



# Society of Royal Cumberland Youths Newsletter 2007

## In this issue

Australia tour

•  
Membership news

•  
The SRCY website

•  
An Australian Cumberland  
in London

•  
SRCY peals analysis

•  
SRCY regional practices

•  
Around the towers

...and much more



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# Master's introduction

I leave it to the Honorary Secretary to introduce the newsletter... It's my opportunity to give a state of the nation address and as usual, I've got a few things to say...

My second year in office has seen a few developments. The new website is the largest of these – enabling the Society to communicate more quickly and effectively with members. I think this has helped create a greater sense of involvement and I think it has helped the Society move forward.



The membership debate, as it became known, has not only been a chance to reflect and openly discuss issues to do with recruitment but has broadened to prompt us to consider the purpose and objectives of the Society. This can feel like painful and difficult stuff but I think we do ourselves credit in considering these things that will shape the Society. The ringing landscape is moving – people travel more, communicate differently, have different expectations of ringing, expect professional events and we have to organise ourselves to meet these challenges and stay at the leading edge of ringing.

And, let's not forget the ringing. What is encouraging is that we're doing more around the country. Regional practices are expanding and regional events are in the offing. This is very encouraging. We're ringing more peals than we have done for a few years, but I'm pleased to note that more people are being involved – it's not just the same people ringing more peals! And we've rung a few more things at the 'top end' that better reflect some of the capability within the Society. We've also provided opportunities for people to do new things and get their potential tested!

What will be keeping me busy this coming year? The website continually evolves because we've always got to add to it, update it and keep it 'live'. I'd like to follow through the work on the 'membership debate' and objectives and of course the ringing. If you're thinking about organising an SRCY event or want to get more involved, please get in touch with me or one of the Officers.

*Simon Holden*



## From the Honorary Secretary

There's nowhere to hide now! For years I've heard the same refrain: "Ah well, you see, the trouble with the Cumberlands is that it's really a London-based Society." As you'll see, apart from the practices in the capital, there are now get-togethers in the North, South, East and ...well the gauntlet is well and truly laid down for the one remaining compass point. So, if you're still scratching your head trying to locate a good new year's resolution, why not read the newsletter and put a date or two in your diary?

We have got more articles to include than we can afford to print this year, but we hope you enjoy the fruits of Jo Dorling's editorial pen and Jeremy Warren's printing expertise. We are immensely grateful to them both. Above all, **please** let us know what you think. It's your Society after all!

*George Unsworth*

## SRCY peal weekend

2007 saw another very successful peal weekend, and thanks are due to John Barnes for co-ordinating such a task.

50 out of 58 peals  
were scored

and a total of

331 members  
of the Society

participated in the arrangements.



# Organise your own SRCY event

Hampshire's membership of the Cumberlands is in good health and enjoys a growing following in the area. On the back of a successful weekend based in Southampton last year and the enthusiastic involvement in the recent peal weekend, it has been decided that in May 2008 we will arrange a southern members' event, to be based in the south of Hampshire.

The idea is to get as many people as possible from the south together under the banner of SRCY. We hope that this event will encourage the return of some lapsed members as well as strengthen the bonds currently active members have with the Society. As part of this, and in an effort to cater for everyone, we plan to have peals, open ringing and an early evening practice, to be rounded off by an informal social event on 17 May 2008.

We are already off to a very encouraging start. A number of members who have, over the years, slipped off the radar are already showing enthusiasm for the idea.

Events like these help show that the Society is about all its members and also provide a less intimidating stage for others to come and socialise and see what the Society is about. If we are to continue to flourish over the coming decades then events like this are going to play a big part – think about whether you could organise something similar.

*Peter Sheppard*

## NOT THE DINNER DAY

Not the Dinner Day this year followed the usual pattern, 'but if it aint broke, don't fix it!' Peals were attempted during the day – at St Martin-in-the-Fields, Spitalfields, Shoreditch, Battersea, St George in the East and St Clement Danes. Four of the six were successful. I had the pleasure of ringing Bristol Major at Battersea followed by a trip across London in the back of the 'Hobbsmobile' for Yorkshire Royal at Shoreditch. The Master seemed to find the Yorkshire a little too quick for comfort, but at least we'd helped him work up a thirst!

The Clifton restaurant provided the evening venue for the traditional curry. As usual, there was plenty of food, plenty of beer, and a great turn out, with nearly 50 people descending on London for the event.

This event has become one of the strong social highlights of the SRCY calendar, and if you haven't managed to make it to one yet, you're definitely missing out! Many thanks to the organisers.

*Stephen Borman*



## March country meeting

In March the country meeting took us to Northfield near Birmingham, West Midlands. Peals were rung at St Paul's Jewellery Quarter, Selly Oak, Hanbury, Kingsbury and Edgbaston whilst general ringing took place at Kings Norton, and finally the fantastic Taylor 10 at Northfield, which are always a pleasure to ring or hear (personal opinion of the author obviously... but I doubt many would disagree).

The meeting was notable mainly because of the turn-out of members (over 90) and because we were able to congratulate Muriel Reay in person on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of her 1000th peal (the first lady to ring 1000 peals). Linda Garton reported to the meeting that 12 female members who have all rung 1000 peals met in Worcester to ring a peal to commemorate the event. Other business passed (particularly quickly in the absence of minutes of the previous meeting which the secretary owned up to having left at home!), and six new members were elected and welcomed to the Society.

The evening event took the form of a gigantic buffet supper in which Margaret Edwards did a sterling job preparing and delivering to all those present. The Australia group met for the first time in advance of their trip – perhaps this and the central location was partly the reason for such a good turn out? Either way, it was good to meet new people and in some cases, renew acquaintance with some less familiar faces who haven't been around for some time. Just what you expect from a country meeting.

*Joanne Fielding*

# Australia tour 2007

The Society had a ringing tour to Australia in March/April 2007. It was thoroughly enjoyed by all and thanks are due to the masterful organisation of Ben and Rosemary Duke, Alan Regin and Derek Sibson. Here are a few recollections from each of the cities that we visited.

## The Cumberlands in Perth

For me in particular, as a member of 35 years' standing, it was a very great pleasure to welcome the Society of Royal Cumberland Youths to Western Australia. To be able to catch up with friends I haven't seen for many years and show people around the place I consider to be one of the most beautiful cities in the world was a real delight.

As far as the ringers of Western Australia were concerned, the visit of the Society was a chance not to be missed and a high proportion of our ringers took up the opportunity to ring with a band of experienced twelve bell ringers with alacrity. It was particularly pleasing to see several of our number ringing their first blows of Cinques and others scoring Bristol Royal and Maximus for the first time. I feel that it is also a measure of the standard of ringing here in Perth that four leads of Orion on the last night of the visit contained no less than five WA ringers.

Running the general practices during the visit, I am acutely aware that I cracked the whip pretty hard and kept our visitors very busy. I am most grateful to everyone for their kindness, help and enthusiasm, which has made a lasting mark on ringing in this area. Apart from the ringing opportunities the visit afforded, new friendships were forged, and many promises of return visits made. Most importantly of all, it was fun! We look forward to welcoming you all back to Perth very soon.

