

The Lancashire Ringer

Special edition for the Central Council meeting – see below

Series 2 Issue 6 – May 2018

LANCASHIRE WELCOMES THE CENTRAL COUNCIL

by Ernie de Legh Runciman

From Saturday 26 to Monday 28 May Lancaster University will be playing host to the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers. All LACR members are invited to get involved. A summary of the programme appears below:



THE CENTRAL COUNCIL OF CHURCH
BELL RINGERS

Central Council of Church Bell Ringers

Annual Meeting 2018

Lancaster University.
26th – 28th May 2018

Summary of the programme:

Saturday:	2.00pm	Seminars
	2.00pm	Young Persons Forum
	7.30pm	Buffet meal and Ceilidh
Sunday:	Morning	Service Ringing – Adopt a Tower
	12.30pm	Lunch
	2.15pm	Ringing World AGM
	4.00pm	Ringers and the Church CCCBR Constitutional Reform
	5.30pm	Formal opening and 1st session of Council
		<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Welcome2. Obituaries3. Election of Life/Additional Members4. Reports of various stewards
Monday:	7.30pm	Annual Dinner
	9.30am	2nd session of Council: Agenda to be defined

The Council is the representative body for all who ring bells in the English tradition with rope and wheel, the majority of whom practise the art of change ringing. Founded in 1891, the Council today represents 65 affiliated societies, which cover all parts of the British Isles as well as centres of ringing in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the USA, South Africa and Italy. These societies in turn comprise the members of the local companies of ringers in their areas.

The full Council meets annually: this year it is within the Lancashire Association's area, but with a difference. Usually, the Council is invited by a local association to hold the meeting in their area, and most of the arrangements are made by them. As part of the ongoing reforms to the Council, the meeting is being organised by the Council itself.

Part of the philosophy is to leave a legacy behind for the benefit of ringers in the North West of England. There will be events open to all, with seminars and workshops, mobile belfries and ringing machines, and a grand dinner in an amazing setting.

Most events will take place in the Faraday Complex, NE of Alexandra Square which is above the main university bus stop. The Annual Dinner will be held on the Sunday evening, in the Great Hall. This is a chance to rub shoulders with bell ringers from every corner of Great Britain, and the world. Again, all members of the Lancashire Association are invited. The formal sessions of the Council are open to all (but only members can speak and vote). The main items of business will concern the ongoing reforms to the Council, following the adoption of the CRAG report in Edinburgh last year.

If you would like to get involved as a helper, please contact one of the LACR CC Reps, or Ernie de Legh-Runciman, ernie@manxcat.org.uk or 07624 426654. For full details and booking, see www.lacr.uk or cccbr.org.uk/about/meeting/2018-meeting.

For more information on the programme, see page 4.

THE REFORM OF THE CENTRAL COUNCIL: a personal view

By Giles Blundell, LACR CC Rep

As you may know, The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers (the CC) appointed a group to look at what the CC did, and how it did it. And they recommended a thorough overhaul of how the CC goes about its business. So the new rules and so on aren't just a case of 'old rule 1 is now new rule 2' – they are completely new rules for a completely new way of doing things. But as far as I can make out, the highlights of how things stand at the moment are that

- The objects (what the CC is actually *for*) are rewritten – now including rather more emphasis on ringing as ringing, as opposed to being a service to the church
- Authority moves from the Central Council meeting of maybe 200 members, which generally happens once a year, to an executive of between 8 and 10 members, which will meet as needed (but I think is visualised as meeting much more frequently)
- The executive is elected by the Central Council members: there is a small degree of stripping out of voting members to those elected by societies (no more life members or additional members, but representative members elected in the same numbers as now) and ex-officio members (essentially anyone on the executive who isn't a representative member)

