



Issue 44

# NEWSLETTER

October 2010

Hello and welcome to this autumn edition of the Scottish Region magazine. The months of this year just seem to be flying in. The days are already getting shorter and soon the leaves will begin to fall. The radio last week was broadcasting that there are only 100 shopping days until Christmas! This means that there are even fewer days of bell practice in preparation for the demands of the festive season. To help with this, the regional ring-alongs this autumn will focus on Christmas music. This will be a read and ring day when we will all be given the music on the day and tackle ringing it together. An opportunity too to ring music you might not be able to with your team. These events are such that you can attend on your own – or with a pal – even if your whole team cannot attend. So hope to see you then.

I was delighted to receive news from two of our youth teams for this issue especially the piece written by Kirsteen and Scott of Strathburn School Handchimes. There are also two substantial pieces on the International Handbell Symposium in Osaka and the Bells of the Cascades Cruise to Alaska. Why not share what your team has been up to? This can just be a short snippet of news and helps to show the extent of handbell ringing across our region.

I thoroughly enjoyed participating in the International Symposium in Osaka. We received an exceptionally warm welcome from the Japanese. They bowed and smiled all the time. The theme for the Symposium was 'Echoes of Peace'. This was very apt as we were in Osaka on 6<sup>th</sup> August, the anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. On the theme of praying for peace, each ringer made at least one origami crane. An ancient Japanese legend promises that anyone who folds a thousand origami cranes will have their wish come true. The crane in Japan is one of the mystical or holy creatures and is said to live for a thousand years. There were almost 1,200 ringers at the symposium and our cranes were taken by the post-symposium tour to the Children's Peace Monument in the Peace Memorial Park, Hiroshima. It was very moving to visit the Peace Park later on my tour and see all the cranes around the monument. Attending an International Symposium and making ringing friends from all around the world is a fantastic experience. Why not think about attending the next one in Liverpool in 2012? Team HRGB are in the photo below.



Helen Campbell has stood down as magazine editor. We owe her a great deal of thanks for pulling together our magazine over the last 9 years – especially as she is not even a ringer! Thank you very much Helen. This therefore leaves a gap. Are you willing and interested in editing our magazine or do you know someone who might enjoy this job? If so, please get in touch with me – otherwise we may have no regular magazine.

If you are reading this magazine and are not a member of HRGB, why not consider joining? The annual membership is only £10 per year and you will receive member rates at all our events.

In the meantime, please do get in touch if there is any help the regional committee or I can offer you.

Christine D Reid

Scottish Region Chair



### **The 14<sup>th</sup> International Symposium, Osaka, Japan**

On July 31<sup>st</sup> after many months of planning, Ruth and I set out for Osaka via Amsterdam and Seoul. A journey of 20 hours did not see us arrive in our hotel until the Sunday. There we met up with Christine. The Symposium did not start until Tuesday so the 3 of us, armed with a map of the Osaka railway system, visited Osaka Castle - not a castle as we know it as it looks more like a pagoda. As it was very hot and humid, there were sprays of cold water to walk through on entering the Castle.

Lunch time called and so we had our first meal of noodles, attempting to master chopsticks. Our next place to visit was the Shitennoji Temple, so we again navigated the railway system. For dinner we ventured into a Chinese restaurant and caused some amusement as no one could speak English. Ordering by pointing at pictures was not always very successful!

Tuesday was the first day of the Symposium and we met up with the other 3 members of Team HRGB. This was our first trip into the Convention Centre, a very large modern building. At the Symposium there were 1200 ringers, so we were divided into 2 groups - Sakura, which we were in, and Fuji. The opening ceremony followed with the welcoming speech being given by Nozomu Abe, the Symposium Committee Chairman. The procession of flags followed with the Union flag carried by Christine Lazenby of East Anglian Region. The Opening bell rang and representatives of the member guilds spoke. Greetings were given by Dr Shigeaki Hinohara, the Symposium Executive Chairman and the president of Handbell Ringers of Japan. He was amazing – at 99 years old, he delivered his speech in English. Deborah Rice, the International Handbell Committee Executive Director welcomed people in Japanese. There were representatives of the Osaka Prefectural Government to welcome us all to Osaka. After the speeches, Kobe YMCA bell choir played and they were very good. Then it was our turn to begin to tackle the massed ringing.

