

Letter to the Times

A Times columnist wrote an article about ringing under the title 'Hells Bells'. The author began with an image of 'a gentle activity, largely undertaken by elderly ladies shortly before being killed in Midsomer Murders' and then demolished this on the basis of having had a go, which left her 'after barely five minutes, poleaxed with exhaustion' with 'muscles that ached two days later'. She recommended that ringing should be market as 'a fitness boot camp'.

John Harrison responded with a letter to The Times, which was published on 1 July 2014.

Tough sport??

Sir.

Gaby Hinsliff (Hell's Bells, 27 June) was correct in her initial assessment of bell-ringing as a 'gentle activity', but she seems to have discovered that it is not at first as easy as it looks, and can be quite a challenging learning curve.

One of the delights of ringing is that a bell of say half a ton needs relatively little effort to control it with precision once you develop a feel for the bell. It is all about poise and technique, not about brute force. Ringers often joke that the most strenuous thing they do is to climb the belfry stairs.

Ringers are always keen to share their skill, and Times readers will be welcome to find out more almost anywhere they hear ringers practising on a weekday evening. Alternatively visit: <http://bellringing.org/learntoring>