*Richard Offen*  
Perth, WA



## ...in Adelaide

**The visit to Adelaide presented some good opportunities for locals to ring with a strong band which was much appreciated by all.**

Some highlights included Stephanie Harrington having the opportunity to ring her first quarter peal of Cambridge Minor at Walkerville, and Nic Rawlence, Katherine Ugody and others getting a chance to extend themselves at the Adelaide Town Hall and St Francis Xavier's Cathedral. Resident Cumberland Matthew Sorell also rang in a peal at Prospect, although he threatened to stand if a message arrived letting him know his wife was in labour! Thankfully, David Paul Sorell arrived on 17 May according to plan, a couple of weeks later. The peal at St Francis Xavier's Cathedral was also successful. The highlight for the visitors was undoubtedly the peal at St Peter's Cathedral followed by a social get-together at the home of David and Elizabeth Bleby.

*Matthew Sorell*  
Adelaide



*Party at the Swan Tower*



## ...in Sydney

Leaving the busiest to the end of the tour for some, Sydney provided a background of many opportunities to ring and sight-see – those staying at the youth hostel perhaps to be given the prize for arranging with meticulous planning the maximum possible opportunities/activities fitted into a day!

We were delightfully entertained at a meal hosted by the Sydney ringers at the ABC, being able to conference Penny (in the UK) into the table conversation too! Having been made so welcome at the start of our stay in Sydney we then set forth to the tasks in hand – mastering the lovely peal at St Andrew's swiftly followed by the Cathedral, ringing Smith's 23 later in the week, together with the relief of some single methods of the standard 8.

We made many good friends at practices in Sydney and hope that we return their kindness one day and that they will visit the UK soon.

*Jo Dorling*

## ...in Hawaii

**For those of us not having to go back to the UK at this point, a hardy 10 of us crossed the international date line en route from Sydney where we gained a day, landing at the airport in Hawaii one hour before we had left Sydney!**

Our hotel was in Waikiki, which is one might say Honolulu-on-Sea! We had an outdoor buffet meal there and watched the hula dancing. Hula music is sort of undulating (or should it be "ululating") and the hula dancer's movements are also sort of undulating particularly the hips and the arms. The traditional attire for hula dancing is of course the grass skirt, later to be modelled by Jane Sibson.

The food was good in Hawaii and reasonably priced. The hotel facilities were DIY though – I managed to boil some eggs for breakfast and Ann Cook learned it is very difficult to prepare



palatable scrambled eggs in a micro-wave oven.

We went swimming in a bay owned by the American equivalent of the National Trust. Before we could go in the sea we had to watch a boring film about conservation and have a shower (or perhaps the shower was afterwards). Then our hands were stamped to authorise entry to the beach area. I'm not sure whether it was coral but I found plenty of rocks to stub my toe on! However it was really beautiful, and the fishes were so tame they would swim right round you, so I guess the conservation message must have gotten across.

The bells at St Andrew's Cathedral are named after the monarchy Hawaii once had. The treble after King Kamehaheha I, second King Kamehaheha II and so on up to King Kamehaheha V, with the 6th, 7th and tenor bells being named after the last three monarchs who were non-Kamehahehas. In one respect their monarchy was more advanced than ours – it was elected. One would-be Queen who did not impress the electorate took it on the chin and retired from public life to do her garden.

We rang two peals at St Andrew's Cathedral in Honolulu on 16 and 18 May. These involved one local ringer in his first peal of Cambridge Surprise Major. The local ringers were most hospitable and welcoming.

My recommendation is if you get the chance to go to Hawaii, or strictly

speaking to Oahu, then take it. I'm sure you will receive a warm welcome, help the local ringers make progress, and find plenty to interest you while you are there.

*JJ Ford*



# The 12-bell competition 2007

This year the SRCY team failed to qualify for the 12-bell final, being placed 5th in the eliminator at Kidderminster. This was a disappointing result and doesn't lend itself to much of a report about the SRCY entry. We've asked Jennie Town to give an account of our friends from Stockton's experiences, as they seem to have more fun than most.

## THE KIDDERMINSTER ELIMINATOR

**Quite recently I was speaking to a member of the Birmingham 12-bell squad, who gave his opinion that, in general, not a lot was made of the eliminators since most people travelled on the day and didn't stay late drinking. This is a far cry from the Stockton experience, where the eliminators in 2006 and 2007 have necessitated long journeys and commitment to an entire weekend. This year we were drawn at Kidderminster, the nearest of the venues for us, just 210 miles from Stockton!**

So Friday night in Kidderminster was a bit like the game of sardines where somebody hides and gradually more and more people find them and squash into the hiding place, only this time we were in the "King and Castle" on the station with more of the Stockton team filtering in as time went by. We had 15 in the squad this year, (although obviously only 12 could ring on the day) and the few who were not in Kidderminster were staying close by.

On Saturday morning we made our way to the impressive church, which towers over the nearby canal. The local team were well in the swing of providing food and drink, which they did superbly all day. It was time for the all-important draw and it was soon clear that we were not going to be lucky there – we were drawn 6th out of the seven teams present with Birmingham drawn last.

Our northern friends from Leeds were drawn first, which is tough because everybody listens to that one. We already knew from our practice that the bells were not as clear inside as they are outside and, as the teams took their turn, it was clear that there were some problems with some of the middle and back bells, possibly due to this. It was really pleasing that everybody rang well, albeit some not

as well as they had hoped. This might have been expected from the fact that every single team at this eliminator had recently been in a final of the competition; it could almost have been a final in its own right.

When our turn came, we felt that we probably rang as well as we could have on the day – we never quite achieved the level of striking of the previous year, but we did have a lot of fun trying to get it right. Unfortunately, I didn't hear the Birmingham ringing either, which was a shame as it must have been fantastic. Somehow dashing to the pub for a well-earned drink seemed to be more important at the time!

With the results came disappointment – SRCY were 5th and we were 4th. We got some very nice comments from the judges though: our ringing was described as "happy, lively, driven by the back bells, fun and enjoyable" plus our time was in the middle of their "ideal peal speed" – altogether an encouraging result.

Afterwards the majority of the other teams made their way back home but for the Stockton and Leeds teams the night was yet young and several hostels were sampled before we ended up back at the King and Castle.

The next day the majority of the team were at the station to travel on

the Severn Valley Railway to Bridgnorth. We were already on the platform when I got an amusing text from Duncan and Sally Walker asking whether we had bought 1st or 2nd class tickets (clearly Duncan usually travels 1st class but had to slum it for our sakes)! After a grand day out we returned to our cars for the long journey north.

We work hard to ring as well as we can, but we have a lot of fun and this helps us to really gel as a team. The judges were perceptive when they commented that "this team seemed to really enjoy ringing together". Yes we do and long may it continue!

*Jennie Town*

It's 10 years since the SRCY last won the 12-bell competition in 1997. What's happened in that time? Well, Birmingham have won it most years and continue to set the standard. Other teams have come through and made the eliminators tough contests in their own right. And the SRCY? I think our approach to the contest (get 12 pretty good ringers, throw together a few practices and you're in with a shout) has been overtaken by teams who take the contest very seriously and practice in a more focused way for competition conditions. The Other Society are perhaps in a similar position to us, although they would point to their slightly better record over the years (who said "second is nowhere?!"...). I'd like to encourage the Society to modify its approach to the contest over the coming years to keep pace with the competition and give a good showing that reflects the talents within our ranks.

