

THE HULL HANDBELLS PROJECT

Promoting double-handed change ringing throughout the East Yorkshire region.

Newsletter Number 47, September 5th, 2020.

COVID 19 and Handbell Ringing.

On Sunday 15th March, almost a full 6 months before this newsletter, Karen Lane visited Hull to ring a quarter peal of Bob Minor. The band could ring Kent TB but this was a quarter to Mark a Hull Solar Gate date, so we played it safe.

Little did we know what faced us.

All through the previous week, the infection rate on COVID 19 had been growing and we knew the deaths would follow. They did.

So we cancelled the amazingly successful Tuesday morning practise sessions in Hull, and went into lock down. For people with multiple risk factors there were plenty of problems to solve, but friends were amazingly generous with their support. Even the Ringing Master of the B&D went out of his way to ensure we could have milk in our coffee !

Ringing didn't hit a full stop. For those with Abel and motion controllers, method practise was still possible, but the lack of clear objectives significantly reduced the motivation. Yorkshire S Major in hand took a back seat once more.

So as we progressed through April and May, gently sliding backwards into incompetence, but the technical gurus were at work. Three different approaches were shoe-horned onto the internet; an Abel cludge called Muster, a co-operative Abel like environment called Ringing Room, and a more visual system called Handbell Stadium.

To enable the ringing across the internet, some form of verbal communication was needed alongside the ringing simulator; zoom communications sort of worked but the winning system turned out to be a server

bolted on to "discord.com" by Graham John. A winner because it enabled a subset of the people on the system at any one time to "virtually" lock themselves in a room to talk and conduct without disturbing everyone else.

Graham John derives a medal for discord.

For some, the visual aspect of Stadium is a key feature, for others it's a distraction.

Everyone suffers from the foibles of the technology, whether it's virus checkers, lack of memory, a waffling wifi, a 4,000 milli-second ping time, or even Paddy digging a hole down the street, . . .

News roundup:

Use of the internet.

Handbell Stadium.

Our understanding of and familiarity with Handbell Stadium continued to grow through the month with some members taking part in the Graham John's Friday night meeting.

Alongside Handbell Stadium is a server that runs www.discord.com on behalf of the ringing community. It provides news and communication, and the ability to lock away a band that can then ring and talk without interfering with other ringers.

The Hull Handbell Project is now using Discord alongside Ringing Room or Handbell Stadium on a Tuesday morning. Any one that wishes to join in should contact Peter Church for an invitation.

On Tuesday 14th July, 7 B&D members met on discord and then broke out into separate sessions. Chris Munday, Chris Church and Neil Turner rang minor on Handbell Stadium, while Heather Peachey, Peter Church, Jim Startin and Rebecca Legowski rang some Plain Bob Major on Ringing Room.

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Later in that week Peter Church and Chris Munday met with Simon Humphrey and Hamish McNaughton to Ring Yorkshire Surprise Major on Handbell Stadium. Several touches were started but the method was too difficult for the experience of the band in that environment.

The real difficulty lay in getting into a consistent rhythm, and this time no blame was attached to ping times, interfering virus checkers, duff motion controllers, etc. The band intends to meet again.

Learning point.

Having rung a couple of quarter peals of Yorkshire on Abel, at peal speed of 2h30, it seems that the Abel environment is too "good". The metronomic rhythm needs a few perturbations to make it feel like real life, and to provide distractions that need to be survived.

Non-performances

So with new-found optimism a number of virtual quarter peals have been attempted, all of which came to grief. Most of these were several hundred changes in, and in one case close to coming round.

The essential problem with Handbell Stadium is to get into a groove to ring fast enough ("goldilocks" speed). Ringing too slowly is very hard work on the concentration levels.

All of the failures were troubled by technology to some extent.
--oo0oo—

Performances:

Beverley & District Ringing Society

Kirk Ella

60 Riplingham Road

Friday 8th May 2020

1346 Cambridge S Maximus

1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10 Abel

11-12 CLD Munday

To mark the 75th Anniversary of VE Day.

Ringling Room, East Yorkshire

Tuesday 9th June, 2020

120 Kent TB Minor

1-2 Roderick R Horton (Beverley)

3-4 Peter Church (Hull)

5-6 Christopher L D Munday (Kirk Ella)

First dabble in Ringling Room as a band

Burnby, East Yorkshire

Beckfield House

Friday 12th June, 2020. 14 in D

60 Plain Bob Minor

(The Plain Course)

1-2 Ruth E Startin

3-4 James R Startin (C)

5-6 Jill E Startin

First whole course on any sort of bells, and not a tower bell ringer: 1-2.

