



HRGB Scottish Region Newsletter



2015/16 Issue 3 – May 2016

Chat From the Chair

“Music is the social act of communication among people – a gesture of friendship – the strongest there is.” – Malcolm Arnold

Seventy people, representing twelve ringing teams, from all over the Scottish Region descended on Aboyne, Royal Deeside, on 12th March for our 2016 AGM & Spring Rally hosted by Cushnie Handbell Ringers. It was twenty years, by a few days, since our inaugural Regional AGM & Spring Rally. It was great to see that a number of teams in Aboyne were also in attendance twenty years ago, in Aberdeen. Clearly they were enjoying being back amongst friends and catching up with their news – friends brought together by a love of ringing music. There were also a number of “new faces” who were warmly welcomed by all. Most teams performed “solo” pieces to a very appreciative, supportive, audience (who all knew *exactly* what it felt like when a hand accidentally played at the wrong time!) and everyone came together as one big team for massed ringing under the batons of our three conductors for the day – Ruth Cantlay, Claire Griffiths and Malcolm Wilson – who gave freely of their time and expertise.

At the AGM we appointed the Committee for the 2016-17 Session. We have a good number, from a variety of teams, but unfortunately no one agreed to be nominated as our new Secretary after Marge Paterson stepped down. This was disappointing but we keep searching and hope that person can be found soon. The duties are not onerous – just Agenda & Minutes of three Committee meetings in Dunblane per Session and the AGM prior to our Spring Rally with occasional other correspondence (thank you cards, replies to any email queries which may come in via our website, a brief report on Scottish Region activities for Reverberations etc). Our meetings are informative and enjoyable – certainly not boring! If you think you can help us for this Session, please do get in touch with me. You will be with friends!

HRGB will celebrate its Golden Anniversary in 2017. We in Scotland are joining in with the fun and are looking to organise some “golden events” for our ringers. But – we would like to hear your ideas and suggestions! A “Golden Board” will be touring around events, looking for you to add little nuggets of ideas. These can be activities for individual ringers, for teams, for areas, for the Region..... the choice is yours! We as a Region have already set the date of 7th October 2017 - the actual day of HRGB’s Golden Anniversary - for our Autumn event that year. The venue will be in Central Scotland to enable as many of you as possible to attend. A real golden celebratory gathering of friends!

One of the new members of my own team - already an accomplished musician – recently acknowledged the real teamwork that is required when ringing. We really do need each other to complete the melody.....to add some harmony... to give support with the bass. Malcolm Arnold could have been referring to ringing instruments when making the statement I quoted at the start of this “Chat”. I have made so many friends through ringing. It has taken me to places I would not otherwise have visited. Special people in special places. I greatly value this musical friendship and hope that you have found it too.

Best wishes to you all.

Elaine Duffus

2016 Spring Rally in Aboyne, Royal Deeside

The regional rally was hosted by Cushnie Handbell Ringers on 12th March, in Aboyne. We arrived by 8.30am to set up the hall. The Victory hall in Aboyne has some interesting features including stuffed mounted heads of some of the wildlife that has been shot in Aboyne!

Our secretary, Janet Robinson, was exceptionally well organised and had all the requirements laid out for us to get ready for the teams arriving after 10am. We positioned ourselves in a nice wee corner. From the balcony pictures were taken as teams arrived and started to set up.

The sales, raffles and refreshment team were busy organising and as our event started they offered hot drinks and “fancy pieces” (local Doric expression) to all.

After the AGM and lunch, the Rally began. Each team performed two or three pieces and in between we worked on three massed ringing pieces. Our turn arrived - we played quite well and Mrs Penny was the lead musician while we accompanied her to the bassoon. Silver City Chimes used a drum in one of their pieces and Dunblane used a few extra percussion instruments too!

Everyone seemed pleased with the choice of 5 different soups we provided at lunchtime to accompany their sandwiches. The raffle raised £150 for Braemar Mountain Rescue and the refreshment donations came to £100 for our own funds.

Although rather stressful, the day was well worth it for the contacts made and new pieces we enjoyed.

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Alison Hunter, Publicity Director for Cushnie Handbell Ringers.



Silver City Chimes had a full team turnout at Aboyne – including their three new members



Kilwhang Ringers

The Kilwhang Ringers enjoyed their day out at the recent Spring Rally at Aboyne and in particular listening to the various musical arrangements of their fellow ringers. Taking part in the massed ringing was at times a challenge and after attempting 'Tastes of Scotia' our humble Scottish fare has a new ring to it! It may never taste the same again!!!