*Simon Holden*

# Membership news

## New members

Jack Aylward, Lyn Barnett, Richard Chandler, Richard Dearnley, Pat Lubbock, David Smith, Naomi Smith, Jon Spreadbury, Lorraine Trebble, Ben Trent, Nicola Baxter, Diane Faux, Andrew Hodgson, Daniel Jones, J.Chapman Knott, Zoe Roberts, Christine Cable, Matthew Hetherington, Catherine Lane, Judith McCoy, Peter McCoy, Beverly Faber, Thomas Mack, Richard Turk, Hugh Wilkinson, Janet Archibald, Michael Crocket, The Rev'd Andrew Davey, Heather Forster, Gill Knox, Martin Marshall, Sue Ottley, Faith Pearce, Maureen Roberts, Jonathan Stokoe.

## Losses of members

Ron Constant of Meopham  
Eric Billings of Northampton  
elected 14/4/73  
Mike Crowder of Barton on Humber  
elected 7/9/57  
Alan Ward of Cheadle Hulme,  
Cheshire elected 18/9/54  
David Gullick of Welwyn Garden  
City elected 12/7/69  
Keith McGregor of Helston elected  
22/1/49  
Douglas May of Cranleigh Surrey,  
elected 15/4/64  
Ann Bethell of Chalfont St Giles  
elected 14/7/73, assistant secretary  
from 1978-1981  
Alfred House of Chard Somerset  
elected 19/1/35  
John F. Jennings of Wickham Market  
elected 31/7/76

Patricia Doorn of St Albans elected  
19/1/57  
F. William Midwinter of Newark  
elected 18/9/54  
The Rev'd Prebendary J. G. M. Scott  
of Totnes, elected 3/4/71  
James Mossop of Egremont, Cumbria  
elected 22/4/56  
Richard Hedges of Gillingham, Dorset  
elected 26/4/80  
Nancy Bramley of Wimborne elected  
4/1/89  
Roy Harris of Reading elected 12/4/87  
Marion Perryman of Orwell elected  
10/7/99  
Joan Summerhayes of Worcester  
elected 19/3/53 – Senior Steward  
1969-1971, 1977-1978; Assistant  
Secretary 1974-1977.

## Congratulations to...

Roddy and Frances Horton, Jon and Lizzy Hetherington, Olly and Mary Cross, Peter and Roxy Sheppard, Matt and Jessica Durham on their marriages

Frank Rivett, John Loveless, Ian Bushell, Ian Fielding and Alan Regin on their part in the record length of London Royal (23,320)

Muriel Reay on the 30th anniversary of ringing 1000 peals

Ian Fielding on ringing his 2000th peal

Ruth Curtis on ringing her 3000th peal

Andrew and Angela Cairns on the birth of their son Isaac James; Louisa and Julian Roughley on the birth of their twins James William and Ian Alexander; Matthew and Michelle Sorell on the birth of their son David Paul; David and Karen Garton on the birth of their son Toby; Anthony and Lizzie Cotton on the birth of their son Edward Christopher.

## Membership

### 70 YEARS

Doris Colgate

### 60 YEARS

Walter J. Lemon, Eric Dodds, Olive D. Barnett, John Norsworthy, Jill R. Parsons, M. Janet Mattinson, Pamela H. Humphries, Donald R. Marshall, Mark S. Lancefield, Betty Robbins, Pamela Latchford, Derek E. Latchford, Audrey Short, Jessie M. Kippin, David J. Gay, Cyril Buesden

### 50 YEARS

E. Vivian Williams, Heather Steere, Harold W. Rogers, David K. Walklate, Sampson Walklate, Richard Dean, Howard Oglesby, Philip Mehew, Anthony R. Mann, Colin A. Tester, Brian E. Jeffrey

### 40 YEARS

Jillian M. Curry, Jenny Brunger, William Allsopp, Gillian M. Clark, Margaret E. Oram, Derek J. Tysoe, Roy Walker, M. Louise Hamilton-Glover, Michael H. D. O'Callaghan, John M. Kemp, Susan P. Cole, James M. Hills, Beryl R. Norris, Gwyneth M. White, Christine Andrew, Allan G. Keen, Raymond D. Helliwell, Gay Bott, Hilary Muirhead, Peter Watson

### 25 YEARS

Elizabeth Hanson, Stephen V. J. Bounds, Anne C. Orme, Ivan R. Howitt, Jill Joyce, Keith A. F. Record, Ian Roulstone, Rowena M. Unsworth, Alison L. Brooke, Timothy Jones, Penny Lowen, Janice Taylor, Ann M. Saunders, Christine C.L. Seaman, Susan C. Barnes, Ian G. Mills, Philip A. L. Rioch

## Where are they now? Please help us to find up-to-date addresses for the following people

Nicholas S. Blyton, Janet R. Cafe, Nicola D. Mason, Peter D. Storey, Maureen A. Popple, Peter G. Neville, David Mossop, Alison Hill, Colin G. Andrews, Lance S. F. Hewson, Terence V. Barnard, Angela Wright, Susan Houghton, Jacqueline Harrison, Ian M. Robinson, Amette Bradbury, Susan P. Cole, William Allsopp, Valerie Williams, M. Pearse, W.S. Bonnet, G. D. Fearnough, Gerald Frost, Cyril Buesden, M. Janet Mattinson, Walter J. Lemon, James T. Stevens, Nicola A. Hughes



# SRCY

## Country Meeting – July 2007

**Coming from Scotland to my first meeting with the Society since becoming a member, with flights booked I arrived in a very wet Loughborough on the Friday morning.**

There had been various peal attempts arranged throughout the county on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday – and I was due to meet up with a band at the lovely village church of Stanford-on-Soar. The thought that it was Friday 13th had not entered my mind, but I hear that some of the attempts fell foul to the tidings of the day. I must admit to being very nervous at this stage. Although I had rung peals for the Society before, this would be my first attempt in a band where I knew very few people – and I didn't want to let the side down.

Having scored an excellent peal of London Major, we made our way to the University of Nottingham campus where the accommodation had been



*Mary Holden, Jo Fielding, Ian Campbell and Simon Holden.*

arranged. We were all due to meet up at the local pub for drinks and dinner. An informal evening seemed to be enjoyed by all with the numbers of members in attendance growing by the minute.

It was superb to meet up with people I hadn't seen for a while – and meet a number of new people. I really had no need to be nervous; everyone was very friendly and made me, the token Scottish member in attendance, feel incredibly welcome.

The Saturday morning saw more peal attempts throughout the area, and a mini-tour arranged for those not ringing peals. The weather had improved slightly and the peal at Loughborough Parish Church that I

was in was scored. After a quick adjournment to the pub across the road (excellent real ale) for lunch, we made our way back to Nottingham to meet up with the mini-tour for the final tower.

Then it was back to the halls for the business meeting. Sitting in the corner or at the back was not an option this time, as the room had filled up. The meeting passed quickly and three new members were elected. I had been unable to make the 400 mile journey to my nomination so it was interesting to see how this was done.

The halls where we were staying had a nice little bar, offering drinks at student prices! The bar manager is quoted from the Friday evening as



*Peter Harrison, Cath Merlane, Shirley McGill, Penny Sharpe, Simon Davis, Mary Holden and Jo Fielding.*



follows: “We’ve brought in a few barrels of real ale for tomorrow night, personally I think we ordered far too much...”. His worries were soon disappearing – as was the excellent ale!

