



Scottish Association of Change Ringers

2022

ANNUAL REPORT

Complied in March 2023

Scottish Association of Change Ringers Bell Restoration Fund is a charity registered in Scotland, number SC011080



JOHN TAYLOR & CO. BELLFOUNDERS



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SACR Events - 2023

Dates for your Diary

| | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|
| 26th February 2023 | Winter Meeting | Inverness |
| 18th March 2023 | Training Day | Tulloch |
| 6th May 2023 | Coronation of King Charles III | |
| 20th May 2023 | AGM & Striking Competition | Dumfries |
| 28th to 30th July 2023 | 49th Inveraray Festival | Inveraray |
| 28th October 2023 | Social Meeting | Edinburgh |
| January 2024 | Winter Meeting | TBA |

**Additional meetings or events will be announced on
the SACR website: www.sacr.org**



OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION 2023

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| PRESIDENT | Colin North | Lynall, Newton of Fetternear Inverurie. AB51 5JT. Tel: 01467 643375 Email: president@sacr.org |
| SECRETARY | Susan Bryce | 17 Corrennei Gardens Edinburgh. EH10 6DG. Tel: 0131 447 0044 Email: secretary@sacr.org |
| RINGING MASTER | Ruth Marshall | 100 Park Road, Bishopbriggs, Glasgow. G64 2LH. Tel: 07973 615 007 Email: master@sacr.org |
| TREASURER | Rachel Milner | 16 Hillpark Brae, Munlochry, Ross-shire, IV8 8PL Email: treasurer@sacr.org |
| PUBLICITY OFFICER | Martin Mellor | Tel: 07753 986 543 Email: publicity@sacr.org |
| BELLS AND TOWERS ADVISOR | Jonathan Frye | Blairgarry, Doune Road, Dunblane. FK15 9AR. Tele: 07952 561 058 Email: advisor@sacr.org |
| CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER | Margaret Williams | Craigallan, 12 Glebe Road, Beith, Ayrshire KA15 1EY. Tel: 01505 502429 Email: childprotection@sacr.org |
| CENTRAL COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE | Tina Stoecklin | 1 Albany Quadrant Glasgow, G32 0HL. Tele: 07843 778049 Email: rep2@sacr.org |
| TRAINING OFFICER | Judith Frye | Blairgarry, Doune Road, Dunblane. FK15 9AR. Tele: 07952 561 058 Email: training@sacr.org |

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Resident: £10.00. Non-resident Life: £10.00 or 3 annual subscriptions.

Associate & Junior member: £5.00

Peal Fee: £1.00 per rope (per ringer on handbells)

Please make cheques payable to 'The Scottish Association of Change Ringers' or ask the treasurer for bank transfer details.

The Scottish Association of Change Ringers holds some personal information about its members including names and in some cases contact details. Details published in our annual report and on our website include the names of members and of people who have rung a quarter peal or peal for the association or in Scotland. This information is processed on the basis that it is in the legitimate interests of both the Association and its members. Peal and quarter peal information will normally have been obtained from existing published information. As a non-profit making organisation the Association is not required to register with the Information Commissioner's Office; however, under the General Data Protection Regulation/1Data Protection Act 2018, individuals still have the right to request copies of information held that relates to them and to correct any errors that exist in that information. If you would like a copy of your personal information held by the Association or do not wish to have your personal details published in the annual report or on our website please contact the Association Secretary.



President's Report

I am pleased that the optimism I expressed in my report last year was not too hasty. We have seen a full return to in-person ringing of a wide variety of types and standards. This has also resulted in the welcome return of ringers' teas, and we have enjoyed some excellent examples this year – this is an option still not available on any online meeting system I know about.

My report to you last year contained far too many negatives for my liking. I am glad this year to be able to report more positives – not the least amongst which has been the chance for us to socialise again with other ringers.

We now have a training officer in place, and we are already starting to reap benefits from this, as described on other pages of this report. The training survey initiative has, as we enter 2023, started a good discussion in many towers and already energised members into a more systematic consideration of their needs. This will, I am sure, prove motivating for many and help with retention. Thank you to Judith Frye for agreeing to take on the role this year.