In the evening we traveled to Kachoen at Kobe for a fun night. Here we enjoyed a Japanese buffet in the restaurant where flowers hung from the ceiling. Then it was time to meet our fellow ringers and exchange gifts.

During the 5 days the massed ringing rehearsals were interspersed with solo concerts given by the various bell groups, and it was interesting to watch the different styles. Some groups moved along with the music, others stood still. On Thursday we had a very early start to travel to Kyoto to see the Golden Pavilion and the Hian Shrine with its very peaceful gardens.

Before the symposium, we had to choose 4 workshops - 2 on Wednesday and 2 on Friday. Ruth ran a very successful Scottish dance workshop - helped by Christine and hindered by me. We had a man of 85 years old who stayed for both sessions. Several people said it was the best workshop they had been to.

Ringling next to us was a Korean group who came across to Christine and said only young people played bells in their country!

As Friday was the anniversary of the dropping of the Atomic bomb, an 'Echoes for Peace' Concert was held. The UK was represented by the East Anglian Ringers who played 'Yesterday'. Aeolian Chimes played 'Amazing Grace' in one of the Solo concerts.

The massed concerts were on Saturday and for this we were in our 2 groups - Sakura played in the morning and Fuji in the afternoon. It was good to listen to the pieces we had been practising as it is difficult to hear them when you are playing. During the day we all made cranes for the Children's Peace Park at Hiroshima. Everybody met up again for the closing ceremony and the Banquet, where the ceremony of the breaking the Saki drum took place. Dr.Hinohara in his closing speech said that he hoped to be at Liverpool in 2012 but he would then be 101 years old.

Owing to the different nationalities at the symposium, everything had to be translated. It seemed to me that that for one word in English, there are 10 in Japanese. The meals were well organized - there were 3 set meals on trays so you picked up a tray of your choice. Whilst we were there Bill Butler celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday and we were all able to congratulate him.

The 5 days went very quickly and I felt that I would have liked more time on the massed ringing pieces. The Symposium was called Echoes For Peace and it would be nice to think that one day peace around the world may come. There were many young groups of ringers and at one concert, a Kindergarten group played bells very impressively. Ruth and I stayed on and visited Hiroshima by bullet train. We went to the peace park and saw the Dome - all that is left of Hiroshima before the bombing - a moving experience. As the next International is in Liverpool perhaps many more people from the UK will be able to go. It is well worth while just to see the different groups play from other countries.

Beryl Snowden Blair Bells



Ruth and her Scottish Country Dance workshop



## News from the Region

### **STRATHBURN SCHOOL HANDCHIMES**

**and their first experience of the**

### **SCOTTISH SCHOOLS' RINGING DAY 2010**

On Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2010, our Handchime group from Strathburn School, Inverurie, Aberdeenshire went to Newton School, Dunblane to join other ringers at the 2010 Scottish Schools' Ringing Day. First we picked up Kaimhill School Handchimes from Aberdeen then travelled on to Dunblane – a journey of two and a half hours. We made new friends from Kaimhill on the coach.

After arriving and setting up in our team places we sat down to enjoy our packed lunches. Our teachers took some photographs of us and we were given a copy of the programme for the afternoon. The other teams who were there were Dunblane Primary School, Newton School, Shieldhill School (Falkirk), Houston School (Paisley) and a small group from Dundee.

Firstly we were introduced to Mrs Wilson who conducted us through "The Sun Has Got His Hat On". We played it over and over to make it perfect. Then Mr Wilson took over to conduct "Kookaburra Cannon" (that was great fun because everyone's bar was different!) before handing us back to Mrs Wilson for "Leaving Lismore". Next the teams had a chance to play a solo spot. We performed "Moonwatch" and we were very good even though we were nervous. Miss Duffus, our Music Teacher, conducted us and she said we did really well although we went a bit fast but nobody noticed!

