

Secretary's Report 2010-2011

Apologies for the inevitable repetition of things the Chairman has said: in the past I've got in first by having my report published in the January magazine, but this year we decided that we would all deliver our reports in person.

Our AGM was once again held here at Bottisham, with 14 teams being represented. There was no change of personnel on the committee; the only difference was that I stood down as NEC rep after 10 years, and was replaced by Keith Meader. The rally which followed was very well attended, and we had great fun with some of the massed ringing.

Unfortunately, this was the only rally we had last year. Willing volunteers (and even unwilling ones) proved impossible to find, so we went without. The lack of income, if this persists, could have serious ramifications for the running of the region, as I'm sure you'll hear later from the Treasurer. Once again, the planned Junior rally didn't take place; maybe it's time we gave up the idea and tried instead to incorporate junior activities in an all-comers' rally.

We did have a couple of workshops, though - a Read and Ring session with Sandra Winter in Broxbourne in September, and another Beginners' 4-in-hand day with Pauline Franks in Lawford in October. Unfortunately the Ring in Praise service with the SE in Milton Keynes at the beginning of December succumbed to the snow.

In the hope of discovering what members want from a regional event, we sent out a questionnaire with the January magazine, and also put it on our website. Lots of you completed it, so thank you very much.

A good number from our region attended the National Rally in Leicester, and again we had two representatives in the evening concert: Broxbourne and Windmill, who both did us proud. We could maybe boast a third, as Aidan Fozard is now a member of East Anglia. I was hoping to be able to tell you who would be representing us this year at Royal Holloway, but I'm told there is no EA representative in the evening concert. A sizeable team also attended the International Symposium in Osaka - and I'm sure all our thoughts are with the Japanese people at this terrible time.

The Regional Team put on three concerts in 2010: in Waltham Abbey and Great Yarmouth they staged their own, very successfully, and in South Woodham Ferrers they joined forces with a visiting percussion band from Shropshire, Prime Percussion, for a very interesting evening. As usual, thank you to Gill Winter and everyone else involved in the organisation of such a large undertaking. Their first concert of 2011 is imminent - please give them your support.

At our AGM last year, lease of the Frank Tomlin Bells passed from Helen Wetherfield to the ladies of Horringer & Ickworth WI. With the aid of the bells they have successfully fund-raised to procure their own set, which we will hear this afternoon, and have returned the Frank Tomlin Bells to us. There are currently no applications pending for their lease.

At the end of 2010 the region had 302 full members, 278 of whom were members of registered teams, and up to 60 Youth members; we had 72 active teams. The statistics, provided by Margaret Hartley, the National Membership Secretary, show that at the beginning of this month we had 278 full members, 261 of whom are members of registered teams, up to 60 Youth members and 67 active teams. Just out of interest, the EM have 29 teams, NE 40, NW 35, Scotland 35, WM 32, SE 130 and SW 126. If anyone would like to look at the statistics after the meeting I have a copy with me.

As a lasting memorial to Jean Sanderson, our Region's first Chairman, who died in 2009, we commissioned Malcolm Wilson to compose a piece of music. All teams in the region will receive a copy of *Celestial Charm*, to use free of charge during 2011, and we have it as one of our massed pieces this afternoon.

In 2010 the deaths were reported of two former members of our region, Guy Ratcliffe and Dorothy de Salis. Guy, an arranger and composer of many handbell pieces, had retired to the Isles of Scilly, and Dorothy, whose conducting of massed ringing with a screw driver will be remembered by many of us, had lived in a nursing home in the West Midlands for several years.

I would like to thank our Chairman, Treasurer and the rest of the committee for their hard work and good humour throughout the year, and Steve and Keith Hammond for hosting our meetings.

Susan Duke