I attended myself the excellently run course on teaching bell-handling in Inverness, and I thoroughly recommend it to you all, it will greatly increase your confidence to help with teaching new ringers, though a drawback is it might shine a spotlight on some bad habits you've developed yourself!

Post-Covid retention of ringers has turned out to be better than feared, but recruitment of new ringers must remain a high priority, especially younger ones, as I have noted in these reports for several years. In this context, we must compliment Sally Thomas and the Haddington team for the success of their recruitment drive and intensive handling courses. Our new training focus across the country should also help with quickly bringing on new ringers in other towers – once we get them through the doors.

The Dundee St. Paul's Cathedral augmentation is moving ahead, with detailed planning and costing undertaken in order to obtain formal approval to begin. Completion of this project is within reach in 2023, and we will have a final push on fundraising at the start of the new year.

Change ringing on handbells has increased and geographically, I have noticed a surge in the Inverness area! This seems to have coincided with the occurrence of monthly Balnaferry Campanile events. Handbell ringing is organized and encouraged now at all our main association events – why not try it yourself? Though at times frustrating to get right, all our experts in this sphere are very patient, supportive, and keen to get newcomers started – please don't feel intimidated, we all remember our own first disastrous attempts. Most handbell ringers find there are useful benefits for our change-ringing on tower bells, and development of a good sense of rhythm.

As someone recently remarked to me, given its size and geographical spread, SACR is a remarkably successful and friendly association. This is a tribute to you all, this is a truly team effort, and all contributions are important. My own personal thanks to the association officers for their help in our successes – we must not take these officers for granted.

Thank you for your continued support of SACR. I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible during 2023.

Colin P. North



Secretary's Report

Last year saw us return to much more normal ways of meeting up as an association and of ringing our bells.

The Association met several times during 2022: the winter meeting in February was hosted in Edinburgh; the March training event was successfully held in Tulloch; the AGM and striking competition were held in Aberdeen in May and the October meeting was held across the central towers, followed by a hugely successful social event which featured an excellent supper and a bellringing version of a 'beetle drive'. Thanks are due to all towers for organising and hosting these events. Several advanced practices and handbell events were also held.

The committee met once during the year, in January. The Association had formal business meetings in February, May (AGM), and October, all of which were held in person at Association meetings. In addition to the formal meetings, the office bearers met on several occasions.

Our membership numbers remain fairly stable at around 220. We have unfortunately lost several members as a result of the pandemic, and sadly Ken Russell from Dumfries died in October. His obituary can be found on the website and in this report. However, we are also now seeing a number of new members elected which is good news for the Association. Thirteen new members were elected during 2022 – welcome to you all! Congratulations are due to Magnus Peterson who has been a member of the SACR for 60 years, Chris Thomas and Robert Ley who have been members for 40 years, and Liz Barr, Eric McNally and John Grainger who have been members for 30 years.

Twenty-nine peals were rung in 2022, nineteen of which were tower bell peals. Alexander Davies rang his first peal for the SACR, Peter Williamson and Susan Bryce rang their 350th peal for the SACR, Simon Aves his 200th, and Chris Thomas, Sally Thomas and Ruth Marshall their 100th. Congratulations to Mike Clay who rang his 1000th peal in November. There was the first peal of Bristol Royal in hand and the first all women's handbell peal for the Association. Peals were rung to mark the 90th anniversary of the inaugural meeting of the Scottish Association, the Platinum Jubilee of HM Queen Elizabeth II and following the Principal Proclamation of the Accession of King Charles III. This peal was also the 1500th peal rung in Scotland.

Susan Bryce



Treasurer's Report

Scottish Association of Change Ringers General Fund

Income was down considerably from the previous year, partly due to the COVID pandemic once again preventing many peals being rung (9 rung in both 2020 and 2021). Also, there was no opportunity for advertising in the Annual Report to generate income. Expenditure was up from last year, mainly due to taking out Liability Insurance.

The increase in subscription fee at the start of 2020 has meant we were able to pay a grant in early January 2022 to the University of St. Andrews towards installation of the dumbbell. There have been no other requests for grants, although St Andrew's Cathedral in Inverness noted that they may require a grant towards a building project to improve ventilation in the ringing chamber.