- The executive is scrutinised by the CC members by (1) the annual meeting receiving an annual report of what the Executive has done (2) fundamental changes (selling stuff, winding up, creating new sorts of members – that sort of thing) requiring the approval of the full council and (3) changes to standing orders being subject to call in if 25 representatives want to do so
- Committees and stewards are replaced by Workgroups and (er...) stewards. The workgroups will be responsible to the executive and membership of the workgroups will be by appointment by workgroup leaders (for which I think read ‘any willing and competent volunteer is welcome’). Specifically, the Admin Committee ceases to exist

There is also a further piece of work about what should replace the Decisions. That’s separate from the rule changes, and I think that while the people looking at that have put progress reports in the RW, there isn’t yet anything that has been issued for consultation. For the moment, I note that the transition motion which will be proposed at the May CC meeting to get us from where we are to where it is suggested we should be proposes rolling over the existing decisions (all of them – not just the ones about methods but the ones about not liking electronic bells in churches as well).

And that’s the best I can do. You really would do better reading the new rules, and CRAG’s report which led to them. And as promised, some caveats – why you shouldn’t take much notice of what I’ve written here

- Like a good civil servant, I’ve tried to give a neutral (and accurate) analysis of what has been produced. But I do have my own views (for the record, I voted against the CRAG report as I felt that there weren’t enough safeguards in the report as written, although I subsequently concluded that the verbal commitments made at the Edinburgh meeting sufficiently addressed my concerns). My biases may be in the above, even if I haven’t realised.
- I have not been involved in drafting the new rules beyond reviewing them and making some (six pages – whoops) comments on the first draft and a very few comments on the second draft. So I am not as familiar with them as someone purporting to give a guide should be.
- Although I am a member of the Admin Committee, and a Lancashire Association CC Rep, everything here is just my take – so please don’t take it as being anything like an official view!

If you wish to know more, full details of the reforms can be found on the CCCBR website – cccbr.org.uk. Or ask one of the LACR CC reps. Contact details on lacr.uk or in the annual report.

RINGING ON THE ISLE OF MAN

It’s getting close to summer, so why not hop across the Irish Sea for a short break and visit the Lancashire Association’s offshore branch? Daily ferries run from Heysham and Liverpool. Flights to the Isle of Man airport at Ronaldsway, six miles south of Douglas, are available from both Liverpool and Manchester. Public transport is good and reasonably priced. The steam trains and electric and horse trams are among the island’s attractions, so there’s no need to take a car. Visiting ringers are always welcome at both Peel and Douglas. Douglas (12) practice on Tuesday evenings, and Peel (8) on Fridays. Both towers ring on Sundays from 9.45 to 10.30am. If there is a group of you, time for extra ringing sessions, including peals and quarter peals, can be made available. For further details, contact Penny Thursfield or Ernie de Legh Runciman (see also the entries in the annual report or on www.lacr.uk under the Sodor and Man Branch).

CENTRAL COUNCIL MEETING 2018: THE HIGHLIGHTS

SATURDAY 26 MAY: The Lichfield Mobile Belfry will be available all day. Both the Carter and Woodhouse ringing machines will be on display. There will be bookstalls offering the Central Council's publications and those of the Association of Ringing Teachers, and the following seminars (all in the Faraday Complex, except for no. 5):

(1) Are you Safe and Safeguarded? A look at the latest issues in health and safety that affect bell towers. To include a question and answer session. Led by Chris Mew.

(2) Kick Start your Bell Restoration Project. Why the church needs bells; faculty applications, avoiding the pitfalls; the work of the Keltek Trust; fundraising in the parish; making a good grant application.

(3) The Essential PR Officer: Positive PR. A run through the essentials of positive public relations, sharing top tips on how to influence media effectively; get the messages you want about bell ringing out into broader society.

(4) Biographies – The Key to Ringing History. Three short presentations on the lives of former ringers, with a section on the history of ringing in Lancashire.

