

Subject: SACR Newsletter :: Scottish Association of Change Ringers
From: Martin Mellor <Publicity@sacr.org>
Date: 08/02/2025, 14:34
To: Members <Members@sacr.org>

Dear Members

Here's the latest SACR newsletter. And here's to a great 2025 for ringing in Scotland!

Upcoming Events

Fri 21 Feb :: Advanced practice, Glasgow, 7pm–9pm. Focus methods Stedman, Yorkshire, and London No.3 Surprise Royal. Please let Ruth (master@sacr.org) know if you'll be attending.

Sat 22 Feb :: Alloa :: Practice on the last Saturday of each month, from 3pm–5pm. All welcome. More information from dunkeld@sacr.org. The worn ropes at Alloa have been replaced thanks to donations from Dunblane, Dunkeld and Edinburgh.

Sat 8 / Sun 9 Mar :: Training Weekend :: Tulloch See full details below and at <https://www.sacr.org/index.php/events-list/events/sacr-training-weekend-2503>

Fri 28 Mar :: Advanced practice, Edinburgh St Cuthbert's, 7pm–9pm

Sat 29 Mar :: Alloa :: Last Saturday practice from 3pm–5pm

Fri 25 Apr :: Advanced practice, Glasgow, 7pm–9pm

Sat 26 Apr :: Alloa :: Last Saturday practice from 3pm–5pm

Sat 17 May :: AGM and striking competition :: Glasgow

Sun 18 May :: Bell Sunday

Fri 30 May :: Advanced practice, Edinburgh St Cuthbert's, 7pm–9pm

Fri 25 – Sun 27 Jul :: Inveraray Festival Weekend

Fri 5 – Sun 7 Sep :: Central Council AGM in Sheffield. <https://cccbr.org.uk/2025/01/24/save-the-date-5-7-september-2025>

Sat 25 Oct :: Inverness and Forres :: Autumn meeting

Obituary

Sylvia Greig :: St Machar's, Aberdeen

Sylvia Greig first came along to St Machar's Aberdeen bell tower in 2016. She came along not to learn to ring, but to bring her son Ross along to learn to ring as part of his Duke of Edinburgh Award, through his school.

Whilst watching with interest as Ross started to learn to handle a bell, the other ringers at St Machar's encouraged Sylvia to have a go herself, which she did. Over the following months she succeeded in learning to handle a bell, soon moving on to rounds and call changes and plain hunt. As time went on pressures of work meant that Sylvia was not always able to make practices, but she was still a stalwart of the tower helping out with special occasions and catering for SACR meetings in Aberdeen.

Ross moved away to University at St Andrews where he continued to ring, but sadly Sylvia developed some health issues which meant she was not able to continue ringing. She did come up the tower periodically to see the ringers when Ross was home and coming to ring. Sylvia would often get in touch with the ringers when Ross was going to be home and there was a wedding or some other special occasion to ring for to offer his services.

Sadly, Sylvia passed away at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary on 14 January 2025, after a brave and determined battle with cancer.

Ian Talboys, Tower Captain, St Machar's

News

SACR Training Weekend :: Tulloch Ringing Centre :: Sat 8 and Sun 9

You can attend either or both days

Saturday 9th March (10 am to 5 pm) – Training Day

There will be three groups:

- Aspiring Change Ringer (plain hunt, plain bob, ringing up and down)
- Beyond Bob Minor (simple plain methods)
- Surprise Major (methods dependant on students but to be advised in advance)

If you are in any doubt about which group would be most suitable, please ask your Tower Captain / Ringing Master.

Sunday 9th March (9.30 am to 2.00 pm) – 12-bell Session

This is for those wishing to develop their 12-bell skills. It will mainly focus on Yorkshire Maximus but may depend on the skill level of those attending.

Some accommodation is available to book at Tulloch Farm, for those wishing to stay over between these events.

BOOKING – by WEDNESDAY 26th FEBRUARY

If you wish to book a place as a student at either of these events, please provide the information requested below by Wednesday 26th February at the very latest.

The success of training events is dependent on the support of more able ringers. If you are willing to help at either or both of these events, again please provide the information requested below by Wednesday 26th February at the very latest.