Following a good buffet meal in the main hall, two skittle alleys were erected and the evening entertainment could begin. Teams were formed, and the competition began. I was quite pleased that our team made it to the second round – not least as we had knocked out another “Northern” team – but we had no choice but to let the next team win, although the Master did demonstrate excellent ball control on a few occasions; on such a narrow alley, it takes a lot of skill to miss every pin, even more to do it twice in a row!

The evening finished in the bar with much hilarity – including various methods being rung on cuddly monkeys....

The Sunday morning saw people leaving for Sunday morning ringing, peal attempts and for some to begin the journey home. My final peal of the weekend was at Shephshed before making my way back to the frozen north.

So to summarise the weekend: 16 out of the 20 peal attempts were scored, involving 55 members, 3 new members were elected and over 70 members were in attendance.

My weekend was over, and although nervous – I had survived! Many thanks to all of those involved in organising the weekend, especially to Andrew Cairns and his team of helpers and to Penny Sharpe. A personal thank you to all in attendance that weekend for making me feel so welcome.

Membership of the SRCY is something I am very proud of, and the wonderful welcome I received at this, my first meeting, only goes to affirm this. Although in the minority in Scotland, we do our best to wave the flag – and hope that one day we will be able to welcome you all north of the border for an event.

*Matt Edwards*  
Scotland

# The SRCY website

**The SRCY website has moved a long way since its beginnings some 10 or so years ago; since Paul Butler started work on the website it has gone through many changes. The previous website was starting to look a bit old, and it was difficult to get pages updated, even for Richard Hobbs whose webspace the site sat on!**



The current website was launched in February 2007, after nearly a year's work by Richard Hobbs, Peter Harrison, Simon Holden and the Officers.

Richard worked on the new 'look and feel' of the site, using his skills in styling the website and to make sure that everyone was able to view the site, no matter what computer they were using. Anyone with a web design background will know what a challenge this can be!



I worked on the part of the site that made it run – introducing a database that the website can connect to, and made it so people could 'log in' to the site which gives them extra pages to view for members' eyes only. The database meant that the next practice could be updated while we were all in the pub on a Wednesday night. It also meant that members have their own web forum

where they can post their thoughts on matters for other members to read. As you might have guessed, the person who posts the most is the Master – hardly surprising as he not only posts his thoughts on the previous practice but he has his own 'blog' as well!

The Officers provided a lot of the content and gave Richard and I plenty of feedback on how they thought the site should look and operate. After plenty of discussions and drafts the current format was agreed and the site was ready to show to the world.

Despite all the work that has gone into the new website, it's not finished! While some suggestions came out at the AGM, there are still plenty of ideas that need to be completed. Some of these are just administrative tasks, which the average member won't see immediately, but it will mean that the website as a whole will be easier to manage and update, which will help keep our site an updated, useful and alive. Other additions will be more obvious to people – but you'll have to wait and see what they are (you didn't think I'd spoil the surprise, did you?).

We hope that the site is something that members can look upon with pride and can contribute to, while other ringers in other Societies could only wish their website was as up to date and easy to use!

*Peter Harrison*

# September Dinner 2007

Having rung a couple of peals previously on the joyful bells of St Mary Abbots, Kensington, I was very aware that my most pressing needs following completion of the Society's dinner day peal in that salubrious bell tower would be to have a shower and then go to sleep for about 12 hours solid. However, politeness (and a raging thirst) dictated that I show my face at the convivial gathering over at the City Pipe, so after managing the shower at least, I slapped on some face paint, dragged on my glad rags and legged it over to Foster Lane.

Having elaborated on the intricacies of Lindsey Surprise Royal to those interested parties who had not been at Kensington ("well it's not really Cambridge and it's not really Lincolnshire"), and congratulated the bands ringing elsewhere on their scores (no losses for our Society that day!), I decided if I wasn't going to get my 12 hours' sleep I would need something to stimulate me as it were, and dived head first into the Master's pewter beer pitcher. Metaphorically at least.

Naturally the chat gravitated to recent activities by various prominent members of the Society. JJ's peal tour got a thorough going over, and one of its participants was in fact the star of



*Mike Marshall and Cath Merlane.*

the evening for his ingenuity in times of adversity – for making an 'exceedingly good' trouser belt out of his phone charger flex... It was also very nice to see a large contingent of Antipodeans bringing a bit of southern hemisphere support to the gathering.

Anyway, eventually we all sat down and got to the meat of the evening. I have to say, the steak was very flavoursome. I was very impressed by the lengths to which one 'blooming' young lady was going to keep healthy, including eating steak well done. Thank goodness we don't have any French ringers or they'd have been horrified. I hope when the Roughley twins do arrive they'll appreciate it.

As we were mellowing into the dessert/cheese course, the Master opened fire in typical no-nonsense manner, congratulating the peal bands, welcoming those who had taken the trouble to bus in from outside of the big smoke, and explaining why it was

important that we do indeed mark such anniversaries as this. At this point I nudged someone in the arm, and discovered it was indeed the Society's 260th Anniversary. Clearly this made the evening an even more hallowed and auspicious occasion, which needed to be marked by some serious celebration. To which

point, a couple of cigar aficionados were noticed slipping outside to enjoy a balmy night under the aegis of the new smoking ban.

It was a delightful evening and our thanks go to the organiser who co-ordinated all the peal attempts and chose such an excellent venue for the meal.

*Annie Brechin*

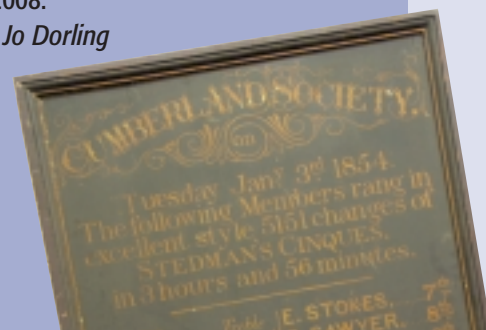
## STOP PRESS Peal boards St Martin-in-the-Fields

Following the major redevelopment at St Martin-in-the-Fields, the Society remains in possession of many old peal boards. These peal boards date from before the restoration of the ringing room. There is space to retain and hang 4 of the boards – the remaining 15 are looking for new homes. Pictures have been taken of the peal boards and will shortly be available for viewing on the website. For any interested parties please do consult with the Officers should you know of the origins of any board and whether it could be rehoused in another tower. The church no longer permits the boards to be stored at St Martin-in-the-Fields. The boards must be removed by Easter 2008.

*Jo Dorling*



*Alan Regin, Philip Vracas, Carol Rider and The Rev'd Andy Rider.*





# SRCY – 260 years ...the last 10!

## (or thoughts of an Australian Cumberland in London)

Ten years ago we were celebrating our 250th anniversary. We rang large numbers of peals, held a huge and magnificent dinner in august surroundings and elected and involved record numbers of members. Sound familiar? A grander version of the events of a usual SRCY year in some ways. We looked back over the previous 250 years, and, we hoped, set ourselves up for the next 250 years.

Now we are in the year of our 260th anniversary, and although it's not a particularly significant figure, it's a good opportunity to reflect on the 10 years since our last big celebration. I was elected at the AGM 10 years ago, having arrived in the UK only a few months previously, and here are some reflections from my personal experience. I'd rather not just list numbers and events so forgive me if in typical fashion I ramble a little from the path.