During the past few months we have entertained at local groups in Stonehaven and now with



our annual coffee, cake and concert morning approaching in May we are practising our programme with some new pieces along with a few familiar favourites. This is our main fundraiser of the year and we hope to give those that come along a 'nice cup of coffee with a “fine piece” to be enjoyed with the ringing of our handbells.

*Margaret Godsman,
Kilwhang Ringers*

The Parish of Dunkeld Handbell Ringers

The group's first event in a new year has always been participation in two Morning Services at Little Dunkeld Kirk and this year was no exception. Only a few ringers were available for the first Sunday and so 12 bell music was rung from stands. Nearly the whole group assembled for the second Sunday, just managing to squeeze all the tables required into the space available. Many members of the congregation commented afterwards on how much they had enjoyed both performances and had been interested to see how we adapted to the presence of different numbers of ringers.



Next was the Regional Association's Spring Rally in Aboyne. Six members travelled to this and enjoyed meeting ringers from other groups, joining in the massed ringing and performing three pieces from a book which the group has only recently purchased: "Music Hall Favourites" for 12 bells arr. David Barker.



Unfortunately, due to a recent fall I had which resulted in a serious knee injury, the 14th season of "Handbell Harmony" - popular with the many visitors to the area - has had to be curtailed for the time being. This is usually a weekly performance of handbell ringing which takes place in Dunkeld Cathedral from 2.00 – 4.00 on Wednesday afternoons throughout the Summer months consisting of Solo Ringing weekly with Small Ensemble Ringing instead once a month. The Small Ensemble Ringing will continue but no Solo Ringing at the moment. If you are travelling a distance to hear us, please check with the Dunkeld office of VisitScotland. Staff there are always informed of performance dates. Tel: 01350 727688

Having been Chair/Musical Director of the group since its formation in 2002, I feel it is time I handed over the reins to someone else – no takers, I'm sad to say. Some members have been persuaded to carry out many of the admin tasks I've been doing and two have agreed to share the conducting. In the light of this I have agreed to continue until the end of the year. We'll see how things work out. As I'm sure is the case with many handbell groups, we need new, hopefully younger, members. So far all efforts to recruit more have been in vain and it is becoming doubtful if the group will be able to continue for much longer.

On a brighter note, in the last edition of Reverberations Alan Hartley, the archivist, made a plea for photos, DVDs etc. Two of Dunkeld's CDs (the first now not available) and 3 DVDs were offered and Alan was delighted, especially as they raise a considerable amount for charity which, he says, is a side of handbell ringing often overlooked. There must be other groups in Scotland with items they could send which would add to Scotland's representation in HRGB's archive.

Heather I. McLean.

www.dunkeld-handbells.co.uk

Facebook – Parish of Dunkeld Ringers

Jordanhill Parish Church Handbell Ringers

Like most handbell groups we were extremely busy throughout December giving the usual carol concerts. We were, however, delighted that we were able to respond to a request through the Scottish Region. There was to be a celebration to mark the 350th birthday of the Brigait Steeple Bell and they wanted bells! We had a week's notice so I was pleasantly surprised that we were able to undertake this. We rang Happy Birthday and some Christmas carols. The steeple bell had been cast by John C. Wilson & Co of Glasgow.

We also had the opportunity to ring in Glasgow University Chapel for the final Christmas concert for Darlinda's charity. It was a beautiful setting and at the end of the concert there were refreshments and who should appear from the organ loft? None other than Adam Wilson who was very complimentary about our ringing!

We are looking forward to our annual charity concert with the Jordanhill Community Choir on the 19th May at 7.30pm. Do come along if you can!

Further details will be on our Facebook page.



The 350 year old Brigait Steeple Bell, Glasgow

Dates for your diaries...

Saturday 8th October 2016 - HRGB Scottish Region Autumn Ring (*With Guest Conductor Sandra Winter*) :

Connel Village Hall, hosted by Muckairn Ringers. Connel is on the southern shore of Loch Etive, 5 miles from Oban, on the A85. It can also be reached by rail on the West Highland Line from Glasgow.

Saturday 7th October 2017 – HRGB Scottish Region Autumn Ring – Celebrating 50 years of HRGB

Your Newsletter, YOUR News!

Thanks to everyone who has taken the time to contribute to this edition of the newsletter.

The next deadline will be the glorious **12th August 2016**. (I continue to try to impose memorable deadlines!) Looking forward to all of your news & pictures from Summer events and also details of any forthcoming events for the remainder of 2016.

You can send me material at any time before then, preferably by email to:

katrinathurso@aol.com.

If you **really** don't do email then you can send me your article by post to:

26 Grove Lane, Thurso, Caithness KW14 8AE.

Katrina Gordon (Editor)