



The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers

Working for ringers and ringing

Registered
Charity
No: 270036

Education, Education, Education

"Is there a problem regarding Sunday service ringing? Is the quantity and quality throughout the land what it could and should be? Is it capable of improvement? In my view there is a problem and improvement is possible.....".

We have come a long way in the forty odd years since the late Norman Chaddock used those words when proposing the formation of what was then the Sunday Service Committee but later became the Education Committee. Norman was a great educator, and we owe a lot to his vision. In the first issue of the Central Council Newsletter we gave a brief outline of the formation of the Council and its involvement in two major projects. In this, the second issue of the Newsletter, we concentrate on the help and advice that the Council can provide in the field of Education and Training.

The Education Committee is one of the Council's largest, with twelve members who have served for an average of just over five years. Even so, it is tiny compared to the forty thousand plus ringers in the Exercise that we are here to help. We try to focus on activities that will either benefit large numbers directly, or that can be multiplied through the efforts of others. Over the years, the balance of the committee's work shifts slightly, reflecting both the needs of the exercise, and also the means available to meet those needs. Currently it splits into three broad areas:

- Communication - facilitating more effective dissemination and sharing of information among ringers
- Resources - enriching the repertoire of training resources available to ringers
- Collaboration - working with member societies to achieve results that would not be achieved individually.

Communication

Whatever we do, if it doesn't reach the people who need it then it is of no use, but making that happen is not easy. Historically communication was mainly through books, Ringing World articles and personal contact on courses etc., but in recent years we have gone beyond this.

In 1995 and 1997 we held conferences for education officers. Each conference provided a forum for people with the practical task of running training in their own associations to meet together, discuss problems and pass on ideas. Those who

attended found them useful and said they would like a more permanent network of some sort. The best we could do at the time was to circulate an address list to participants along with the report of the proceedings.

The rise of E-mail provides another way for people to communicate. The first E-mail discussion lists on ringing appeared some years ago, but in March 2000 we launched RingingEducationNet - an electronic forum devoted to learning or teaching aspects of ringing. It has been very successful with a steadily growing number of subscribers (currently over 150).

Our latest initiative, the Network for Ringing Training (NRT) is specifically intended to help people who train ringers, to raise the profile of training, and to stimulate activities that will help to develop the skills needed. Although most people will subscribe to NRT electronically, people without e-mail will be included. NRT builds on the idea of the education officer's network, but with extra facilities made possible by the technology now available. As well as discussion and exchange of information, it will allow ringers interested in developing training skills to make direct contact with others near them who share their interest. We hope it will encourage more activity focused on the needs of trainers. NRT is being launched at the Ringing Roadshow. See details below to join.

Resources

Developing new resources has been a core activity ever since the committee was founded. We try to identify gaps and fill them. You might think everything that could be written about bellringing already had been, but we keep finding gaps. New titles in 2000 included Learning Methods and Organising an Outing. We periodically revise old titles, for example The Tutor's Handbook and Easily Remembered Touches. Very occasionally, we do something completely different; The Tower Handbook, a book that says 'something about everything', was without precedent, and is our most successful title to date. [Have you got your copy yet?].

We use modern technologies too, with the bellhandling video A Tutor's Companion and the two audio tapes Listen to Ringing and Listen to Ringing Live (soon to appear on CD). We are currently working on skill cards - watch this space.

Collaboration

Our other main work is running courses. This is a longstanding activity, but in the early '90s we took two important decisions that shape how we now work. We do not see ourselves as 'just another course provider' in areas that are well developed. We see our role as helping to develop new ideas or new approaches, and running them until they too become commonplace. In 1993 we introduced the Listening course and in 1996 we introduced the MTM (Management, Teaching & Maintenance) course. Apart from the first few occasions to pilot the concept, these

have all been run several times a year as collaborative events with local associations or branches. Recently we ran an MTM course in conjunction with a ringing centre and we ran our first overseas course too, an MTM course for the ringers of Atlanta in the USA.

Useful contacts

- Chairman: John Harrison 0118 978 5520 harrison@eurobell.co.uk
- Secretary: Catherine Lewis 01959 563767 catherinemlewis@cs.com
- Committee web site: www.cccbr.org.uk/committees and click on Education
- Discussion list - RingingEducationNet-Subscribe@yahoogroups.com (send any message)
- Network for Ringing Training
 - To join by e-mail: NRT-signup@fredbone.waitrose.com
 - To join on the web: <http://ds.dial.pipex.com/fred.bone/NRT/>
 - For an application form by post, contact: Peter Wenham, 10 Sanders Close, Braunston, Daventry NN11 7JW 01788 891935

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