Going back to 1997, when I arrived in the UK as a non member, I met many of the leading lights of the SRCY at a summer peal tour organised by Phil Goodyer. I heard all about the preparations for the great 250th dinner from Linda Garton and about her colour co-ordinated dress. The dinner was already fully booked, but I was lucky enough to be offered a spare ticket by Greg Woods. I leapt at the chance – what an introduction – I'd been primed by both Cumberland and College Youth friends about the great variety of people I was about to meet, who was whom, and some of the intricate threads that bound them! A most impressive and interesting introduction to the Society. I was delighted to be proposed for membership at the AGM in October.

The only people I knew as a fresh arrival to London in November were ringers, and having recently been elected a member, I soon became involved in all possible events –

practices, ringing at St Martin's, Shore-ditch, Spitalfields, ringing peals, and if not, then turning up at the pub after...

1997 was a pinnacle of effort and achievement with many events before, during and after it, involving over 500 people in 444 peals, with the election of over 50 new members. We won the 12-bell striking competition in that year at St Martin-in-the-Fields. The Wednesday night fare was Rigel and Avon with Bristol and Orion being the easy rides – plus Stedman of course (which was all I could ring apart from the treble). Alan Regin was in his second stint as master in 1997, and he led with dynamism, and enthusiasm, PR skills and energy supported by a team which included Jane Wilkinson towards the end of her 25 year reign as secretary.

I know that masters don't define the society but we do look to them for direction and leadership and the masters who followed in Alan's steps had a hard task but I believe, continued to lead the society in the right direction. Ian Fielding bounced onto the scene from his position of senior steward in 1999 – one of the youngest masters yet. His style was different from Alan's, his main focus being on the consolidation of the Wednesday night ringing. He focused on consolidating and raising the standards on a Wednesday night, introducing more to Bristol and reintroducing Yorkshire and Cambridge to the weekly diet.



*Penny Sharpe*

Doug Beaumont was master for a year (his second) in 2003, and he was also very considered in his direction of Wednesday practices and in the development of many of the Wednesday night members who were consolidating Bristol and Orion.

Our current Master, Simon Holden, was elected in 2005 only a couple of years after joining and has introduced yet another leadership style. He is also one of our younger masters. He is a very energetic and pragmatic person who has been on a steep learning curve – and has taken on the development of the website, membership issues, and has encouraged the organisation of SRCY peal ringing outside Wednesday nights in London.

Inspired by the country meeting in the US in 1997, a lot of Cumberland trips have been there, and in 2007 we had an SRCY trip to Australia which was enjoyed by around 40 members. There is no doubt that we have involved more members from out of London in the past 10 years than before.

Over the decade we've rung an average of 250 peals per year. We are a peal ringing society and this is an area which remains strong.

This brings to mind one of the external factors which have affected us – one of which was the ASCY rule change by which they allowed the



*Masters over the past 10 years: Simon Holden, Doug Beaumont, Alan Regin and Ian Fielding.*

## SRCY – 260 years – continued

election of female members. Hitherto, women who wanted to join a top notch ringing society had only one choice. There was some movement of change in membership of the two societies both ways and we think that this process has evened itself out, but it has changed the landscape somewhat for ringers looking for a society to join.

At the end of 2002 we had 1301 members and by October 2007 had over 1351 members. In 2002 we have 99 (7.6%) non UK members, and in 2007 we had 131 (9.7%) – this gives an indication of the increase in the involvement of non UK members (and I think the pattern will be repeated with country members too).

In the last three years we've had a series of informal 'friendly' ASCY/SRCY striking competitions, held on normal Tuesday and Wednesday practice nights. I believe the cumulative total is even. Along with the 12 bell competition and the London Ringers' party which has in the last few years extended to a ringers' advent service at Cripplegate, has provided an opportunity for us to mix with the 'other side' along with many other ringers.

Being a member of an organisation such as the Cumberlands brings with it

certain pleasures and privileges as well as responsibilities. The privileges and pleasures include the availability of ringing opportunities at a high level with like-minded people – i.e. those committed to the pursuit of excellence in ringing, in pushing themselves further than they can at the local level, in helping others to come with them. This has been touched upon in our discussions over the past year about membership: why we propose and elect members; what we should expect from the Society; and what the Society should expect from us.

There is continual debate about standards, about what we should expect on a Wednesday night, peal invitations etc. There are various theories about how to maintain and raise our ringing standards and keep the society welcoming and at the same time develop the skills of the members. We need to keep developing talents not just of Officers, but of all our ringers. It is a big task, and we all need to remember to take responsibility for our own development and not to be afraid to speak out or to volunteer to help! Also to arrange things for the people in your area – don't always wait to be asked!

In any ringing organisation, people have varying levels of commitment and expectation and a variety of reasons for wanting to belong. So we have a continually evolving world around us – nothing ever stays the same – although looking at the names of the conductors and peal ringers and indeed the names of the independent examiners, I wonder! There are members ringing regularly now who've not been seen for years and members who were a huge part of the scene and now, for various reasons, are no longer. One of the best parts of ringing for me is the story telling – be it what happened last Saturday or what happened 15 years ago. The Cumberlands are like any other group in this respect. But it is our group.

Finally a word about what 10 years has meant to me. When I arrived in the UK as a non member I could ring the standard 8, Stedman Cinques, basic surprise royal and maximus and Stedman up to Cinques. Most 12-bell ringing I'd done had had to be specially arranged in Australia. I was of course pretty daunted by all the ringing in London, but there was no option for me but to throw myself in, particularly as I didn't know anyone but ringers. Since joining the Society in '97 I've been exposed to regular ringing of a very high standard, and have had the opportunity to learn and ring peals and touches of Bristol, Orion, Rigel and Zanussi to name a few. I've been invited in peals in all sorts of places throughout the UK – most of my non ringing friends haven't seen as much of the UK as have I, nor sampled us much real ale (another advantage over Australia). Encouraged by other members I worked towards ringing Smith's 23 spliced major. If you really want to progress, and put in the time and mental effort, there's not much to limit you. The other thing is that I've made a huge network of friends over the last 10 years – mainly through the Cumberlands.

*Penny Sharpe*



# National Devon call change competition

On Saturday 1st September 2007 a band of SRCY members descended on Branscombe for the National Devon Call Change competition. Although we didn't manage to bring back salvaged BMW motorbikes (long gone, unfortunately), we were more than satisfied with the little haul that we did acquire.

The rules were the standard 6 bell call change competition rules i.e. rise, top ringing (the 60 on 3rds peal found in the diary) and lower, with closed handstroke leads and not less than 15 minutes and all judged. In addition to 3 other 'out of county' teams, we were going to be up against the current 8 bell champions (Kingsteignton), 6 bell champions (Egg Buckland) and the 4 other top teams from Devon.

Anybody having had the chance to take part in good call change ringing will know how difficult it is to get it right. It is a totally different style of ringing and if we wanted to do well we were going to have to practice hard – especially as Branscombe are a challenging ring of 6.

After a couple of practices in London, we met at Fivehead and Isle Abbots on the morning of the competition for final rehearsals. We travelled to Branscombe with confidence that we could do well. As we entered the church to ring, we were greeted by Mike Brady – one of several SRCY groupies who had come to support us and wish us well and who sat in the church as we rang. We had a reasonably good rise, rang the top ringing fairly well and didn't do too badly with the lower – Mike said it was the best of the afternoon! What would the judges think though?