First whole course on handbells for at least 40 years, and first away from 1-2: 5-6.

Ringling Room, East Yorkshire

Saturday 13th June, 2020

120 Cambridge S Minor

1-2 Roderick R Horton (Beverley)

3-4 Peter Church (Hull)

5-6 Christopher L D Munday (Kirk Ella)

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Barrow & District and Beverley & District Ringing Societies.

Handbell Stadium

Monday 29th June, 2020

1260 Plain Bob Minor

1-2 Heather L E Peachey

3-4 Peter Church

5-6 Christopher L D Munday

First online quarter for all

Beverley & District Ringing Society

Melbourne, E Yorkshire

1 Melbourne Park

Thursday 30th July, 2020

1260 Plain Bob Minor

1-2 Jenny M Hastings

3-4 James R Startin

5-6 Neil Turner (C)

Rung in the patio with social distancing rules.

Handbell Stadium

Wednesday 5th August

1312 Kent TB Major

1-2 Peter Church (Hull)

3-4 Christopher L D Munday (Kirk Ella)

5-6 Hamish McNaughton (Eastergate)

7-8 Simon Humphrey (Wetton)(C)

Market Weighton, E Yorkshire

26 Sancton Road

Wednesday 12th August, 2020

1360 Plain Bob Major

1-2 Jenny M Hastings

3-4 Karen A Lane

5-6 Neil Turner (C)

7-8 James R Startin

65th birthday compliment to 5-6.

Beverley, East Yorkshire

39 Morton Lane in the garden

Thursday 13th August, 2020

120 Kent TB Minor

1-2 A John Atkinson

3-4 Graham K Smith

5-6 Roderick R Horton (C)

Socially distanced to get the dust off the bells.

Hull

33 Westbourne Avenue

Saturday 15th August, 2020

1344 Plain Bob Major 45m, 15 in C

1-2 Peter Church

3-4 Heather L E Peachey

5-6 Christopher L D Munday (c)

7-8 Barry F Peachey

To mark the 75th anniversary of VJ Day.

Melbourne, E Yorkshire

1 Melbourne Park

Wednesday 19th August, 2020

1260 Plain Bob Minor

1-2 Jenny M Hastings

3-4 James R Startin

5-6 Neil Turner (C)

Rung in the garage with social distancing rules.

Ringing Room, East Yorkshire

Wednesday 19th August, 2020

1344 Kent TB Major

1-2 Peter Church (Hull)

3-4 Christopher L D Munday (Kirk Ella)

5-6 Hamish McNaughton (Eastergate)

7-8 Simon Humphrey (Wetton)(C)

Tuesday 25th August, 2020

600 Kent TB Minor

1-2 Rebecca Legowski (East Hull)

3-4 Roderick R Horton (Beverley)

5-6 Peter Church (West Hull)(C)

A progressive virtual performance for all.

Melbourne, E Yorkshire

1 Melbourne Park

Wednesday 26th August, 2020

1360 Plain Bob Major

1-2 Jenny M Hastings

3-4 Karen A Lane

5-6 Neil Turner (C)

7-8 James R Startin

30th on Handbells: 1-2.

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Melbourne, E Yorkshire

1 Melbourne Park

Wednesday 2nd September, 2020

1288 Spliced Plain & Little Bob Major

1-2 Jenny M Hastings

3-4 Karen A Lane

5-6 Neil Turner (C)

7-8 James R Startin

Ringing Room, East Yorkshire

Wednesday 2nd September, 2020

1280 Oxford TB Major

1-2 Christopher L D Munday (Kirk Ella)

3-4 Peter Church (Hull)

5-6 Hamish McNaughton (Eastergate)

7-8 Simon Humphrey (Wetton)(C)

Handbells and the virus.

September 2020 and the Coronavirus Lock Down is at a critical point.

The guidelines were relaxed at the start of the summer, but we are now faced with the restart of school term. Fresher's Flu is a well-known phenomenon. There will be an upward turn in the COVID 19 infection rate and mortality just as the darker evenings are starting, and cooler weather drives us indoors.

Judging the balance between risk and reward between a life-threatening infection and a difficult but rewarding motor skill remains difficult to say the least. Patiently staying safe could be a life-saving commitment.

My estimate in March 2020 was that 2020 would be a write-off for real handbell ringing. Let's just hope that the estimate was correct and March 2021 will see us ringing together again.

Peter Church

5th September, 2020.