We had a break for refreshments in the middle of the afternoon then back into the hall for some more ringing. This time we had to walk around and sing "Kookaburra Cannon" AND ring it all at the same time. That was difficult!

The journey back home was really good because we were able to talk about our performances with Kaimhill ringers. Kirsten thought the day was very enjoyable and it was lovely to hear everyone play their different instruments. Scott's favourite part of the day was his team's performance of "Moonwatch" because he thought they did extremely well! He also enjoyed the journey because he got to sit with his friends and he had a good time.

Kirsten Watson & Scott MacGregor (11) Strathburn School Handchimes.



'Roving Reporters' Kirsteen & Scott



Strathburn School Handchimes, Inverurie

## The Parish of Dunkeld HR

The Dunkeld group is perhaps unusual in that it has a break from ringing in January and continues with a busy programme of ringing throughout the summer. This summer as usual we provided entertainment in Nursing Homes, for Fellowship Groups, SWRIs, at Country Markets and The Cross in Dunkeld, but we also gave two concerts in aid of charity.

The first was for The Friends of Innerpeffray Library, the concert being in Innerpeffray Chapel. This small chapel, which dates back to 1508, has a really special atmosphere and with candles in all the window recesses and on the original stone altar it made a splendid setting for our concert before a packed, enthusiastic audience. The second concert was in The Chapel Royal at Falkland Palace in aid of The Tapestry Fund, the occasion being our social outing. (The group has established a routine of a day trip one year followed by a concert tour the next - dates, concert venues and accommodation for 2011 already booked!). After coffee and scones on arriving in Falkland, all the equipment, apart from the bells, was set up in the Chapel with time for exploring the Palace, gardens and village before an enjoyable lunch together prior to our concert. The weather was perfect and, expecting everyone to be outside enjoying the sunshine, we were delighted by the size of the audience. Next, having been invited to ring in the tiny village of Kinloch Rannoch, some of our members decided they'd like another day out! So again on a beautiful summer's day, we drove to Queen's View on Loch Tummel enjoying lunch and a walk (taking the obligatory photo beside the view) before travelling on. It should be obvious by now that the Dunkeld ringers enjoy their food! We'll be along the same road going to Tummel Bridge in October and intend meeting in Dunkeld for Fish and Chips before setting off.

In August my travels took me a bit further to Vancouver where I joined The Bells of the Cascades cruise to Alaska (separate report). Several Dunkeld members attended the Ring in Praise Seminar at Dunblane and will be present at the Rallies in Haddington and Aberdeen. The eighth summer season of Handbell Harmony – weekly performances of solo/duet/small ensemble ringing – continued throughout the summer finishing at the end of September. These performances are becoming more and more popular with visitors to the area and this year plate donations, which are shared between the Cathedral and handbell group, far exceeded those of previous years, sales of our CDS and DVDS also going well (production of 3rd CD now underway).

Now into autumn we are starting to prepare for our usual performances at Pitlochry Theatre for Dougie MacLean's Amber Festival and the Christmas Event in The National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh in addition to many local events.

Heather I. McLean



Parish of Dunkeld Handbell Ringers at Falkland Palace

### True Grit (and a challenging Term!)

One Saturday evening back in February, I was browsing through the 2010 Aberdeen & North East of Scotland Music Festival Syllabus when I had a brainwave (or so I thought that night!) We had a particularly good Handchime Group at Kaimhill in the 2009/2010 Session with a number of very experienced Primary 7 ringers so why not enter them into the Festival in the Group Music Making Class? It had been some time since we had entered such a group but this certainly seemed a good year to do so. With the agreement of our Head Teacher I sent off the application and set about looking out some suitable pieces for a six-minute programme which would show off the Handchimes, and our ringing skills. For good measure, we also decided to take the group to the 2010 Schools' Ringing Day in Dunblane on 13<sup>th</sup> May.

Soon the busy Summer Term arrived and, along with my other school Handchime group from Strathburn School, Inverurie, we set off on the two-hour bus journey South to Newton School, Dunblane, for the Schools' Ringing Day. Although a non-competitive event, I thought this would be a good opportunity for Kaimhill ringers to perform in front of an audience prior to the Music Festival. I was very pleased with both their performance and that of Strathburn School ringers and was delighted to see pupils from both schools mixing well during and following the event. So, all was going smoothly and to plan. Or so I thought!