NAME:

TOWER:

SATURDAY GROUP: Aspiring Change Ringer / Beyond Plain Bob / Surprise Major / Helper

SUNDAY GROUP: 12-bell / Helper

CURRENT RINGING LEVEL:

RINGING GOALS:

I WOULD LIKE TO IMPROVE MY CONDUCTING SKILLS:

Please return this form to Judith at training@sacr.org

Aberdeen, St Machar's Cathedral :: SACR Winter Meeting

It was great turnout of SACR members to the meeting at St Machar's Aberdeen with around 50 ringers present. Ian Talboys put together a video of the events: <https://youtu.be/1IR8kWu082k> ... plus some photos:



 **St Machar's Cathedral**
6d · 🌐

You may have heard the bells ringing out yesterday. It was a pleasure to welcome members of the Scottish Association of Change Ringers to St Machar's for their Winter meeting, hosted by our own band. Sounds like a great day was had and we look forward to welcoming everyone back to Aberdeen soon! [Scottish Bellinging](#)



 **Scottish Bellinging**
6d · 🌐

SACR's Winter Meeting was at [St. Machar's Cathedral, Aberdeen](#). A busy day, and a busy ringing chamber ... with a smashing turnout and some great ringing opportunities. Thanks to Annie Brechin for the snaps

[\(https://www.facebook.com/stmacharscathedral/posts/\)](https://www.facebook.com/stmacharscathedral/posts/)

Welcome to new members of SACR, elected at the Aberdeen meeting:

- Andrew Cumming – St Mary's, Edinburgh
- David Groves – Dundee
- Emily Walker – Haddington
- Eve Harknett – St Cuthbert's, Edinburgh
- Helen Aries – Aberdeen
- Jane Rutherford – St Mary's, Edinburgh
- Jeanny Bassett – St Mary's, Edinburgh
- Marion Ford – Aberdeen

Association of Ringing Teachers (ringingteachers.org)

- Anthony Cole from Inverness has recently been accredited by ART for both Bell Handling and Teaching Early Change Ringing. Well done, Anthony!
- ART teaching courses are suitable for both new and existing ringing teachers.
- If you are interested, please contact Judith Frye at training@sacr.org

New Town Church, Edinburgh

Annie Brechin talks to the *Edinburgh Inquirer* about Edinburgh New Town Church bellringing: <https://www.edinburghinquirer.co.uk/p/the-timeless-and-enduring-appeal> (paywall)

The timeless and enduring appeal of a peal of bells

The city's campanologists on blisters, keeping tradition alive and the dangers of holding on to the rope



CAT THOMSON WRITES
DEC 24, 2024 - PAID



Learning the ropes, Edinburgh's bell-ringers:
Pic: Cat Thomson

At this most festive time of year, when one-year ends and another begins, Tennyson's poem resonates:

"Ring out the old, ring in the new,

Ring hallow bells across the snow"

(<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1A1csrwkGC>)

And New Town Church also appeared on the front cover of *The Ringing World's* Christmas bumper issue ... available to read online and at many ringing chambers across Scotland! <https://bb.ringingworld.co.uk/issueno/5930>



Dumfries

If you plan to join Dumfries on a Thursday evening practice night (7.30pm–9pm), please check ahead since sometimes a practice night is cancelled. The email is dumfries@sacr.org

Inveraray Tower Outing to West Yorkshire 2025

by Ed Gosden

“But Inveraray doesn’t have any resident ringers,” I hear you cry, “so how can there be a tower outing?”

Well, most of us aren’t all that local: We live between one and eight hours drive away from Inveraray and meet for a tower/bell maintenance weekend in March each year and for the Inveraray Ringing Festival the last weekend of July. But we don’t really need an excuse to have an outing do we? In past years the Inveraray outing (officially the "Inveraray Bell Tower SCIO" – SC050075) has visited South London (2024), Leicester (2023) and Guildford (2019), Bristol and Central London to name but a few.

For 2025, Sue Wilkinson kindly invited us to tour West Yorkshire and organised us some towers, meals and drinking opportunities for the weekend of 18th and 19th January. Some of us arrived on the scene early enough to ring at Halifax Minster practice night on Friday 17th (they are a splendid 27 cwt twelve, of which more later), followed by some quality time in The Three Pigeons, the local band’s favoured pub.