At the results it transpired that we had done very well and much better than I had anticipated. We came 5th overall and won the Trinity shield for the best-placed non-Devon band. We had also beaten a couple of the top call change bands. Predictably Egg Buckland won, although they were given a close run by Kingsteignton.

## RESULTS:

1 Egg Buckland	41.75	9 Moorland Ringers	80.25
2 Kingsteignton	45.25	10 Bath & Wells –	
3 Lamerton	55.75	Glaston Branch	83.25
4 Dunsford	59.00	11 Stoke Gabriel	88.00
5 SRCY	60.25	12 Bath & Wells –	
6 Hampshire West	69.25	Axbridge Branch	88.25
7 Exeter Cathedral	70.5	13 Exeter Colleges Guild	111.75
8 Exeter St Petrock	70.75		

It was a good day – well organised by Paul Pascoe and Ryan Trout. The Devon Association are keen to promote their unique way of ringing and I would encourage people to consider taking part. I am certainly keen to enter in 2008 and we're continuing to practice call change ringing prior to some of the Society's regular Wednesday practice nights in London.

*Ian Fielding*



## Forthcoming July country meeting

**You will by now know that the Society's Country Weekend is being held in sunny Norfolk in July 2008.**

We are still working up plans for the weekend but we would like to issue a challenge to members across the country: a friendly contest in July. The Eastern practice would like to invite a team from the Northern practice at Stockton, from the Southern practice and hopefully from the Western practice in a friendly competition at St Peter Mancroft for a small trophy. The potential is therefore to have five teams from the Society competing together in friendly rivalry. What a great advert for the Society that would be. So give it some thought and start planning now. Rest assured you will receive a warm welcome in the fine city of Norwich for all the usual country meeting entertainment and it will good to know that at least one team competing in Norwich will win a trophy in 2008!

*Simon Rudd*



Once again there has been an increase in the number of peals rung.

Between  
1/8/06 and  
31/7/07  
there were  
**262**  
compared with  
**243** last year.

There are 7 (8) handbell peals in that total and again this year most of those were in the UK, with one in Toronto. The number of towers was significantly higher with 191 (157). Shoreditch remains the leading tower with 18 (27). This year a number of new towers have got into the list because of overseas visits, especially Australia.

**Towers:** Shoreditch 18 (27), Marietta 7 (0), St Martin-in-the-Fields 6 (1), Augusta 5 (4), Charleston Grace Church (1), Perth Swan Tower (0) and Spitalfields (6) all had 4 and Greyabbey (0), Hendersonville (0) and Streatham (0) all had 3, 22 (16) towers with 2 and 158 (134) with just 1. 3 (6) of the 7 handbell peals were rung at 15 Harford Drive.

Geographically the peals were still widespread with of course a large increase in Australia, 33 (2). In the British Isles peals were rung in 37 (30)

# SRCY peals analysis 2006-2007

(last year's figures are in brackets)

different counties including 9 peals in 4 counties in Northern Ireland; 28 (20) were rung in 7 (5) states in the USA including the society's first in Hawaii and 1 (0) in Canada. In the UK most were rung in London 56 (60), followed by Nottinghamshire 15 (1), Yorkshire 11 (2), Surrey 10 (14), Hertfordshire 8 (14), Kent 8 (8), Sussex 8 (2), Cambridgeshire 6 (11), Leicestershire 6 (0) and Suffolk 6 (6). As usual the change in distribution each year is a reflection of where we hold the country meetings and where any tours have been held, with Australia being prominent at 33 (2), rung in 3 (1) states, and the U.S.A. with 28 (20)

This year there has again been a significant increase in the number of members taking part in peals, 366 (312). 167 (137) rang in only one peal.

**Ringers:** Alan Regin 103 (86), Ian Fielding 72 (69), Stephen Wheeler 59 (61), Richard Hobbs 55 (93), Derek Sibson 55 (64), Shirley McGill 54 (58), Simon Davies 53 (40), Mary Holden 53 (22), Michael O'Callaghan 49 (39), Jane Sibson 48 (54), Ian Bushell 47 (45), Cath Merlane 47 (32), Simon Holden 46 (41), Ian Campbell 43 (38), Fiona Wheeler 42 (33), Jo Dorling 41 (38), John Loveless 39 (39), Frank Rivett 39 (42).

The conducting was shared by 51 people this year compared with 47 last year. Derek E. Sibson 53 (57), Stephen A. Wheeler 48 (41), Ian R. Fielding 46 (49), John P. Loveless 13 (15), Roger Baldwin 8 (9), Ian Roulstone 8 (7), Graham A. Duke 6 (1), Matthew J.L. Durham 6 (5), James W. Belshaw 5 (3), Ian V.J. Smith 5 (3), three members with 4, two members with 3, ten members with 2 and 26 (30) with 1.

The variety of methods has once again risen slightly. 109 (102) different

methods or groups of methods (e.g. 4-Spliced) were rung. 12-bell peals have increased with 33 (18) including 4 of Cinques (2) this year. (10 of the 29 peals of Maximus were rung in Australia). Royal 56 (51), Caters 5 (2), Major 135 (140), Triples 0 (0) and Minor 32 (32).

Why no peals of triples again? It is now four years since the Society rang a peal of triples!

**Methods:** Bristol S. Major 25 (26), Yorkshire S. Major 12 (9), Bristol S. Royal 11 (6), Yorkshire S. Maximus 11 (0), 8-Spliced S. Major 10 (9), Cambridge S. Royal 9 (7), 7 Surprise Minor 8 (11), London S. Major 8 (9), 7 Treble Dodging Minor 7 (6), Bristol S. Maximus 7 (7), London No.3 S. Royal 7 (6), Rutland S. Major 7 (5), Yorkshire S. Royal 7 (9), 23-Spliced S. Major 6 (8), 4-Spliced S. Major 6 (8), Lincolnshire S. Major 6 (6), Cambridge S. Major 5 (9).

These figures are for peals published in *The Ringing World* up to October 26th and are therefore by definition out of date by the time you read this! One member reached their 500th for the Society since last year's list, Shirley McGill at Westmill on 21/4/07. Alan Regin reached his 1500th at Stanford-on-Soar on 13/7/07. 10 of the 31 members elected during the year rang their first peals for the Society, as did 12 members previously elected.

It would be greatly appreciated if conductors would please check the peal list published on the website and notify me of any omissions or errors.

If any member wants a list of their Society peals please get in touch with Derek Sibson at:

sibson@bartonseagrave.freemove.co.uk

Derek Sibson



## CUMBERLAND YOUTHS' PEALS 1758 / 1808 / 1858

Date	Tower	Method	Conductor
27/11/1758	All Saints, West Ham	5,400 Oxford TB Royal	Samuel Wood
17/12/1758	St Mary, Whitechapel	5040 Plain Bob Major	Samuel Wood
26/12/1758	St Margaret's, Westminster	5120 Union TB Major	Samuel Wood
04/07/1808	St Peter's, St Albans	5040 Grandsire Caters	George Gross
13/11/1808	St Giles in the Fields	5040 Grandsire Triples	George Gross
17/01/1858	The Punch Bowl, Hemlock Court, Strand	5040 Grandsire Triples	Henry Booth
21/01/1858	St James, Clerkenwell	5040 Stedman Triples	John Cox
24/01/1858	Christ Church, Blackfriars	5040 Stedman Triples	John Nelms
04/03/1858	St James, Clerkenwell	5024 Grandsire Major	Henry Booth
22/03/1858	St Clement Danes	5001 Stedman Caters	John Nelms
05/04/1858	St Mary, Bury St Edmunds	5040 Grandsire Triples	Henry Both
05/10/1858	St Sepulchre, Snow Hill	5003 Grandsire Caters	John Nelms
20/11/1858	St Mary Abbots, Kensington	5040 Grandsire Triples	John Nelms

Just three peals in 1758, all concentrated at the end of the year, November and December and all conducted by Samuel Wood. Only two in 1808, George Gross being a leading conductor of his day, as was his father (also George Gross) before him.