A few weeks prior to the Music Festival I received the news that one of our ringers, Morgan, had fallen and broken her right arm – badly! Help! Although clearly disappointed, Morgan was in no doubt she would still attend rehearsals, and the Festival, ringing with her “good arm”! Another ringer bravely volunteered to take an extra chime (Morgan’s right hand) on board so we were soon back on track – for a week or so anyway. All the ringers were working very hard and obviously wanted to play well. Then ten days before the “big performance” (as it had now been called), I received a text message from the Head Teacher to tell me that one of our ringers, Jack, would not now be in Aberdeen on the day of our Festival performance and she wanted to know if she would cancel the bus. I must confess I was sorely tempted to agree but I then thought of all the hard work the pupils had put into getting their programme ready. So, I took a deep sigh and replied, “No!” Then I thought “How on earth can we cover more missing notes?”

Two days later I broke the news to the rest of the group and explained we were in dire straits! We discussed the situation and the possibilities. We could still take part with me ringing Jack’s chimes but we would not be allowed to compete for a place. I could see the disappointment on all their faces but they agreed they wanted to go ahead. Then one of them suggested a former ringer may be able to help out. A quick message along the corridor confirmed this to be the case so we were back on track.....for a few days

anyway! One of the school Depute's is a member of my adult Handchime group so she agreed to provide some extra coaching for our stand-in ringer.

On Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June we all gathered in the Music Room to wait for the bus to take us to the venue for our Festival performance – almost all that is. We then found that our stand-in ringer wouldn't be able to stand in after all as he had a dental appointment! The look on twelve faces said it all and for the first time I caught a glimpse of defeat. We had all tried so hard to ensure things would go ahead as planned but here was another hurdle – and a big one! It was clear that the team wanted to go ahead and the pupils accepted we would perform, without competing, with me ringing. It was all we could do and at least we would still have the chance to play. So, although somewhat disappointed, we set off.

I explained the situation (briefly!!) to the lady in charge of our Class at the Festival and then found out that another school was in a very similar situation. Given all the facts, she agreed to allow everyone to compete. Wow! The smiles were back on and I was so pleased for our ringers. Even more so at the end of the Class when we were announced as joint First Place Winners with a Scottish Music Group. The adjudicator was clearly impressed with the sound of our Handchimes. These are some of his comments - :*"What nice sounds! Excellent concentration from everyone. You kept really well together. You caught the new tempo (our second piece) well and this was very well controlled. Some effective trills (he should have said shakes!) here (in our third piece). Well done – much to enjoy!"* This was summed up with a "Very Good" performance certificate which indicates commendable artistic and technical control. And, of course, that coveted joint First Place.

So, it had been a very long and difficult journey but all the hard work and sheer determination had paid off. I was very proud of the team who had shown outstanding "true grit" as each hurdle loomed ahead of them. It's rare to see such obvious determination and first class teamwork in young people and it is surely a lesson for all us adult ringers who often give up at the first hurdle. I'm sure none of Kaimhill handchimes of 2009/10 will forget this experience for a long time. I know I won't!

With the new 2010/2011 Session underway and our Primary 7 ringers from last Session moved up to Secondary school, the remaining ringers are looking to recruit some new members to join them. I can already see last Term's challenges have done a great deal for the team spirit of the group as they step out into another school year. Whatever may lie ahead!

Miss E Duffus Music Specialist, Kaimhill School

### **PS Morgan is back ringing with both arms!**



**Kaimhill School Handchimes of 2010/2011 session Morgan (back ringing with two arms!) with friend Elie**

## Jordanhill Parish Church Handbell Ringers

We started the new session with a ringing day in the church hall to get our 'eyes' back in and try out some new pieces of music which Ruth had brought back from Japan. So watch out for some lovely Japanese compositions by Nozomu Abe in our latest repertoire!

In June we bade farewell to Anne Goodall, a founder member of the team, who has moved to live in Boat of Garten. She has not completely severed all links with the team and may occasionally be seen at our rehearsals.

