

Bramham Mean Time

Not everyone loves bells. Though they 've been here longer than any of us, and we didn 't have to choose to live nearby , they do cause some [a minority , I suspect] to have feelings of annoyance , or worse. No one , however , seems to object to the Church clock , even though it does show a slightly different time on each of its faces and is therefore not entirely reliable.

The clock can be seen from a surprising number of places in the village ; some people , I 'm told , have come to rely on it ; and it s valued by many as a focal point in our community. How many photographs of Bramham include the clock ? Can you imagine the village without it and its Church tower ? I m soon reminded of my duties , I can tell you , if I allow your clock to stop !

Of course , without the bells , the clock would not strike , making it a less characterful , living part of our lives. The two are , in their history and their function , bound up together. The six bells , cast by John Warner 's of London and hung by John Taylor 's of Loughborough , replaced an earlier ring in 1875 , at the same time that William Potts of Leeds replaced the previous single - faced clock. The whole exercise , carried out after a fire in the tower , required the construction of two immensely strong floors and frames , which stand firm to this day. They were made to act in unison , a working harmony under which generations of villagers have lived out their diverse lives ever since.

We now exist in an age when , oddly , folk look to eliminate hard labour from their diaries , whilst paying handsomely for membership of gym or pool. Exercise from the weekly winding of the great weights which drive the clock is somehow unfashionable or too much of a responsibility. That philosophy , together with our favouring of all things electronic , has brought to the fore the suggestion that unreliable man should be eliminated as winder, with the clock computerised though , one hopes , not digitalised . It wouldn 't be quite the same to glance up at a 24 hour numerical face or to listen to an hourly electronic strike !

For the moment , muscle is cheap and handy , but when the day comes to install a motor , costs , initial and running , will rise. Then , if you value your village timekeeper , you ll need to pay for it. The Church as supplier of services to the uncommitted may well not stretch that far !

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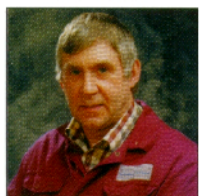
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Mick Tomlinson



Tony Charlesworth



Our time served engineers have specialised skills in both modern and traditional clocks. These skills are handed down from generations of clockmaking expertise.



Leeds Town Hall

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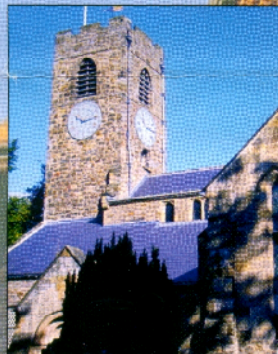
In addition, our UK network provides all year round support, ensuring a continuous callout service for our clients.

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- Replacement of time motors, hammer wires and weight lines.
- Consultancy and visits for advice on conservation.
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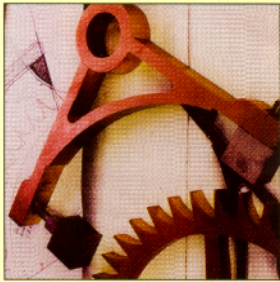
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We operate a Total Quality Management system across the group. From maintenance to major restoration, our procedures are established on close links with Diocesan Clock Advisers, the British Horological Institute, and the Worshipful Company of Clockmakers



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Our skilled craftsmen provide an individual service with close attention to detail. Major overhauls are carried out in our workshops, which are fully equipped to deal with the Specialist engineering requirements of tower clock restoration.



Cork - Shandon Steeple: Ireland's principal timepiece. The original mechanism dates from 1847, and was completely restored in 1988



Cardiff City Hall clock: overhauled by J. B. Joyce in 1996, which included re-gilding of the four twelve foot diameter dials



Wigan, Lancs: Clock built for the Galleries Centre by William Potts, which has Bell Sound with chimes, and gilded hand cut decorative copper leaves



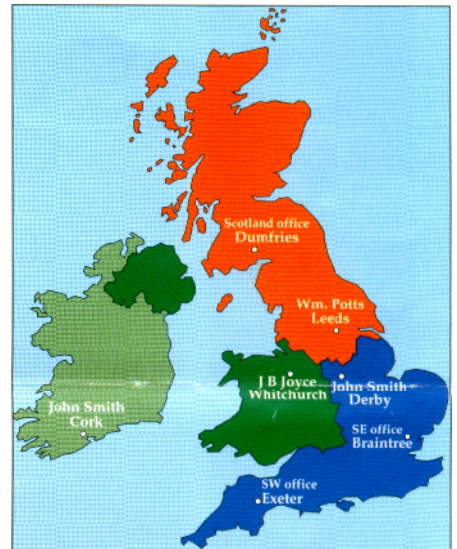
St Pauls Cathedral: clock mechanism built in 1893 by John Smith and Sons, and still regularly inspected and maintained by the company.

4,500 Inspections a Year

The Smith of Derby Group is responsible for the care of public clocks on cathedrals, parish churches, municipal buildings, village halls and parks. The Smith Group - William

Potts of Leeds, J. B. Joyce of Whitchurch, and John Smith & Sons of Derby probably have the widest range of expertise and capability in the world of tower clocks.

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