1858 sees a much wider range of peals, an interesting handbell peal, a couple of rare towers, Christ Church Blackfriars where the bells were a casualty of World War II and St Mary's Bury St Edmunds where the bells are now no longer hung for ringing.

Note to 05/10/58 peal. This was rung to the memory of Charles Goozee, late of the College Youths Society. He had previously been a Cumberland Youth; ringing many peals for them, including the first on the heavy 8 at Spitalfields (The Round Peal Board).

## SRCY 1908 PEALS

Date	Tower	Method	Conductor
04/01/08	All Saints, Edmonton	5056 Superlative S Major	James Parker
18/01/08	St Mary, Battersea	5072 Double Norwich C B Major	Frank Bennett
01/02/08	All Saints, Edmonton	5040 Stedman Triples	James Parker
14/03/08	All Saints, Isleworth	5088 Superlative S Major	James Parker
26/03/08	All Saints, Edmonton	5088 Superlative S Major	James Parker
04/04/08	St Lawrence, Waltham Abbey	5088 London S Major	James Parker
04/04/08	St Mary, Luton	5008 Double Norwich C B Major	Frank Bennett
16/05/08	St Matthew, Bethnal Green	5184 Superlative S Major	James Parker
16/06/08	St Mary, Battersea	5040 Stedman Triples	Frank Smith
11/07/08	St Mary, Lewisham	5024 Double Norwich C B Major	Frank Bennett
15/08/08	St Mary, Battersea	5040 Stedman Triples	Frank Bennett
17/09/08	St Martin, Gospel Oak	5040 7 methods Minor (Violet, Oxford Delight, Woodbine, Oxford TB, Kent TB, Double Court, College Singles)	William J Nudds
26/09/08	St Mary, Knebworth	5184 Double Norwich C B Major	Frank Bennett
07/11/08	Christ Church, Southgate	5088 Superlative S Major	James Parker
12/12/08	St Lawrence, Waltham Abbey	5040 Stedman Triples	James Parker

The North side of London featured quite a lot with peals at Edmonton, Southgate and Waltham Abbey. Note, the furthest peal from London was in Luton!

We had Frank Bennett specialising in conducting DNCBM (4) and James Parker (Edith Parker's father) conducting all of the Surprise peals.

*Alan Regin*



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# SRCY

## regional practices

### Eastern Practices

It was in the summer that the Society's Secretary and I first started discussing the idea of having some form of Eastern regional practice. In Norfolk we have a lively membership covering younger to older members.... you can guess my category! Although enthusiastic, it's still difficult to get down to central London to ring at the Society practices and we felt that maybe there were like-minded members in Essex, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire too. The first debate was to define exactly what the East consists of. Being God's chosen region means that there are many in the Home Counties, East Midlands and even London who try to usurp the cachet of belonging to the East! But we know who we are don't we?

In order to put an end to months of procrastination, we decided to bite the bullet and arrange a series of three practices on a bi-monthly basis and see what happened. We held our first practice on Thursday 4 October at St Peter Mancroft in Norwich. Bearing in mind that Norwich is really in the deepest East. It was very encouraging to see 24 ringers in the tower at close of play and the ringing ranged from Grandsire Cinques to Bristol Maximus. The evening provided a great opportunity to renew old friendships and meet new faces. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves and the feedback I had was very positive. The following practice at Great St Mary on 6 December 2007 was equally successful. The third practice is on 7 February 2008 at St Mary-le-Tower, Ipswich. After this we will look for feedback from those who have attended to see if the day of the week is right or whether the format needs changing. It does seem however, that we have started something.

If you would like some more information, do please contact our Society Secretary.

*Simon Rudd*



# Around the towers

## Christchurch, Spitalfields

Another good year at Spitalfields with quite a bit to report. Perhaps the major thing to report is the decoration of the ringing room which, after being talked about over the past 18 months has now happened; the woodwork in the tower was re-painted, the large round peal board commemorating the first peal on the 33cwt 8 (December 1845) was put back on the wall, the ruined coat hangers replaced by brand new ones and the old lights replaced by four new up-lighters. All has been done to a very high standard, on time and on budget – we are very grateful to the Friends of Christ Church who have funded this work. We still have further things that we hope to do so watch this space.

On the maintenance front, apart from general checks the only thing that has needed action has been the replacement of the tenor rope. We have 8 new ropes on order and I hope that they will arrive by Christmas.

We have continued to ring at least once a month, generally on the first Sunday. It has often been challenging

to get ringers due to the various other ringing commitments most of us have. We were helped out a good deal with the St Martin's band moving to Bow and it was easier for some of them to reach Spitalfields in reasonable time. Thanks are due to those that have helped out during the year, not only for the regular Service ringing but other ringing events as well – this has included ringing for Remembrance Sunday in November, two Carol Services at Christmas, the service of dedication for the Eric Elstob memorial stone in January, the East Festival in March, Easter Sunday, five weddings and one funeral. If you happen to be in London on a Sunday, particularly the First Sunday, do get in touch ([aregin@spitalfieldse1.freemove.co.uk](mailto:aregin@spitalfieldse1.freemove.co.uk)) as we are likely to be ringing from 10.00 until 10.30.

We have been pleased to welcome a number of groups on Tower outings and visiting ringers for both quarter peal and peal attempts along with three Society events: the



SRCY v ASCY competition (SRCY 2 ASCY 0) in June 2007, and practices in November 2006 and July 2007.

The regular Third Sunday peal attempts have been reasonably well used during the year. As well as other attempts, there have been 11 peals rung (and a couple lost), since the last newsletter. Those scored included one in memory of SRCY member Mike Crowder and one in memory of Spitalfields resident, Monica Lane along with one to mark the 40th anniversary of the first peal of Smith's 23 Spliced.

Other events have included ringing for the Spitalfields Festival, both the Winter Festival in December 2006 and the summer one during June 2007 and also the opening of the tower on the morning of the London Open House event in September 2007. Groups visited the Ringing Chamber where they had a talk on the history of the tower and bells and saw a demonstration of ringing – over 100 visitors joined us during the morning. Another interesting event was the visit of Terry Mann who made recordings of the bells for a musical piece that was given its World Premier during the Spitalfields Festival.

We receive great support from the Rector of Spitalfields, The Rev'd Andy Rider and everybody else involved at Christ Church for which we are very grateful.

*Alan Regin*



*The Eastern regional practice at Great St Mary, Cambridge was well supported.*

## Northern practices

I was asked for a review of the last 10 years, but in fact the SRCY Stockton practices did not start until 1999, although prior to this both Paul Mills and Duncan Walker had organised occasional 12-bell practices. I thought I would break the review down into headings to show how things have changed in the last eight years.

### Attendance

This has always been good, but in the early days the core band was quite low in numbers so I had to mail round to find the best date in order to ensure we had enough to ring. In eight years we have only met short twice, with 10 ringers (on one occasion ringing a quarter of London Royal). The highest attendance was at a practice in Newcastle with 28.