(5) Towers and Belfries – A practical session on tower maintenance, to be held at St John's Pilling. *Numbers are limited, so advance booking is essential.*

(6) Youth Leadership Forum – How to attract and retain the interest of young ringers. Tickets for each of the seminars: £12 a head. Buffet supper and ceilidh in the evening.

SUNDAY 27 MAY: Conference delegates will be reinforcing Sunday morning service ringing at local towers in Lancaster and the surrounding area. In addition to the formal meeting of the Council, and the Ringing World AGM there's a 4:00pm seminar organised by the Clerical Guild of Ringers, on the relationship between Church and bells.

All are welcome to the Annual Dinner – the guest speaker is Canon Chris Pullin of Hereford Cathedral. He takes a full interest in ringing no doubt encouraged by his keen ringer son. He has a track record for speaking well and with humour. Tickets cost £40.

These events are open to all, but only members of the CCCBR (and by default the Ringing World Ltd) can speak and vote at the two formal meetings.

***Lancaster University 2018:
a landmark occasion***



MONDAY 28 MAY: This is where the real business of the Council takes place. The formal agenda will be drawn up once notification of motions and other business has been received. However, it is envisaged that one of the main items will be the formal proposals for the reform of the Council, which follow on from the adoption of the CRAG report at last year's meeting in Edinburgh. *Non members of the Council are encouraged to attend to watch the Council in action.*

For details and bookings, see www.lacr.uk. Parking on the university site is limited, but there are frequent buses from the centre of Lancaster and the railway station.

IN PRAISE OF FIVE BELL TOWERS by Peter Rivet

A lot of organisers of ringing outings who won't have anything to do with towers with fewer than six bells. Sometimes they don't know what they're missing.

Change ringing started on five bell towers, like this one in London: St Bartholomew the Great in Smithfield (right). Its bells were cast by Thomas Bullisdon in 1510, and they are the oldest complete ring in existence. Over the years they have survived the Reformation, the Great Fire, and the Blitz. Their tuning is quirky to modern ears, but they sound good together and ringing there is by any standards a memorable experience.

Film buffs may recognise parts of the building as it was one of the churches used in the making of *Four Weddings and a Funeral*. It has featured in other films as well.



Then there's Pembridge, in Herefordshire (left). It has quite a good ring of five in a spectacular detached bell house, which is constructed mainly of wood and looks a bit like a Norwegian stave church.

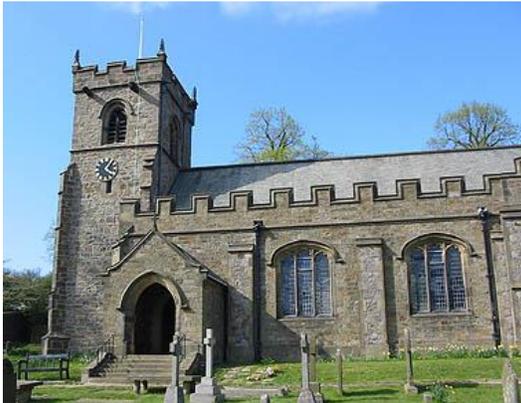
A detailed measured survey, combined with dendrochronology undertaken on the timbers, has established that the tower dates from between 1207 and 1223. It was originally intended to be temporary, because money to build a conventional tower wasn't available, but it survived and is now the most memorable feature of the church. The bells are an interesting mix; the oldest is by John Martin of Worcester (1658) and the newest by Barwell of Birmingham (1898).

Failure to build a conventional tower is also the reason for the "bell cage" which houses one of the best known rings of five, at East Bergholt in Suffolk. They are not a ring of bells in the normal sense as they aren't hung with ropes and wheels, but swung on their headstocks. This is a difficult and somewhat hazardous operation, so they aren't available for normal ringing outings; but they are a significant part of ringing history.

You may think that fives are for people who like odd and unusual bells rather than well tuned ones. This is not necessarily so; there's the example of St Andrew's Rugby (right). This has two quite separate rings of bells, in different towers. The big north east one has a 25cwt eight cast by Mears & Stainbank in 1896, very typical of their era but nothing special. In contrast the west tower has a beautifully toned 9cwt five by Joseph Smith of Edgbaston of 1711, which are much more satisfying to ring.



