

Subject: SACR Newsletter :: Scottish Association of Change Ringers
From: Martin Mellor <Publicity@sacr.org>
Date: 18/04/2024, 17:36
To: Members <Members@sacr.org>

Dear Members

[Here's the latest SACR newsletter.](#)

Upcoming Events

Fri 19 Apr :: Advanced Ten-Bell Practice :: Glasgow, 7.30pm–9pm (master@sacr.org)

Sat 11 May :: Scottish Handbell Day :: Glasgow (simon.gay@ed.ac.uk)

The next Scottish Handbell Day will be on Saturday 11th May at 1 Albany Quadrant, Glasgow. The format will be a mixture of practice sessions and quarter peals, as we have done in the past. Please feel free to pass the invitation on to anyone who you think might be interested, especially if you are doing any regular handbell ringing with people who have started recently. The only condition is that we are not planning to cater for complete beginners, so anyone who comes needs to be able to ring Plain Bob Minor already.

So, please could you do the following:

1. Tell me whether or not you are going to come.

If you are coming:

2. Tell me what you would like to ring a quarter of.
3. Tell me what you would like to practise.
4. If you think I don't already know, tell me what you can ring confidently.
5. Tell me whether you can bring a set of bells.

All of that goes for conducting too; maybe some people would like to try calling new things.

Best wishes,

Simon (simon.gay@ed.ac.uk)

Sun 12 May :: Bell Sunday :: bellsunday.org



Sat 18 May :: AGM and Striking Competition :: St Andrews

Unfortunately, we will not be able to ring at Dundee in the morning but there is plenty to do in St Andrews if you would like to make a day of it! Walks in the town and on the beach, and the Himalayas putting green to name a couple of options.

A rough outline for the day will be as follows:

- Lunch – people to organise their own. No hall available but plenty of green space if sunny or coffee

shops if not.

- Striking competition from 1pm–4pm. General ringing until 4pm if the competition has finished. Plenty of space in the chapel for people to shelter if weather poor
- 4pm–4:15pm short service (tbc)
- Move to nearby hall for AGM and tea
- General ringing 6pm–7pm

The rules for the striking competition are available from master@sacr.org. Please do encourage as many people as possible to take part. It is a six-bell competition and the bells at St Andrews are nice and easy to ring. Two trophies are available: One for the overall winner and one for the best performing band with limited experience. It is also possible for a scratch band to enter, so really everyone has the opportunity to ring!

Please let Ruth know if your tower is planning to enter a band for the competition (master@sacr.org) as soon as possible.

Further info to follow shortly.



Fri 31 May :: Advanced Ten-Bell Practice :: Edinburgh, St Cuthbert, 7.30pm–9pm

Sat 15 / Sun 16 Jun :: Scottish Quarter Peal Weekend

Sat 22 Jun :: ART Module 2 course :: Teaching Change Ringing :: Dunblane (training@sacr.org), 9.15am–5.30pm

Module 2C – From Rounds to Methods

This course shows new and experienced teachers how to support their students and develop the necessary foundation skills for good ringing and then move forward to ringing changes. You will learn through a mixture of practical and theory sessions about:

- Developing foundation skills - fine bell control, listening, rhythm and ropesight
- Lots of fun exercises to develop these skills
- Coaching skills and building a successful band
- Introducing Plain Hunt and Covering
- Development of change ringing, broken down into small steps

We ask that you have:

- Sufficiently good bell control to be able to inspire confidence in others
- The ability to comfortably ring up and down in peal
- Rung a quarter peal of Bob Minor inside

Further information:

- Further details can be found here: [ART Events - Courses for Teachers](https://events.bellringing.org/en/courses-for-teachers) (<https://events.bellringing.org/en/courses-for-teachers>)
- Register at: [ART Events - Upcoming events](https://events.bellringing.org/en/events/module-2c) (<https://events.bellringing.org/en/events/module-2c>)
- If you have any questions, please contact me.
- If you are unavailable on this date but would like to participate in a future course, please let me know.

Judith Frye, SACR Training Officer (training@sacr.org)

Fri 28 Jun :: Advanced Eight-Bell Practice :: Dundee, 7.30pm–9pm

Fri 26 – Sun 28 Jul :: Inveraray Festival Weekend

Fri 30 Aug :: Advanced Ten-Bell Practice :: Glasgow, 7.30pm–9pm

Fri 27 Sep :: Advanced Ten-Bell Practice :: Edinburgh, St Cuthbert, 7.30pm–9pm

Sat 19 Oct :: Autumn Meeting :: Advanced Eight-Bell Practice, followed by General Ringing, Meeting and Social :: Haddington

Fri 29 Nov :: Advanced Ten-Bell Practice :: Glasgow, 7.30pm–9pm

News

2023 SACR report :: This is now published and it can be accessed at sacr.org/index.php/resources/annual-reports. A paper copy is available for each tower. If any member would like to request a personal paper copy, please contact Simon Aves on report@sacr.org

SACR AGM Officer positions :: Please see Colin's email of 18 April about electing or re-electing your association Officers. In particular, there are two positions which will definitely be vacant:

- Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Officer
- A second Representative to the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers (CCCBR)

More info available from Colin at president@sacr.org or Sue at secretary@sacr.org

Tulloch Training Weekend :: Two reports from the March weekend at Tulloch about "an exhausting and exhilarating weekend."... thanks to Eli and James for these. "Good food, good drink and fine company"... oh, and some ringing too!