The increase in numbers on the mailing list (currently 40, not all of whom are able to join us but like to be kept in touch), meant that I could find a date which seemed to suit most people most of the time – the second Wednesday of every month.

### Methods

From the outset Cambridge, Yorkshire, Bristol and Stedman have been considered 'standard'. We added Orion a year later, but even now that can be fairly 'exciting' since once a month isn't sufficient to keep people in

practice! Newgate and Ariel both featured for a time and we have recently added in Zanussi, which seems to be going well. The band is stronger now and lots of us are much more experienced at 12-bell ringing, so I am confident about keeping Orion and Zanussi in the repertoire. There are also forays into Superlative or Lincolnshire or whatever the 12-bell committee see fit to inflict on us!

### The National 12-bell competition

Although I had considered it previously, it was Paul Mills' idea that we enter this in 2006. It has been of huge benefit in improving the standard of ringing and in forging close ties in a band that already knew how to work as a team.

We were of course thrilled to come 2nd in our eliminator at Redcliffe, although this was tempered by thoughts of Worcester Cathedral since many of us had heard the reputation of

the bells but few had been there. On the day we (just about) managed to overcome our nerves and came a creditable 6th. In 2007 we had a different proposition and the practices never quite went as well, but we were still pleased with our 4th place in a tough eliminator at Kidderminster. And so to 2008...

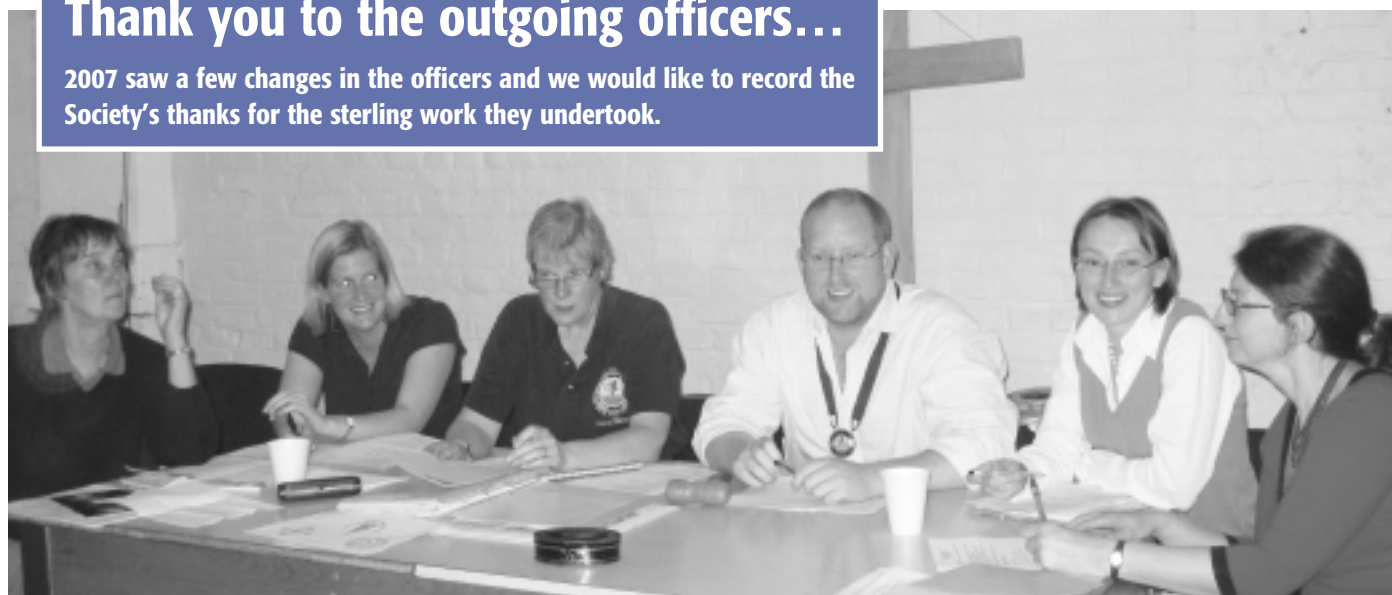
### Socialising

We have always excelled at this and have lots of banter up the tower and between touches which continues in the pub afterwards. In the past we had a Christmas meal instead of a practice in December, but we seem to have dropped this in favour of the ringing! The 12-bell practices have increased our contact with other towers in the north: Leeds, York and Newcastle, and have given opportunities for weekends away. I still really enjoy the practices and I hope (and think) that others do too.

*Jennie Town*

## Thank you to the outgoing officers...

2007 saw a few changes in the officers and we would like to record the Society's thanks for the sterling work they undertook.



*Shirley McGill, Mary Holden, Philippa Whittington, Simon Holden, Jo Fielding and Penny Sharpe.*



# Around the towers

continued

## St Martin- in-the-Fields

2007 has been an eventful year at St Martin-in-the-Fields because the church is going through a major programme of renovation and re-building which should be complete by Easter 2008. Up until May 2007 we had to contend with our windows being removed and filled in with blockboard after scaffolding had been erected through the ringing room. On May 6th we rang a quarter peal of Stedman Caters for the last Service before the church closed.

We moved with the congregation to St Mary-le-Bow for the four months of the church closure and returned to St Martin's on the 30th September. It was magical to be back – brand new ropes with no spring, a delight after Bow, and the scaffolding was gone. The blockboard was gone too, but the windows were still on the ringing room floor... For a couple of weeks we rang with no windows at all. Each time we met more work had been completed and now the carpet has been refitted, the windows have been replaced, there is electricity and there is also a heavy covering of sand and dust on every surface.

The band had its annual outing in the spring and had a fun-filled day in Cambridge taking in the Catholic eight before their much needed work took place and also the tricky twelve at Great St Mary's where we rang a good four leads of Bristol. With all the work going on in the church we are unable to have our annual dinner in the crypt as usual and are heading up to the rooftop restaurant at the National Portrait Gallery where we'll have a grandstand view of the top of our tower.



Ringers are always welcome to join us from 9.00 am–10.00 am every Sunday morning and the bells are generally available for peal attempts every Saturday morning. The Cumberlands usually practice at St Martin's on

the first Wednesday of the month from 6.30 pm–8.00 pm. Contact details – [avb@btinternet.com](mailto:avb@btinternet.com) (preferred) or 020 7485 3525 or 07816 342651.

*Andrew Brown*

## Shoreditch

Shoreditch bells have continued to be well used by the SRCY and visitors alike again this year. During the year the walkway on the top frame was installed by Hayward-Mills and the working party for the acoustic work have covered the bricked up areas of the louvres with absorbant material. This has made a difference, but there is a long way to go before we reach a satisfactory conclusion. We were asked to ring for several weddings, and my thanks go to members of the UL who have helped out with this and have also continued to ring for some services on Sundays as have Derek's alternate month Sunday peal band.

The bells continue to be readily available unless there are other activities going on in the church that prevent this thanks to the support and

generosity of the Vicar – The Reverend Paul Turp.

*Ian Fielding*



# Officers 2007–2008



**Master**  
Simon Holden



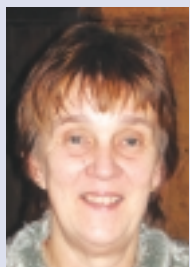
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