We held a Craft Fair and Book Sale in mid-September which raised £500 for Pakistan Flood Relief and our own church. Ruth and Christine have regaled us with their many Japanese adventures while attending the International Symposium in Osaka.

We have a busy programme planned up until Christmas and beyond. Team members are attending both Autumn ring-along days.

Lynda Barclay

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## Solo Handbells Launch Longest Tapestry

On the 26th July I had the privilege of playing solo handbells at the launch event of what the BBC reported as the longest tapestry in the world. The Prestonpans Tapestry comprises 104 metres of mainly Crewel embroidery and needlelace stitching, retelling (through the series of 104 metre-long panels) the journey of Bonnie Prince Charlie from France to victory at Prestonpans in 1745. This tapestry exceeds the length of the Bayeux Tapestry, from which inspiration for the Prestonpans Tapestry came, by some 30 metres. Some 200 volunteer needleworkers from all over Scotland were recruited by the Baron of Prestoungrange, the driving force behind this incredible project, and worked together to complete this amazing piece of artwork designed by artist Andrew Crummy. I completed one of the panels, one showing Sir John Cope and his army fleeing the battlefield, and was honoured to be part of this slice of history. In my panel the galloping horses were challenging to stitch to get the movement correct and this had to be completed in 2 months, which was no mean task. I also helped stitch the panel relating to Charlie's stay in Dunblane where the story is retold that the maid was so excited to have met the Prince that she bowed and kissed his shoe instead of his hand.

I opened the musical offerings at the launch event in Prestonpans by performing solo handbells (accompanied by Malcolm) to the 300 invited guests along with several television crews and reporters. The handbell solos started with *Eriskay Love Lilt* (Eriskay is where Bonnie Prince Charlie first landed in Scotland from his voyage from France in his quest to reclaim the British throne), followed by *Ae Fond Kiss* (recalling the Dunblane connection as he stayed in Balhaldie House in Dunblane and was kissed by the maid there), then *Skye Boat Song* and *Will Ye no' come back again*, both songs recalling this Jacobite era. The audience sang along and many said afterwards how moved they had been by the music.

The whole tapestry goes on tour following in the footsteps of Bonnie Prince Charlie in 1745 by putting the tapestry on display in each community in Scotland visited by Bonnie Prince Charlie on exactly the same dates this year as he would have been in each place in 1745. And there is an actor playing the part of Bonnie Prince Charlie who will be accompanying the tapestry to each venue this year, and the local tapestry teams will be on hand in each location to welcome visitors in their communities to see the whole work. It is very impressive and is well worth a visit either on the tour or when it eventually gets a permanent housing in Prestonpans.

More information about this amazing piece of work can be found at <http://www.prestonpanstapestry.org/tapestry/>.





Lysbeth Wilson, Dunblane Cathedral Handbells

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### **Bells of the Cascades Cruise to Alaska**

On Saturday, July 31<sup>st</sup> 2010 I boarded the Holland-American cruise ship MS Zuiderdam in Vancouver for a fantastic handbell ringing experience and journey to Alaska, together with Anne and Jeffrey Singleton (Amber Bells of Ashover, England) and Linda Lamb, American composer and arranger, with whom I was sharing a cabin.

The American group “Bells of the Cascades, directed by Nancy Hascall, has been organising bell cruises since 1993 and plan everything carefully down to the smallest detail so that all runs smoothly. On previous cruises ringers had been split into three groups: one for absolute beginners and two to cater for ringers with different abilities. This time it had been decided that, as most of the experienced ringers were of a high standard, they would all ring music of the same level of difficulty but, due to space, would still be divided into two groups for the massed ringing rehearsals.

Our music was awaiting us in our cabins, so everyone would be sight-reading at the first rehearsal the next morning. First though, there was the “Sail Away Party” in The Crow’s Nest and a chance to meet our fellow ringers. Afterwards, on being escorted to our table for dinner, we were delighted to find that the four of us were at a table with Nancy Hascall and her husband Glen. This was Table 30 and we soon decided that it was the best. We got on well with each other, conversation flowed freely and we also had the pleasure of being beside a huge window through which we could see the passing scenery.

