



Training Times

Working together – Regional Seminars for R.C.s

One of the aims of the Ringing Centres Committee is to promote mutual support between centres. To this end we have organised a series of regional seminars for centres to meet and exchange experience. The first of these was held in the South West at the Bradpole R.C. in July and others are planned for 2011.

Ten representatives from five centres met at Bradpole. There were presentations from Bradpole and Edington while Committee members, Les Boyce and Norman Mattingley, led discussions on the work of the Ringing Centres Committee and current issues in ringing education.

Bradpole operate their programme very much on a “demand-led” basis; when enough students for a particular method come forward a course is organised. Regular “friends” sessions are offered in between for those for whom there is not enough demand for a special course. Christine Purnell from Edington described their “Teachathon” initiative, an intensive basic course in learning to ring run over the Easter holiday and aimed particularly at young people. Over the course of the two weeks nine beginners were able to get as far as ringing well in rounds and were then supported in their local towers (see *R.W. 4 June 10*). So successful was this that seven more recruits have come forward to learn from scratch.



In the general discussion which followed, we asked centres for their views on Central Council recognition and presented information on the Integrated Teacher Training Scheme pioneered by Pip Penney and now adopted by the Ringing Foundation. Some familiar concerns emerged – how to get enough competent tutors and helpers to support learners, how best to engage with young people, how the R. C. Committee can best support centres. Everyone agreed that the seminar had helped to reduce centres’ isolation and that it would be useful to repeat the exercise and the Committee came away with suggestions about how better to support centres.

Les Boyce

Further Seminars Planned are:

March 12th – South East Region – Coggeshall, Essex
From 11.30 to 3.30 – Lunch provided for a small charge.

Please book your place by emailing Janet Edwards – janet@ajsplace.fsnet.co.uk or writing to Lavender



Cottage, 181 High Street, Kelvedon, Essex CO5 9JD

March 19th – Kington Village Hall. Ringing at the Harry Windsor Centre after the meeting.

Please book your place by emailing Graham Nabb at graham@nabb.orangehome.co.uk Sandwich lunch included at £6.00 per head.



June 18th Northern Seminar – Details to come later

Integrated Teacher Training Scheme for the ODG.

At the beginning of 2010 the Oxford Diocesan Guild’s Education Committee were in the position of having to find a replacement for their “Laying the Right Foundations” seminar; a one day course designed to help aspiring ringing teachers gain knowledge and confidence. Coincidentally, at about this time we became aware of the ITTS, created and developed by Pip Penney of the South East Wales Ringing Centre and the Central Council’s Education Committee. The scheme had been piloted in South Wales with a lot of success.

The ITTS commences with a one day course (Module One) which the ODG signed up to, run by Pip, which covered both the practical and theory aspects of bell handling and ringing skill development. However, where this scheme differs from most if not all others of this type is the On-going mentored support provided for each trainee by experienced ringing teachers. Further support and information is also available to both new teachers and mentors via the “Moodle” web site. It is important that the mentors attend the introductory course so that they can understand the general philosophy of the scheme as well as the more specific “Schedule of Learning”.

Since this scheme appeared to be a natural replacement for LTRF it was decided to run the course for twelve new ringing teachers and their mentors during October, 2010. The ODG covers a relatively large geographical area with most of the aspiring teachers coming from rural Branches with limited access to ringers with sufficient experience to act as mentors. It was necessary, therefore, as part of the organization of the course to find and assign willing (and reasonably local) mentors for the new teachers.

The day started at 10.00 a.m. and concluded at about 4.30 with a mixture of theory and practical sessions, all quite intensive. The students were paired up during the practical sessions and were made to practise on each other the techniques demonstrated by Pip for imparting

good bell control to the novice ringer. With hindsight, we should have limited the number of students to ten or maybe eight. Because this was a new venture for the Guild it attracted a number of interested observers so having a galleried area was useful for these people plus the mentors.

I anticipate the Guild's Education Committee will be looking to repeat the course during 2011 and beyond;

Alan Bentley
Secretary, ODG Education Committee
CC Ringing Centres Committee

Note: Pip Penny will be making a presentation at the Kineton seminar and Liz Rayner from Essex who attended one of the first pilot sessions will be making a presentation at Coggeshall

Teaching for the Future The Right Environment

Society changes, things move on. Ringers must move forwards with new developments in teaching to remain relevant. Teaching as it is today would in some ways be unrecognisable to ringers over 50. Nowadays, in schools, colleges and universities, not only does the teacher report on the work of the student but the student appraises the work of the teacher. Attitudes change.



In Ringing we tend to think in terms of *what* we teach learners. The subject matter remains unchanged. We will still teach learners to handle, control and hear a bell, following on to teaching theory and the practical skills required for moving on towards change ringing. However, it is the *way* we teach rather than the subject matter, where ringing could benefit from a modern approach. We must ensure that Ringing offers the same up to date methods experienced by those learning something for the first time in other hobby activities.

We lose a high proportion of new recruits. We need start to consider how to address this problem. How to maintain a higher retention rate in Ringing?

Fun is the most important factor that will attract people to an activity and keep them participating. Tower Captains and Ringing Coaches are leaders, and it is their responsibility to create an atmosphere in the ringing room which will allow people to enjoy their new pursuit. This is called "*Setting the motivational climate*".

What factors can help create this positive environment and make people want to remain involved?

The coach must be enthusiastic about his task. Enthusiasm inspires.

Good communication is critical. Communication should be thought of as a two way process. Not just instruction but asking and listening too. When giving instruction it should be remembered that other factors have a powerful influence on what is received by the learner. People take in

far more from body language (55%), tone of voice (38%), than the actual words spoken (7%).

Ringling coaches should attempt to use language that the learner can easily understand, asking questions to check that the subject had been fully understood. He should not just hear what the learner says to him, but should actively listen, using what he hears as feedback about how the learner is finding his experiences on the rope.

All new participants should feel respected in the tower, this will give them the confidence to express their own thoughts and ideas about their learning experience. It is only when the coach understands how the learner is viewing the process that he will be able to adapt the teaching to best suit the individual.

Once the coach knows what makes the learner "tick", he will notice when the learning curve should be made more challenging, the learner might be showing signs of boredom, perhaps losing concentration or eagerness; or on the contrary, when a learner is feeling discouraged or frustrated and things need to be slowed down giving time for skills to consolidate and confidence to be restored. He will pick up on which learners prefer significant verbal support or discussion to get the idea of a new concept, which learners prefer to prepare at home in advance of the practice, which learners do best with someone standing behind them, and which benefit from sitting out going through something with paper and pencil or on a white board.



If the coach develops a flexible and responsive teaching style capable of adapting to the individuals requirements, rather than teaching everyone in the same manner that has always been used in the past he will keep his learners more involved. It is necessary for the teacher to adapt to the learner rather than to attempt to force everyone to learn in a particular manner.

Learning is improved and enjoyment enhanced if the teaching is adapted to the way which the learner finds natural for them. When the learner is enjoying him or herself it is more likely that they will be motivated to stay for more!

It is setting this strong motivation climate which will help establish, develop and keep the band together.

Pip Penney

Please send any comments or indeed articles that you would like included in the next edition of the Newsletter to janet@ajsplace.fsnet.co.uk.