The training weekend at Tulloch was tremendous

Highly organised so not a minute was wasted: we were allocated our groups and each learning group had a band of able and supportive helpers. The group I was in was run by Jonathan: he was brilliantly prepared and knew exactly what he wanted us to get out of the day. He started with a

clear presentation and easy to follow explanations, and carefully and clearly answered all of our questions. We started with a theory session – the type of session that explained things I maybe thought I should know, or knew a little but with his calm and patient style, he made everything clear. He went through different surprise methods explaining the importance of the blue lines and his approach to learning them, common features and how to use the grid to see what everyone else is doing while you are following your line. He also gave really useful tips to look out for as we become more competent. We then put the theory into practise first in the Last Tower and then in the ringing centre. It was really worthwhile, ringing with an expert band around us gave us the confidence to ring and rely on all of our ‘pre-course learning’ working.

The afternoon followed the same pattern, more theory with some other Surprise Major Methods – fascinating; followed by lots more opportunities to practise with that all important supportive team around us.

Sunday was completely different: a chance to try 12 bell ringing. It was billed as an introduction and Simon, with meticulous planning, had worked out exactly what he wanted each of us to try. It was not just an introduction, we were encouraged (and pushed beyond what I thought I could do), but with his expert ear and eye, and a fantastic group of helpers we managed all sorts of exciting things. His high standards and clear explanations made it all seem possible.

I cannot thank you enough – Judith and Ruth, the group leaders and all of the supporters: it was an exhausting and exhilarating weekend. I am looking forward to taking what I have learned back to the tower.

Elinor Farquharson

What could beat a day devoted entirely to early change ringing?

For those of us who enjoy a weekly practice at our local towers where opportunities to develop our skills have to be slotted in between those who are just beginning to handle a bell and others who are extending their Method ringing skills, a day with like-minded people devoted to mastering the art of change ringing is priceless.

Tulloch has a 12-bell ringing centre (Tenor 7-2-4 in B flat) and a small lighter tower with 8 bells (Tenor 1-1-15 in A), and our morning was to be divided into 3 sections: 8-bell ‘tower’, ringing centre, and theory. There were 3 learners in our group and a plethora of method ringers who had kindly devoted a day to help us. We started with some ‘fun’ exercises to get a feel for the bells and provide an opportunity for our teacher, Judith Frye, to see what she had in store for the day! We rang ‘Twinkle Twinkle’, and quickly moved between a series of exercises designed to develop our bell handling. These warm-up exercises were a good reminder of the importance of not just warming up our muscles, but also our brains: listening, rope sight and rhythm were to be some of the key messages of the day. Our own group have a way to go, but we were lucky to be surrounded by elite ringers who could cover any wayward handling.

All too quickly our 45-minute session was over and we were off to the 12-bell ringing centre – not to ring 12 bells, but these heavier bells provided all sorts of options as we practised ‘Plain Hunting’ and ‘covering behind’. In our local towers it is all too easy to ring from the same bell whose handling we are familiar with. This session provided the chance to try bells of different weights and to start in different positions. In the afternoon, Plain Bob Doubles was also on the agenda. And with the excellent patience and instruction of Judith Frye, we were all able to progress our skills – listening, rope sight and rhythm – as well as work to perfect our handling. There was plenty of time for each of us to ring (with the support of the elite ringers) and time for reflection before we had another go.

All too soon it was off for a theory session devoted to Plain Bob Doubles. My theory knowledge was sadly lacking, more so than that of my fellow learners – but this is an aspect we have no time for in our weekly ringing practices. While I have knowingly browsed the Method

Books in our ringing chamber, it was great to spend a little time studying the principles of Plain Bob Doubles and the Circle of Work! I am now looking forward to extending my knowledge of ringing theory in the next few months; but, thanks to this training day, I now have a much better understanding of the basic concepts of the theory needed to become a Method ringer. However, lunch could not come soon enough.

The organisation of the day was excellent: there was a constant available supply of tea and coffee, and the home-made biscuits and cake provided additional sustenance throughout a busy day. Everyone brought their own lunch.

The afternoon followed a similar pattern to the morning but, after tea, all the groups met in the ringing centre and we rang on 12 bells. For those of us who were learning, the experience of ringing rounds, call changes and Plain Hunt was challenging, but really enjoyable. All the skills of rope sight, listening, rhythm and bell control were to the fore.

