

Central Branch outing - 29th September 2007

A grand day out by the seaside

Early on a misty Saturday morning the annual branch coach outing departed from Barnsley via Penistone. On the coach were 26 ringers, another 10 friends and family members and 1 dog! As we went over the top into Lancashire it actually got even foggier, but soon the anticipated sunshine appeared as we drove across the Wirral towards our first tower at Hawarden. This was a fine ring on six bells which were all cast in 1742, and are believed to be the only complete set of Rudhall bells in existence. The cartwheel experts amongst us certainly gave the old bells a good workout.



St Deiniol, Hawarden



Down the A55 to Bodelwyddan, a large imposing white limestone church with a 202 ft high tower. It is known as the "Marble Church" because of the 13 different kinds of marble in the interior of the church. It was a tight squeeze at times fitting all the ringers into the small ringing chamber to ring on the 8 bells.



St Margaret, Bodelwyddan

There are over 100 burials of the 1914-1918 war, in the South East part of the churchyard, all immaculately maintained by the CWGC. Over 80 of the burials are those of Canadian soldiers who died in a local repatriation camp in 1919, largely from influenza. However some of the burials are of soldiers reputedly shot during a riot at the camp in 1919.



Holy Trinity, Llandudno

Into Llandudno now, in bright sunshine for lunch, Brian had once again arranged a trip with perfect weather to go with it. Lunch arrangements were varied in this busy seaside town. Some of us did manage to find a Wetherspoons which had been tastefully converted from the old Palladium Cinema, which was serving good local beer and food.

It was then only a short walk back to the church, with an excellent ring of 8 Taylor's bells which were cast in 1892. Brian even managed to do a spot of teaching, when a member of the public came up to have a look around, and was encouraged to have a ring.

Back along the scenic coast road, past mile after mile of caravans and funfairs to Rhyl, where we were able to park the coach in the church car park almost alongside the front door. This superb church was designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott in 1860 with a brick tower containing another excellent Taylor ring of 8 bells, cast in 1876. The only drawback being that they could hardly be heard at all in the ringing chamber, the door onto the stairs having to be left open, which proved to be the only way of hearing them.



St Thomas, Rhyl



Was Richard looking for the sound?

A short drive along the coast to Prestatyn and we arrived at our final ring of the day, on this very light ring of 6 bells, the tenor weighing just over 5 cwts. Christ Church is the first church where an ex-Trinity House buoy bell has been hung as part of a full circle ringing peal of bells. The heaviest three of the pre 2003 clock chime are now the 2nd, 5th and tenor of the ring. The ex-Trinity House bell is the 3rd and a surplus bell from London is the treble; the ring being completed by a new 4th bell from the Royal Eijsbouts bell foundry in the Netherlands. Considering the light weight of the bells they sounded quite loud outside, but they proved very easy to ring from the ground floor porch.



Christ Church, Prestatyn

Thanks once again to Brian for organising an interesting day out for both ringers and non-ringers, and for also managing to arrange for perfect weather as well, how does he manage it? It was indeed a grand day out by the seaside.

John A Courtney

16 October 2007