The SACR continues to have an asset in the form of the Paisley bells. The loan from the Keltek Trust was originally required to be repaid by April 2021; however, an extension to this deadline was granted. The Keltek trust may be willing to waive the loan if a suitable place of worship is found for the bells, or the loan could be repaid in bell metal if required.

Bell Restoration Fund Trustees' Report

No new applications for grant assistance were received by the Trustees in 2021. The grant of £10,000 offered to St Paul's Dundee for the augmentation project is the only current commitment on the Fund. There was no expenditure from the Fund.

Income to the fund was lower than previous years, largely due to the lack of opportunities to fundraise at meetings due to the pandemic. An exception to this was the generous donation, collected at Glasgow in October. The Trustees would again like to thank those who make regular small donations by standing order, those who use smile.amazon.co.uk, and to Ruth Ogilvie for running the 50-50 club.

There were two changes to the Trustees at the May AGM, Rachel Milner replacing Simon Aves and Jonathan Frye replacing Mike Clay.

Colin North, Susan Bryce, Ruth Marshall, Simon Aves (to May 2021), Rachel Milner (from May 2021), Mike Clay (to May 2021), Jonathan Frye (from May 2021).

Rachel Milner



Ringling Master's Report

We started with an online Ringing Room surprise major practice in January but thankfully for the rest of the year we have been back ringing in our towers.

At the end of February, we had our 'January' meeting and, after a fabric issue with a window above the bells at St Mary's that meant we could not ring there as planned, we were able to rearrange things at short notice and rang successfully at Edinburgh St Cuthbert's and St Andrew's & St George's.

We have had six advanced ten-bell practices over the year that have not been as well supported as in previous years but have allowed us to continue ringing surprise royal methods regularly. It would be nice to see more people attending those in 2023.

In March, we had the training day in Tulloch. My thanks go to Judith Frye and Simon Gay for being tutors and all the helpers who attended. We had a good number of students and ran three groups covering (1) Bell Handling and Foundation Ringing Skills (2) Plain Hunt / Plain Bob Doubles and other Doubles Methods and (3) Grandsire / Stedman/Plain Bob / Treble Bob Hunting / Kent.

At the AGM in Aberdeen in May, Aberdeen had the home advantage and won the Inveraray Trophy at the Striking Competition. The team from Edinburgh St Mary's was awarded the St Andrew's Shield for the best performing band with limited experience. In total, we had five teams entering and my thanks to Timothy Billings from Arran who judged it so expertly for us.

For the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations in June, peals were scored at St Cuthbert's Edinburgh and Glasgow over the weekend, which was a great achievement.

We were finally able to have an Inveraray Festival Ringing Weekend in July after a couple of years break, and it was fabulous to see some familiar faces come and join in the ringing from our members in Scotland and beyond.

In September, our bells rang out across Scotland to mourn the death of Queen Elizabeth with most of the towers tolling a bell or ringing muffled appropriately as the announcement was made and on the day of her funeral.

The October Meeting was held across the Central Towers starting with a 'tone your technical' session at Alloa and then general ringing at Alloa, Stirling and Dunblane. Generally the standard of ringing was high and we rang a range of touches to cover every level of expertise from rounds and call changes to surprise major.

Ruth Marshall



Central Council Representative's Report

This year's Central Council meeting, held in Nottingham, was blissfully uneventful and nearly ran to time. It has been several years since the reorganisation of the council's leadership and executive structure, and the time has come round for regular reviews and audits. These produced minor amendments (passed). Notable to the SACR was a change to the membership fees, which are now 20p per member, rather than a set fee per the size of the organisation / number of allowed representatives. This is cost neutral for the SACR, and the change was specifically designed to be cost neutral for most ringing organisations. An amendment to remove an upper limit was passed, so large ringing associations will pay the same rate per ringer as small ones.

The Ringing World meeting was also relatively painless. A new assistant editor had been appointed, and donations had recovered to pre-pandemic levels. This, along with the aggressive cost-cutting programme, has returned this institution to financial health. There are lessons to be learned, however. We at the SACR rely on BellBoard, which is subsidised by the magazine subscriptions and donations.