The day ended with an adjournment to a local hotel where good food, good drink and fine company were enjoyed by all. It was a delight that those attending the day were from a wide mix of towers and that everyone from teenager to retiree was fully involved in the activities of the day. I am looking forward to 2025, by which time I hope to be ready to join an even more advanced group.

James H Bryce



Bell and Tower Maintenance :: It's spring cleaning time, with a tweet from Haddington and a report from the Inveraray maintenance weekend

Haddington

Tower spring clean day at St Marys Church, Haddington. Lots of nasty hoovering and a replaced rope. Selfie with underside of tenor because I was holding the clapper in place while its crown staple was tightened. <https://x.com/SBellringing/status/1778038705560658075>

Hugh Pumphrey



Inveraray annual maintenance weekend

March saw the usual trip to Inveraray for the annual maintenance weekend with 18 people volunteering their time and labour. The theme this year was painting. The ten wheels, parts of the frame and some of the volunteers were liberally covered. Inveraray is unusual in having painted bell wheels, all 10 were repainted the traditional Mosel blue and looked very fine by the end of Saturday. The metal frame is exposed to the elements so, after rubbing down, a specialist protective paint was used to control the rust. Each of the bells were checked to ensure that the clappers swung freely, that the crown staple bolt was tight with a split pin in place, and that the Hastings stays, toggles and sliders were all in working order.

On Sunday the focus turned towards tidying up and cleaning to get the tower ready for the [first peal](#) band and tourists over the summer. Guttering was cleared out, window ledges dusted, carpets vacuumed and stairs swept (all 176 of them!). Having found the belfry wetter than usual, investigation found a crack in the lead on the roof so a temporary fix was made using a lead repair paint. The final task was to fit the ropes. New ropes for the ninth and tenor were fitted, with Dyneema tops to reduce stretch and make the bells even easier to ring.

As always it was also a very sociable weekend. We based ourselves at the Inveraray Hostel which we ended up having to ourselves which was nice. We enjoyed two evening meals at the George Hotel and plenty of whisky back at the hostel as a reward for the hard work.

Angela Deakin and Jonathan Frye

Belfry Upkeep

Here's a useful website from the Central Council about belfry upkeep... you can navigate the document via the menu on the top left of the page. It's mainly aimed at the steeple keepers at your tower, but is of course interesting for anyone who wants to know more about bells and their workings: <https://belfryupkeep.cccbr.org.uk>

Also, Jonathan notes in the 2023 SACR annual report: "Over the year I have received requests for help or advice from our own towers in Scotland about steeple-keeping issues such as ropes, muffles and tightening frames. I'm always pleased to receive these questions and can respond with advice, suggestions, hands-on help or contacts for professionals." Email: advisor@sacr.org



Belfry Upkeep

Handbell Ringing: To Inveraray and Beyond!

On the west coast of Argyll, opposite the Isle of Jura, in the hamlet of Kilmory Knap, a house called Dun a'Bhuilg was the location of the second and third SACR handbell peals, in 1936. The house was built for Edwin and Agatha Lewis in 1929 as a holiday home. Edwin Lewis was a significant figure in 20th-century ringing. He was President of the Central Council from 1930 to 1957, Master of the College Youths in 1936 and 1937, and author of an influential treatise on structural engineering in relation to bellhanging.

Recently a group of us spent a week at Dun a'Bhuilg, which is now run as a holiday rental by Edwin and Agatha's grandson. We rang another peal, of Kent Maximus, as well as several quarters and some commemorative touches around the Lewis graves at Kilmory Knap chapel. We also visited the home of Martin Mellor and Ewan Halley on the Isle of Danna and rang a quarter peal there, after a boat trip around the Gulf of Corryvreckan.

Look out for longer articles in the Ringing World and the next SACR annual report.

Simon Gay



Portrait of Edwin Lewis (top left) hanging in Dun a'Bhuilg (bottom right); the ringers in Kilmory Knap chapel (top right), and ringing at the Lewis graves (bottom left)

Congratulations :: Congratulations to Annie and Ed on your engagement!

<https://bb.ringingworld.co.uk/view.php?id=1717636>

Bellboard :: Here's a link to SACR performances since the last newsletter: [link](#). Including celebrating Inverness ringer Catherine McLaren being licensed as a Lay Reader, birthday wishes to Mike Milner and Mike Clay, and celebrating Tina and Simon's 25th wedding anniversary

Open Doors Days in September :: September can be a good month to showcase bellringing in your tower. To check dates, see doorsopendays.org.uk/2024-weekends

**DOORS
OPEN
DAYS 2024**

Fun with Bells podcast :: All episodes of this podcast are available at <http://funwithbells.com>. The latest episode is "Cool Kenyan Ringers from Kilifi Bring Bell Ringing Back Home"



Social media

For up to date info on social media:

<https://www.facebook.com/scottishbellringing>

<https://www.instagram.com/scottishbellringing>

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