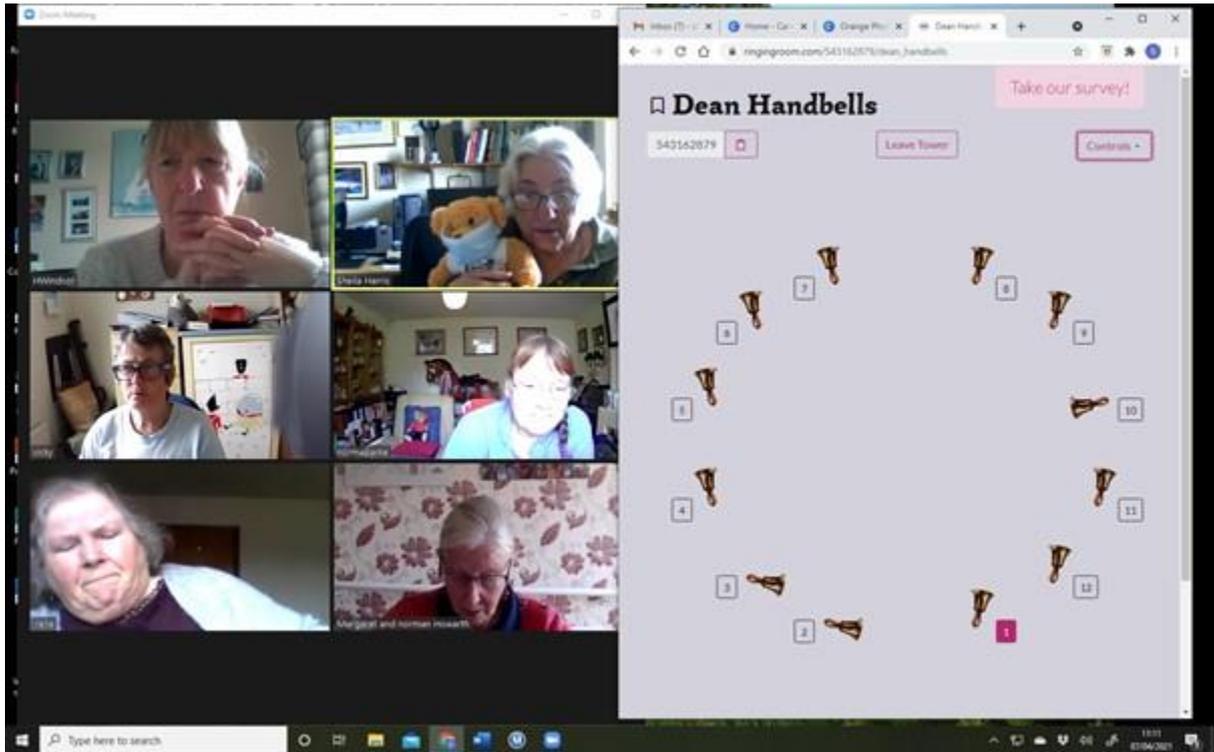
Dean Handbells

p.s.

Whilst I was writing this a quote came to mind from a spoof song about Star Trek.

"It's life Jim but not as we know it"

I think sums it all up.



## SUBMITTING ARTICLES AND EDITORIAL DEADLINES

To submit articles and photographs you can contact me, David R. Kerry at [blitzen@btinternet.com](mailto:blitzen@btinternet.com)

### EDITORIAL DEADLINES

**Our editorial deadlines have been suspended. When it is appropriate (and when we have enough material) the next issue of Oyez will appear. In the meantime keep sending me articles and photos.**

**Please note that I cannot handle items sent in PDF form. However, Word is acceptable.**

**NORTH WEST REGIONAL COMMITTEE, 2020 - 2021**

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