Sunday – Cruising the Inside passage, two massed ringing rehearsals and two ensemble sessions.

Our conductor was Dr William Payn, renowned handbell composer and director, professor of music, director of choral studies and chair of music dept. at Bucknell University, PA.

Taking us gently through the first rehearsal he seemed satisfied with our first attempts at the music, but we were well aware that he expected (and would demand) a high standard of ringing and that we had a long way to go to achieve it. He knew exactly what he wanted and how to get it. Skilfully he led us forward in a patient and kindly way with straightforward instructions and clear conducting.

The Ensemble Sessions were taken by Nancy Hascall, with help from several BOC ringers. The group was comprised of ringers having no experience of solo and ensemble ringing through to very experienced soloists but Nancy enabled everyone to either begin or to move forward from their existing level. Small ensembles were formed and appropriate music selected. Nancy's chief claim to fame in the handbell world is the development of the "four-in-hand travelling" technique and I was delighted that, having been struggling at home with difficult sections in some of Nancy's own arrangements, Nancy spent time showing me the bell choreography and technique needed. No rehearsals after dinner but a varied selection of entertainment on offer plus, with plenty of bells available, the opportunity to practise ensemble ringing if one wished.



Monday – a.m.- Cruising Tracy Arm Fjord, massed ringing rehearsals and classes on sight-reading and special techniques. p.m. Juneau.

This morning was the only time during the cruise when the weather was cold.. Whenever the ringers were free, they all wrapped up in warm clothes and went on deck to see the wonderful Alaskan scenery, to watch for whales (one or two sightings) and to take photographs.

At each port of call there were lots of excursions available – rides in helicopters, seaplanes and boats to visit remote areas with no other means of access, to see the wildlife, canoe, ride horses, go trekking etc. the list was endless. Anne and Jeff enjoyed many of these excursions whilst Linda and I, who have previously been to Alaska with my husband and experienced such activities, decided to spend time exploring the various townships to learn more about the Alaskans – their way of life, history and culture. In Juneau, Jeffrey and Anne hiked up from the cable car station to Father Brown's Cross on Mt Roberts followed by an exhilarating float plane flight over 7 glaciers to Taku River Lodge for a delicious salmon bake dinner entertained by a large black bear licking out the fat from the barbecue not 20 yards away from us. After a quick look around the town, Linda and I took the cable car to the top of Mount Roberts from which there was a splendid view and also a performance by The Alaskan String Band. This was a family of five, - mother, father, daughters of 12 and 19 and a son 16. They were brilliant, each playing several string instruments – guitar, fiddle, mandolin, bass, duck plus snake drum and swapping from one to another with ease. As well as the beautiful music we also heard about their way of life: how they survive during the long, dark winters cut off from the outside world and about their intricate, beautifully embroidered costumes with which the Alaskans cover their furs and skins. Two interesting facts they mentioned were that

- 1) all Alaskans are legally entitled to a fixed, free amount of timber. It is required that they go into the forest and choose their own trees, which the timber company then fell and transport for them. As a result this family of five had built a beautiful home for a third of the price it would normally cost.
- 2) Juneau expanded from a small tribal settlement following the discovery of gold in 1880 and mining of the gold continued until WWII. Following the closure of the mine all its assets were invested for the benefit of the Juneau people and interest is still paid every year to each eligible person. To date the smallest payment has been \$200, often it has been considerably more.

#### Tuesday – Skagway.

A day free from ringing, apart from ensemble practice if one desired.

Again, Anne and Jeff went off on a long excursion into the Yukon by coach and train whilst Heather and Linda explored the township on their own and learned more about Skagway. In 1897 thousands gathered there to begin the long and arduous trek up and through either the Chilkoot Pass or the White Pass into the Yukon in the hope of finding gold. In the Visitor Centre they watched an excellent film, which included some genuine footage, and showed events as they unfolded. Then they travelled to the summit of the White Pass, rather more easily than gold prospectors did, by riding on the narrow-gauge White Pass Yukon Route Railroad.

