

History

Location

Tulloch is a small farm situated 18 miles north east of Fort William in the Western Highlands, equidistant between the 3 most north westerly towers in Britain (Inverness, Dunkeld and Inveraray – all approx 1 1/2hrs drive away).

There are several experienced ringers in the Fort William area. In addition there are several lapsed ringers whom we would hope to lure back to the exercise. We will welcome the challenge of building the band.

We had dreamed of creating a ring of bells at Tulloch since moving there in 2002. In 2010 we learned that the [Keltek Trust](#) had acquired the chime of 10 Gillett & Johnston bells from [St George's North, Greenock](#) and the chime of 12 Gillett & Johnston bells from [Mount Zion Church, Quarriers Village](#). The bells had been removed from the redundant churches in August 2007 and were on offer to the Scottish Association of Change Ringers for use in projects in Scotland. Tulloch, we thought, might be viewed as a worthy project. We attended the 2011 Scottish Association AGM in Paisley and formally requested the opportunity to buy six of these magnificent Gillett and Johnston bells and were given permission to purchase the following six bells.

7-2-4 34.9" Gillett & Johnston 1950 #7, St George's North, Greenock

6-0-7 31.5" Gillett & Johnston 1950 #5, St George's North, Greenock

4-2-21 31.75" Gillett & Johnston 1946 #8, Mount Zion Church, Quarriers Village

4-0-21 27.25" Gillett & Johnston 1950 #3, St George's North, Greenock

3-0-21 24.6" Gillett & Johnston 1950 #1, St George's North, Greenock

2-1-24 22.6" Gillett & Johnston 1946 #4, Mount Zion Church, Quarriers Village

Adrian Dempster of Ward Cole Ltd was then commissioned to design a purpose built bell tower for us to house these bells at Tulloch, with space to augment to a 12 by the addition of 6 trebles. These treble bells are being cast by the Perner Bell Foundry. Although light, the bells are of similar weight to the 12 at Bitterne Park in Southampton, a very popular and easy to ring set of bells. The hanging and augmentation was undertaken by Matthew Higby and Company Ltd, who have a proven record in the small bell and mini-ring bellhanging fields. The result has exceeded our wildest dreams.

In addition to the belfry we have restored an attached stone barn as a teaching facility to include heated classroom, kitchen, and toilets which can be used to offer teaching courses.

In order to ensure that the facilities are used, we would encourage visiting bands. The tower has been built to contain the sound rather than project it and in addition we have no neighbours to worry about, so Tulloch will be a suitable venue for practice ringing, peal ringing and long length peal ringing as the bells will be available 24/7, 365 days a year, whether we are present or not.

On the farm we have several guest cottages where we can offer our ringing friends a base when they wish to visit, and within a 5 minute drive of the farm are 2 large independent hostels/bunk houses (sleeping total 50) & The Glen Spean Hotel (14 bedrooms).



The bells in the belfry at Tulloch

There are superb walks on the farm – along the river Spean & in surrounding woodland. [Glen Spean and the Great Glen](#) provide a million ways to enjoy your visit. A 10 minute drive will enable ringers to enjoy the Cairngorm National Park, 15 mins to Ben Nevis, 25 mins to Fort William & 40 mins to Loch Ness – we would be an ideal location to provide the off-ringing amusements popular with ringers & families.

The Project Principals Peter & Helen learned to ring in London in 1979. We each had a spell as Ringing Master at St John of Jerusalem, Sth Hackney (19 cwt 8). In addition Helen was sometime secretary & treasurer, Peter was steeple keeper. On moving to Reading in 1987 we rang with the combined band of St Mary's (25 cwt 8) & St Lawrence's (22cwt 12). Peter was steeple keeper of both towers. We joined the [Royal Society of Cumberland Youths](#) in 1990. On moving to New York in 1999 we installed the first North American mini ring in our home and supported the local band at Brewster. When we arrived in Scotland in 2001 we joined the [Scottish Association](#) but the distances have made regular attendance at any tower impossible. We are both more interested in teaching than peal ringing, having rung barely 250 peals and 2000 quarters between us on all numbers, both in hand and in tower.

We spend part of each year in Alderney, Channel Islands. Peter is Ringing Master of St Anne (13cwt 6 – but augmentation planned for 2013) and Helen is District Master for the Channel Islands. Teaching is very much the focus of our activities on the Channel Islands.