Over the years the number of five bell towers has dwindled, usually because of the addition of a new treble, or sometimes a tenor. We don't have many rings of five in the north of England, either east or west of the Pennines. The most unusual is probably the steel five at Willington in Co. Durham - interesting, rather than musical. Currently the Lancashire Association's only examples are at Downham, Leck and Thurnham.



Downham (left) is in the Blackburn Branch. The other two are both in the Lancaster Branch. Leck bells are in good order but those at Thurnham, which are believed to be only the second ring installed in a post reformation Roman Catholic Church, are at present unringable. These installations should be treasured, not neglected. After all you can ring Stedman on a five... that, surely, is worth the effort?

METHOD OF THE MONTH - ERIN DOUBLES

To go with the article above, here is a five bell method: a Stedman variant, so technically it's a principle. Erin isn't particularly complicated in itself, but could be useful for aspiring Stedman ringers who want to try something slightly different. It extends in the same way to seven, nine or eleven bells if required. Note however that the start is different. The plain course is substantially shorter. Singles work in the same way as in Stedman, but you will of course need four to obtain an extent.

1234**5** 4**5**231 31**5**24
 2134**5** **5**4321 132**5**4
 124**5**3 4**5**312 3124**5**
 142**3****5** 43**5**21 321**5**4
 412**5**3 34**5**12 2314**5**
 421**3****5** 3**5**421 213**5**4
 241**5**3 **5**3412 1234**5**
 42**5**13 **3**5124
 24**5**31 **5**1342
 2**5**413 **5**3124
52431 **1**5324
54213 **1**5342
 4**5**231 31**5**24

BARROW SIMULATOR GETS TV COVERAGE



Barrow in Furness, St James the Great

Barrow's ringers made the BBC's North West Tonight programme on Wednesday 11 April, with coverage of their new simulator, which was described as "bell ringing karaoke".

An interview with Andy Pollock was accompanied by demonstrations of it in action, along with some normal ringing. It gave the tower and ringing generally excellent publicity, emphasising that this kind of equipment allows practising the basics of bell handling without disturbing neighbours.

European Bell Foundries no. 6 PONTEFICIA FONDERIA MARINELLI, ITALY

This foundry is located in Agnone, in central Italy, some 25 km north of the town of Campobasso. Like many bell foundries it has a long history, and claims to have been established for around 700 years. As can be seen from the adjoining picture, the bells it produces are "long waisted", in the medieval manner. They use the traditional "lost wax" method of casting; decoration is seen as just as important a part of the bellfounder's art as tuning.



One of their best known products is the Assunta bell in the Leaning Tower of Pisa, pictured on the right. It was cast in 2004, replacing a long lost one which had been a war casualty.

The foundry offers guided tours for visitors. These take place at 12 noon and 4pm on weekdays, with extra tours during August; however for groups, prior booking is required. The address is: Via Felice d'Onofrio 14, Agnone, IS, Italy – tel (39) 0865 78235.



POINTS FROM THE LANCASHIRE ASSOCIATION AGM

This was held in Liverpool on 28 April – a good venue, and the catering was excellent. The officers of the Association remain unchanged but it was agreed to create a new post of Ringing Master. If you have any ideas about the most suitable person to hold this post, please contact Beth Ingham, the Association General Secretary. While on the subject, we also need an Association Conservation Officer – is anyone interested?

Each summer there's a striking competition for young ringers – that means ringers under 18. If your tower has somebody who would be interested in joining a Lancashire Association band to enter it in 2019. Please get in touch with either your Branch Secretary or Graham Turner on 01772 335995 – g.turner@preston.gov.uk.

Finally the new Annual Report has been published (it has a grey cover). Your Branch Secretary will have copies available for distribution, if you have yet to receive a copy.