#### Wednesday – Cruising Glacier Bay, massed ringing rehearsals, ensemble practice followed by concert.

When not ringing, everyone was on deck. On entering the fjord there was low mist but as we approached the glaciers at the head of the bay the mist cleared, the sun shone and it was a glorious day. Everyone was engrossed in the scenery all around them – magnificent, spectacular, awesome – words cannot describe it and the many photographs taken can hardly do it justice.

The Ensemble Concert was given by those who wished to demonstrate the new skills they had learned and also included performances by such experts as Nancy Hascall and Ron Bellamy.

Open to all the ship's passengers, the audience thoroughly enjoyed the range and variety of the performances.

#### Thursday – a.m. Massed ringing rehearsals, p.m. Ketchikan

On deck again when possible whilst cruising towards Ketchikan – the weather still great.

The first inhabitants of Ketchikan were the Tlingit tribes who named their camp “Klin – kit” meaning “thundering wings of the eagle”. Ketchikan is now a bustling small town and known as the Salmon Capital of the World. Linda and I explored it first by horse-drawn trolley, followed by walking to the mouth of the creek to watch the vast number of salmon passing through and to see the famous Creek Street, built over the water on stilts and the Red Light district in days gone by.

The South Alaska Discovery Centre was the place to visit for an insight into the Tlingit people. There was an excellent exhibition which covered all aspects of their lives and was absolutely fascinating. As we left we said, “Gunalchees” or “Thank you” in the Tlingit language. Meanwhile Jeffrey and Anne visited one of the infamous cannery factories that helped decimate salmon stocks in the region in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (read James Michener's “Alaska”) They returned to Ketchikan by jet-boat catamaran observing bald eagle families nesting and modern salmon fishing practices on the way.

#### Friday – Cruising the inside passage back to Vancouver and two concerts.

The first concert, in the morning and open to all 1900 passengers, was by The Bells of the Cascades under the direction of Nancy Hascall. This was a polished performance by excellent ringers. The varied programme was beautifully interpreted with tremendous skill and emotion. Needless to say, they fully deserved the standing ovation they received at the end.

Afterwards, the rest of us hurried to our practice room for the final rehearsal prior to our own concert after lunch. Throughout the week the passengers had shown great interest in the bells and, through the windows and open doors of the practice room, had watched us rehearsing. Now they were obviously keen to attend the final concert and every bit of space was occupied, with people even sitting on the floor! The concert went well and afterwards Dr Payn seemed pleased with our performance. He had trained us so brilliantly that I think we all just followed his excellent conducting through each piece and knew exactly what we had to do. The final piece “Plink, Plank, Plonk”, malletted throughout and taken at a fast pace, was a joy to perform with the ringers almost dancing to the music and smiling throughout.

So, that was it. All over!

Not quite – we still had a banquet that evening to look forward to, with entertainment by the dining room staff in between courses.

Saturday – Yes, time to disembark.

It had been a memorable experience – brilliant conductor, lovely selection of music, massed and small ensemble ringing, good company, constantly changing spectacular scenery, sightings of Alaskan wildlife (whale, bear, seals, bald eagles, tufted puffins etc.), and beautiful weather combined with excellent accommodation and food.

What more could one possibly want? Perhaps another cruise? The next will probably be in the Caribbean. Watch out for it!

**Heather I. McLean**

**The Parish of Dunkeld HR**

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## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

October 9	“Mistletoe & Wine”, themed Ring-Along, Holy Trinity Haddington
October 23	“Mistletoe & Wine”, themed Ring-Along, Chapel Chimers in Aberdeen
October 27 – 30	UK Bronze - details in Reverberations
March 26, 2011	Spring Rally & AGM. McLaren Leisure Centre, Callander

### **Deadline for next issue of magazine – 25th January 2011**



## **Magazine Editor**

**To produce our 3 magazines per year. All contributions are received electronically and most magazines are distributed electronically. You do require to have a computer and access to the internet. If you are interested and would like to know more please contact Christine Reid (details on the back page)**

## 2010/2011 Committee

Contact details can be found on the HRGB Scotland website [www.hrgbScotland.org.uk](http://www.hrgbScotland.org.uk)

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