Saturday dawned cloudy and chilly and we headed first for Mirfield, a 27cwt ring of ten. We had no trouble finding it: the church is HUGE and on the top of a hill. Mirfield proved to be the first experience of Yorkshire tail ends for a number of the band. One well-known Glasgow resident was heard to remark “Will all today’s towers have these?” She was reassured that this was not the case. The bells proved to be a little challenging to ring but were well worth persevering with as they sounded superb. Highlights were some good Stedman Caters and a half-course of Yorkshire Royal. It turns out that Yorkshire tail ends are actually quite comfortable to ring with; well, the author thinks so anyway.

Next was Brighouse, an 11cwt eight, also on top of a hill and visible from some way

off. The first difficulty here proved to be finding the tower door. The author walked past it twice and tried two west doors and the vestry door before finally finding it down a very narrow passageway between the base of the tower and the main part of the church. The door was a bit narrow and saggy, and posed some problems for the more rotund members of the party (me) as did the narrow staircase. The bells themselves were more than a little odd struck and the tenor was so deep set that some of us had difficulty pulling it off in rounds despite the modest weight. Grandsire Triples was the best ringing we did here, but some Stedman and Yorkshire were also enjoyed.

Last tower before lunch was Lightcliffe, a very light (4cwt) eight. Upon entering the tower, the author noticed six sallies plus an additional two tail ends disappearing into the roof: these tailends were for the treble and second. "Are the trebles set at backstroke I enquired?" "No" replied the tower captain who met us. "I took the stays off: you ring the front two like a mini-ring."

So, we duly rang up the back six and prepared ourselves for the encounter by hauling the treble and second up to the balance. This proved more difficult than anticipated, because both bells were a lot heavier than your average mini-ring; particularly the second which weighed over 1cwt. I rang the treble to some Grandsire Triples from a worryingly tall and not very wide box. An unusual experience for a 6ft 1in ringer. I am not totally convinced that I had the bell firmly under control at all times, but the touch came round in the right place (I think). Jonathan fared rather better on the second on a box that was almost as tall. Angela arrived a little after the first touch, and was unhappy to miss the sight of two of the tallest ringers on the outing wobbling around on boxes. We all struggled a little with these bells. The best ringing was definitely the Cambridge minor on the back six, but the bells were certainly a character-building experience.

We scattered a little for lunch, some to the White Horse just a few yards from the church. Others went into Huddersfield. It is said that no Yorkshire meal is complete without chips, and this certainly proved true at The White Horse.

After lunch we headed into Huddersfield to ring at the Parish Church, a 23cwt ring of 10, hung at the top of a tall thin tower – a lot of tower movement. The trebles were particularly awkward, but all of the bells had a tendency to drop out of the change unpredictably. All things considered though we did ring them quite well. Yorkshire Royal being the highlight again. The other interesting feature here was a beautiful and unusual china peal board, hung above the entrance to the ringing chamber.

And, finally on Saturday afternoon, a return to Halifax Minster. Unlike some previous towers on this outing, access to Halifax Minster appeared straightforward. The door is easy to find, and the stair seems innocuous enough. But, when you get to the ringing chamber, the stairs carry on past, and to reach the ringing room floor you have to take a very high step. Alternatively it's possible to hang from a steel pole and swing across. Several of us entered the ringing room on our knees. The bells themselves are quite easy to ring (for a heavy-ish twelve) and sound magnificent. We acquitted ourselves well, with a good bob course of Grandsire Cinques and a decent course of Stedman Cinques. Descending was slightly easier than ascending, provided you were happy to hang from the pole and drop a down a step or two. After which a few of us adjourned to The Three Pigeons once again (just to steady our nerves), prior to dinner.

Our usual Saturday evening outing meal was held at Da Sandros in Huddersfield, an excellent Italian restaurant, fortuitously next door to where a number of us were staying. It was Sean Langton's birthday that day, so after dinner he was presented with a birthday cake that had been iced in the shape of a highland cow, complete with

edible horns! The usual post meal tradition of drinking whisky in somebody's hotel room until the small(ish) hours was deemed impractical because many of the rooms had quite thin walls. A surreptitious attempt to use the bar with the barman turning a blind eye, was awkwardly interrupted by a surprise visit from the manager, and so it was early bed all round.

