

celebrations. We really ought to be capitalising on this event.

When did a long length of Glasgow Surprise Major last attract as much world-wide attention?

RICHARD OFFEN

Perth, Western Australia

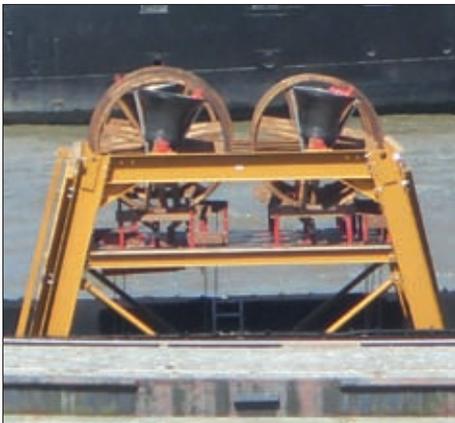
## These bells float!

SIR, – Visitors to London enjoying the summer sun along the embankment last Saturday were treated to a preview of the Jubilee bells mounted on their large Thames Barge and being pushed along by a tug (*photos below*).

The bells could be heard from over a quarter of a mile away and were audible before the barge could be seen. The barge stopped above Blackfriars bridge and moored in mid river. The ringing stopped for lunch. A few minutes later a peal attempt started and the ensemble disappeared downstream. All the excitement was over. The bells seemed to be relatively unaffected by the movement of the water on a breezy day. The peal was successful (*Ed. – see p.576*) so they day must be rated as a success. The organisers should be congratulated on the hard work that has brought this scheme to fruition. We are all looking forward to seeing the bells in the flotilla on Sunday.

HILARY DONOGHUE

Billericay, Essex



## Will this motion float?

SIR, – I think that Chris Frye (p.547) may have misunderstood either my previous letter (p.1014) or motion (B) on the Council meeting agenda (p.462).

I did indeed suggest that if John Norris believed that the Council Decision on Peal Ringing should be amended to cover peals on simulators as well as peals on bells, then he should ask his representatives or other sympathetic Council members to propose a motion asking the Methods Committee to prepare the necessary amendments to the Decisions.

However the proposer and seconder of motion (B) are not seeking to have the Decision on Peal Ringing amended, they are only seeking to influence how certain non-compliant peals are treated in the Analysis.

Some background may help. The Peal Records Committee are required, by their Terms of Reference, to prepare an analysis of and report on **all** peals published in *The Ringing World* and, by Decision (D) E., to identify peals not complying with parts A to D of the Decision on Peal Ringing. Peals either comply with the conditions or they don't and if they don't they are identified as such in the Analysis.

In the bad old days peals had a variety of designations: if they were compliant, they were "recognised"; if they were "non-compliant" they could still be "included in the Analysis" or "not included in the Analysis". This caused no end of disputes and in 2002 Council adopted the current non-judgemental designations: they either "do comply" or "do not comply" with the conditions. Moreover, it makes no difference **how** the Peal Records Committee chooses to include a peal in their report, it either "complies" or it "does not comply".

Motion (B) is not concerned with the status of peals on dumbbells and/or simulators (they "do not comply"), it is simply concerned with how they are included in the Peal Records Committee report.

Winchester, Hampshire

TONY SMITH

## Bring on the buoyancy aids

SIR, – I don't doubt Chris Frye's good intentions but I fear he has unwittingly misrepresented the situation (p.547).

Recapitulating briefly, I concluded my article *Peals rung on simulators: time to recognise them?* (23 Sept 2011, p.963) with the words "The purpose of this article is not to plead for change without consideration but to draw the attention of the Methods Committee to the matter and hope that they will give serious consideration to the issue and make well-argued recommendations to the Council, whether for change or for maintenance of the status quo." In response Tony Smith (2011, p.1014) felt that it wasn't fair "to expect the Methods Committee to take on this significant item of work before Council had had an opportunity to discuss and agree on the matter in principle". Instead he suggested the approach correctly quoted by Chris that "the best way to proceed would be to propose a motion at Chester asking the methods committee to prepare the necessary amendments to the decisions". This motion would have sought unambiguously to change the Decisions to cover peals on simulators, leaving the Methods Committee to work out the details.

However, in subsequent email correspondence Tony advised me that he did not think "that Council would be sympathetic to changing the Decisions to also cover peals on simulators for the sorts of reasons raised in the debate in 2003." As a less radical alternative motion he suggested: "That the Peal Records Committee shall prepare a statistical analysis of non-compliant peals." This motion would have left the Decisions unchanged but would have required the Peal Records Committee not merely to mention 'non-compliant' peals in its report, as required at present, but also to include them in a new separate table in the analysis. Since no change to the Decisions was envisaged there was no reference to the Methods Committee. Treating simulator peals in this way received wide support amongst the Sussex County Association membership and formed the basis of the actual motion proposed to the Council. The motion differs in only one key respect from Tony's suggestion; it is deliberately 'tighter' to ensure that standards are maintained and that any new table does not become a convenient receptacle for other sorts of as yet unconsidered non-compliant peals.

Chris suggests separating peals rung on bells with silenced clappers from peals rung on dumbbell rings, "the former being much closer to the traditional view of peal ringing". I don't think this 'divide and rule' separation would be very helpful, not least because all the simulator peals so far rung have been on dumbbell rings or (one example) hybrid rings. (That's assuming that no peals have been rung on tied bells with simulated sound and published without the fact being disclosed – but that's another issue).

Summarising: the motion proposed is a small step that would lead to inclusion in the statistical tables of peals rung on dumbbell