The Stewardship and Management working group has produced an online belfry maintenance guide called 'Belfry Upkeep', which is easier to keep up to date. It is worth a look here: <https://belfryupkeep.cccbr.org.uk/>
Worth looking at is a new online publication called 'Running a Tower': <https://runningatower.cccbr.org.uk/>

As this was the first in-person meeting since 2019, the meeting itself (redesigned to be brief) was surrounded by other activities. Instead of the traditional open towers for grabbing, there was a mini-training day, which focussed on what local ringers needed, and to which council members participated as helpers. This change was very well received and meetings will continue to focus on local immersion activities.

Following the day of meetings, there was a mini-roadshow, to which about 300 people attended. This included a prototype of the new council demonstration ring, various publications and activities, and a bit of 4-in-hand ringing by Simon Melon (with supporting cast).

The SACR continues to punch above its weight in this arena. I have now taken over from Graham John as the Technical and Taxonomy workgroup lead, and while Ruth has stood down as a Council representative, she and other SACR members continue to participate and share knowledge with various working groups.

Tina Stoecklin



Training Officer's Report

Having a Training Officer was one of the prime recommendations from the training strategy group that was convened, along with other groups, to aid the post-Covid recovery of ringing in Scotland. The group had many other suggestions but having someone in place to work with the rest of the committee to pursue these was crucial.

The first task was to run an ART (Association of Ringing Teachers) Module 1 course – Teaching bell handling. This was run in Inverness and, although the number of delegates was small, it was much appreciated by those who attended. Having a toolbox of skills to aid the teaching of new ringers should help with the retention of new ringers – something that should be of benefit to most towers. Further courses will follow.

As an experiment we ran a Tone Your Technique class in Alloa, prior to the general ringing at the October meeting. This session was not just for learners; we can all improve our technique. Someone wanted to improve their style with a view to ringing heavier bells and someone who had not rung for a few years needed confidence. Further sessions may be run in future so keep a look out if you are interested.

To help the committee shape the future of training in Scotland, we have sent out a survey to gather ideas from all towers. If we understand the needs of Scottish ringers, then that can help us formulate our plans for future events.

Since taking up the role in May, I have been pleased to assist towers who have phoned or spoken to me to ask for advice or practical help. Questions and suggestions are always welcome.

Judith Frye



Publicity Officer's Report

Articles, links, photos and social media posts are collated each month for a newsletter that's emailed to all members who are signed up. If you don't receive these email webmaster@sacr.org to subscribe; previous newsletters are posted at: <https://www.sacr.org/index.php/resources/newsletters-reports>.

SACR continues to use facebook and twitter, and at the end of the year added an instagram account to its social-media offering. There was coverage of many local events, training sessions, practices, peals and meetings.

Articles, photos and comments are always welcome, and these can be sent to publicity@sacr.org

You can catch up on media coverage via: <https://www.sacr.org/index.php/resources/media>

Social media links are:

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

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

<https://twitter.com/SBellringing>

<https://www.sacr.org>

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Martin Mellor



50-50 Club Report

The results of the draws for the 50-50 Club in 2022 were as follows:

| Month | Draw Date | Location | Amount won | Winner |
|-------|------------|------------------------|------------|-----------------------|
| Jan | 03/02/2022 | Feb meeting, Edinburgh | £30.50 | Martin Mellor |
| Feb | 03/02/2022 | Feb meeting, Edinburgh | £30.00 | Sue Bryce |
| Mar | 16/03/2022 | March meeting, Tulloch | £32.50 | Dawn McAleer |
| Apr | 21/05/2022 | May meeting, Aberdeen | £32.50 | Rachel Milner |
| May | 21/05/2022 | May meeting, Aberdeen | £32.50 | Jose Symes |
| Jun | 22/10/2022 | Oct Meeting, Dunblane | £35.00 | Stephen Elwell Sutton |
| Jul | 22/10/2022 | Oct Meeting, Dunblane | £34.50 | T&M Williams |
| Aug | 22/10/2022 | Oct Meeting, Dunblane | £34.50 | Elizabeth Gatland |
| Sep | 22/10/2022 | Oct Meeting, Dunblane | £34.50 | Isabel Crane |
| Oct | 22/10/2022 | Oct Meeting, Dunblane | £34.50 | Lynne Sydes |
| Nov | 19/12/2022 | Aberdeen Practice | £33.50 | Fiona Wheeler |
| Dec | 19/12/2022 | Aberdeen Practice | £33.50 | Chris Frye |

Total raised by the 50-50 Club in 2022: £808.00

It has been an excellent year for the 50-50 Club, with I think probably record ticket sales. Thank you to our regular supporters who have managed to keep the monthly winnings at over £30 every month! We have also paid £350 into the Bell Restoration Fund (BRF). Please continue that support into 2023 so we can keep the prizes high and raise even more funds for the BRF.