Sunday was if anything colder than Saturday, and we had service ringing arranged at Lindley, just about ten minutes drive from our hotel. To the author's consternation, the ringing room at Lindley had much the same access arrangements as Halifax Minster, except that there was no pole. Knees were once again used to enter the ringing chamber.

Lindley proved to be a likeable 8 (about 18cwt) and we enjoyed some good service ringing, with a service touch of three leads of Bristol. We did not take very long to say our goodbyes, because it was much too cold to linger outside and several of us had long journeys home. The author however did stop to admire the [Lindley Clock tower](#), which was opposite the church. It was donated by a local mill owner, built in 1902 and was designed in the Art Nouveau style. A remarkable piece of architecture.

So ended a thoroughly enjoyable weekend with a lot of highlights. Thank you to Sue for a good outing with some excellent (and challenging) towers and good food and drink.



A ringing centre in central Scotland?

At the Aberdeen meeting, Colin advised that at the committee meeting it was felt useful to appoint a small working group to explore the options for developing a ringing centre in central Scotland. This idea had been raised in 2023 when it was recognised that the bells in Tulloch were not a permanent arrangement as the farm would be sold at some point and the bells would move.

A small group would be tasked with exploring options and putting the case both for and against such a proposal. Colin asked if anyone interested in joining such a group would speak with him or Jonathan.

Please do contact Colin (president@sacr.org) or Jonathan (advisor@sacr.org) if you would like to know more about this or to express an interest in joining the small group.

50:50 Club for the SACR Bell Restoration Fund

From Ruth Ogilvie (50-50club@sacr.org)

Congratulations to the 12 winners from 2024 who shared over £420 in prizes. Thank you so much to you (and all the non-winners!) for donating to our draw and therefore to the Bell Restoration Fund. I was able to pay £450 into the Bell Restoration Fund at the end of 2024.

The New Year means that, for many of you, your donation to the SACR BRF 50-50 Club has expired! If you're not sure, please ask me and I can let you know. Some of you obviously have a Standing Order set up as I have received payments already – thank you very much!!

I am again hoping everyone who usually pays me in January/February will send their donation direct to the 50-50 club account. Some of you also paid in cash in person at the Aberdeen meeting.

If you would like to contribute towards the SACR Bell Restoration Fund, and to have the opportunity of winning monthly cash prizes, please email me at 50-50club@sacr.org for details.

Looking forward to a prosperous New Year for all!

Latest draws:

- Nov 2024 – Jane Farquharson (Dunblane) won £34.50 – drawn at Aberdeen practice in Dec
- Dec 2024 – Pat Whyatt (Glasgow) won £34.50 – drawn at Aberdeen practice in Dec
- Jan 2025 – Stephen Elwell-Sutton – drawn at the Aberdeen Winter Meeting on 1 Feb

Ruth Ogilvie, SACR BRF 50-50 Club Organiser

Bellboard :: Here's a link to SACR performances since the last newsletter: [link](#).

- **Firsts (and thirds!):**
 - First surprise inside for Rachel Milner
 - First Grandsire for Miranda Jones

- Third Surprise Major alphabet for Peter Williamson
- Commemoration:
 - 1260 Plain Bob Triples in celebration of the life of Robert George Preece

CCCBR AGM in Sheffield :: Fri 5 – Sun 7 Sep ::

The weekend programme is open to all ringers and the full programme will be published in due course. This year it includes a roadshow on the Sunday, supported by trades and exhibitors, speakers and ringing opportunities on both Friday and Sunday.

<https://cccbbr.org.uk/2025/01/24/save-the-date-5-7-september-2025>



Please send in photos, articles, your social media posts and other updates about your local ringing to publicity@sacr.org.

Social media

See Scottish Bellringing's facebook and instagram pages for more photos and items

For up to date info on social media:

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

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

<https://x.com/SBellringing>

<https://www.sacr.org>

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<https://www.facebook.com/groups/bellringers>

The SACR Committee