RINGING CALENDAR a list of forthcoming events

Fri 4 May Hornby (8) Lancaster Branch 7:00-78:30pm Surprise practice.

Sat 5 May - Whalley (8) 3-5pm and **Clitheroe** (8) 6:30-8:00pm, Blackburn Branch.

Sat 12 May – Tarleton, Preston Branch (8) 3:00-5:00pm. Also **Wigan Branch outing** to the Pennine Valleys – contact the Branch Secretary for details.

Sat 19 May – Stretford, Manchester Branch (8) 10:30am-12:00noon. **St Anne's**, Fylde Branch (8) 3:00-5:00pm

Mon 21 May – Lancaster Priory, Lancaster Branch (10) 7:30-9:00pm

Sat 26 May-Mon 28 May – Central Council of Church Bell Ringers meeting at Lancaster University.

This will feature events open to all ringers, including an opportunity to ring on the Lichfield Diocesan Mobile Belfry – see <http://www.nsacr.org.uk/LDMB/>. Also **St Anne's** (8) Fylde Branch 3:00-5:00pm

Mon 28 May – Wigan, Wigan Branch (10) 7:30-9:00pm. Ten bell practice.

Fri 1 June Hornby, Lancaster Branch 7:00-8:30pm Surprise practice.

Sat 2 June Aughton St Michael (6) 3:30-5:00pm and **Halsall** (8). Includes Wigan Branch striking competition as well as general ringing.

Sat 9 June Blackburn Cathedral, Blackburn Branch (10) 10:45am – 12:15pm. Ten bell practice; ringing is expected to cater for all standards, from rounds and call changes to Surprise Royal. Also **Leyland Moss Side** (6) Preston Branch Striking Competition – times to be confirmed.

Sat 16 June Salford Sacred Trinity, Manchester Branch (8) 10:30am – 1:00pm.

Sat 23 June Singleton, Fylde Branch (6) 3:00-5:00pm

Mon 25 June Wigan, Wigan Branch 7:30-9:00pm. Ten bell practice.

Fri 6 July Hornby (8) Lancaster Branch 7:00-78:30pm Surprise practice.

Sat 7 July Blackburn St Jude, Blackburn Branch (8) 3:00-5:00 and 6:30-8:00pm. Also **Hindley** (8) Wigan Branch 3:30 – 8:00pm with **Poolstock** (8) 6:30-8:00pm.

Sat 14 July Chorley St Lawrence, Preston Branch (8) – times to be confirmed.

Wed 18 July – Cockerham, Lancaster Branch (6) 7:30-9:00pm

Mon 23 July Wigan, Wigan Branch (10) Ten bell practice.

Sat 28 July Ansdell, Fylde Branch (8) 4:00-6:00pm

Sat 4 Aug Downham (5) 1:00pm – 2:30pm, **Gisburn** (6) 3:00-5:00pm and **Bolton-by-Bowland** (6) 6:30-8:00pm. Blackburn Branch meeting. Also **Aughton Christ Church**, Wigan Branch (8) 6:30-8:00pm

Sat 11 Aug Burton in Kendal, Furness Branch (6) 2.30-4:30pm followed by refreshments. Also **Brindle**, Preston Branch (6) – times to be confirmed.

Sat 18 Aug Kirkham Willows, Fylde Branch (6) 3:00-5:00pm; **Kirkby Lonsdale**, Lancaster Branch (6) 3:00-4:00pm followed by **Barbon** (6) 4:30-5:30 and **Sedbergh** (8) Furness Branch 6:00-7:00pm (8)

Mon 27 Aug Wigan, Wigan Branch (10) Ten bell practice.

Sat 6 Oct – Association Striking Competitions, Bolton Branch: 6 bell: **Blackrod**, 8 bell, **Horwich**

Sat 24 Nov – Association 10 bell Competition: Kirkham.