

E d i t o r i a l



There has been much work going on behind the scenes! At our first Committee meeting after the ADM, Ian Hunt raised the matter of the age old problem (and one that seems to be getting worse) of Recruiting new ringers, particularly the young. This opened a can of worms in that there are so many aspects to recruitment. You have to find them in the first place and then they have to be taught to ring. Then you have to keep the interest going so that they don't leave out of boredom. This is a problem that we are all so familiar.

The question is what can we do to solve the problem? None of us had any bright ideas, after all if we had we would have used them by now! We went home and put our thing caps on, having arranged an "extra-ordinary committee meeting" in a few weeks time. We invited a few Guild Officers to attend and offer any guidance they could. This meeting was followed by another as we tried to put together a strategy.

Rather than go for the Recruitment drive first, it was decided to get into place a better training base so that the recruits could be dealt with on a "Fast Track" District basis if needed, the outcome of this was a "Teaching Bell Handling" course was held at Upham on Saturday 4 November (report below) 8 District Members were given some great tips on Teaching Handling by Mike Winterbourne. I had hoped to see more people take up the chance of improving their training techniques. Having taught many recruits myself over the past 25 years or so I learned a few tricks that will be put to good use in future.

In 2007 the recruitment drive will happen. We will taking the Ringing stand and a Mini-ring to shows and fetes across the District, so if you would like to have a "stand" at your village fete and get yourself some new recruits please don't hesitate to let the committee know.

I have taken the liberty of adding to these pages my "holiday from hell" (3 pages (sorry)) which only has a brief mention of ringing at one tower on our journey, but having said that it's all gripping stuff!

I have to conclude by mentioning that I am standing down from the offices as Ringing Master and Newsletter Editor at the ADM in February. The reason being that I have been doing the job for many years and I feel the need a rest. I will however continue to help the committee with the recruitment initiative.

My sincere thanks go to those who provided material for this edition.

Steve

Clap and Squeeze, Clap and Squeeze

After a coffee in the warm meeting room discussing CRB, Safety, Insurance, probationary members and involving the parents, we enthusiastically moved into the cold ground floor ring at Upham for the practical sessions. A bit self conscious at first, we soon all got into the swing of the course, "teaching bell handling" delivered by Mike Winterbourne. There were 8 people that signed up from 6 of the 20 or so district towers.

We paired up and, under the tutelage of Mike, and started to discuss the key components for good teaching. Some guidance on the general approach was followed by numerous tips and practical sessions on teaching bell handling from initially handing the rope to the prospective learner through to developing full handling. The 'clap and squeeze' technique probably won't be forgotten and neither will the technique for ensuring ringers ring with the tail end in their left hand. (left handers beware!). Words like **pull** are now VERBOTEN and have been struck permanently from our vocabulary. The practical on dropping the tail end and how to recover, where the bell is pulled off with the tail end still on the floor, raised the heart rates of all involved, especially when we were asked to do it!

The day finished with a discussion and some pointers on improving technique of existing learners.

This course was arranged in the context of Training the Trainers, ensuring that the trainers of the district have been given the opportunity to review their skills and learn new techniques in anticipation of the recruitment program that Portsmouth District is planning to run next year.

Ian Hunt