You can buy tickets at any time of year for as many months as you want:

- when you see me at meetings
- or email me for an entry forms and payment options (cheque, online transfer) at 50-50club@sacr.org

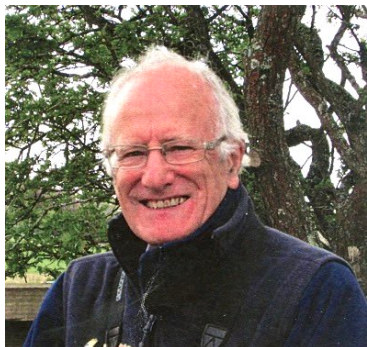
The 50-50 Club exists to raise funds for the Bell Restoration Fund but at the same time gives you the opportunity to win cash as well. If you would like to support this worthy cause you can purchase numbers as described above. Each month we draw a number from 1 to 75, and the winner receives half of the takings for that month, the other half going to the BRF. You can buy the same number(s) for a year at £12 each, or you can purchase one number one month at a time for £1 per month.

Elsewhere in this report the BRF contribution to Scottish Ringing over the last year is explained – a very worthwhile cause which we are proud to support.

Thank you once again for your support and looking forward to the 2023 draws.

Ruth Ogilvie





As a family they were bombed out of London in 1944 and settled eventually in Glasgow where Ken went to Giffnock School and Hutchesons Grammar. After, in his own words, a totally undistinguished academic career, he left home and school at sixteen to become a nursery boy in the Forestry Commission. After two years there, five years in the RAF and two years at college in Argyle, his first posting was Wittering near Peterborough. They had bells, three (now 6 bells, 5-3-12) and only two ringers. His boss was much involved with the church, which was the centre of village life, where he was recruited. He didn't know at the time that it was a plot: one of the other ringers was a teacher at the village school and at

twenty-five the village thought it was high time she was married. Two years later there was the wedding of the year between the village teacher and the assistant forester, and two days after that Ken and Thelma arrived at Patshull & Pattingham in Staffordshire.

He had got a job as Head Forester with the Crown in Shropshire, so they moved to Patshull, where the estate church had six bells (10-0-21) but no ringers. He also joined nearby Pattingham which had eight bells (12-3-6) and a band. With a lot of help from Pattingham ringers and many others they got a band together at Patshull. Three of that band were grandsons of the Earl of Dartmouth: a blue blooded band! They continued to ring at both churches until the children came along, then they took it in turns.

Ken got involved with bands from Shropshire and Staffordshire resulting in ringing sixty-eight peals in the next few years from Essex to Wales, all over the Midlands, and Rutland to Edinburgh. They were lucky enough to ring peals of everything from doubles to maximus, including spliced surprise. He also rang eleven minor quarters in a day (they went for twelve) and ten major quarters in a day. The rule was different methods and different towers for each quarter. They had back-up bands going ahead to put the bells up, and another to get them down. Ken became the Tower Captain at Pattingham until July 1975 when work took him and the family to London. It was in that year that I first met Ken when I joined the Pattingham band in February 1975.

Ken and Thelma continued to take turns going on ringing tours and child minding until Ken re-joined the Commission and was sent to Ae Village, Dumfries Office and Castle Douglas. Despite an industrial injury that left him without a thumb, he just adapted by holding the rope between index and second finger. In 2014 Ken was able to resume his ringing career when he joined the new band at Dumfries. He became at once a greatly valued member of

the team, and his wise words and sensible advice will be much missed. He played a key role in starting the new band from scratch where his expert and seemingly effortless style of ringing, and his patience for teaching newcomers, was invaluable.

On 12th November members of the Dumfries band rang for 45 minutes in his memory: the bells were half muffled and his daughters and other members of his family came to listen..

Tony Mellwrick

