

Ringling Round Devon



THE GUILD OF
DEVONSHIRE RINGERS
Newsletter 128 December 2022

Hong Kong Edition

聖誕快樂

Merry
Christmas

Guild Striking Competition

Saturday 15 October 2022

This year it was the turn of the Mid Devon Branch to host the Guild's striking competition. Competitions were held at both Bishopsteignton and Dawlish.

There were seven entries for the 6-bell competition, which was judged by Michael Cannon (Guild Ringing Master) and Ian Campbell. Both claimed to have enjoyed a pleasant morning sat in the sunshine in the garden of a house in Bishopsteignton. It was lovely to hear a range of ringing including Grandsire and Plain Bob Doubles from less experienced teams and London and Cambridge Minor from the more experienced ringers.

The Jack Fiddler Trophy was awarded jointly to the Exeter Cathedral band for their plain course of London Minor and the Tavistock band, but,



The handbell workshop at Dawlish

to quote Michael Cannon, the team in seventh place were not last – they are still ahead of the team that did not take part!

The atmosphere at Bishopsteignton was thriving and the ringing coincided with the harvest fair. Hearing the ringing encouraged people to come into the church to peruse the stalls and flower arrangements and enjoy some tea and cake. The ringers were kept happy with the refreshments available!

Others spent the morning in Dawlish, where there were three entries for the novice 8-bell competition. Richard Johnston was the judge and the David Willis Trophy went to the team from Withycombe Raleigh.

The afternoon was filled with ringing from the six bands who entered the 8-bell competition, along with the various other activities that had been arranged, such as handbell ringing and enjoying more tea and cake! Thank you to the Dawlish ringers for their hospitality.



Les Boyce has a piece of cake



Tim Bayton organising a band for the competition photo

The results from the morning were announced, followed by a period of trepidation that we may never know the results of the 8-bell competition as we realised that we had appeared to have 'lost' the three ringers from Cornwall who had kindly judged. Just when we were all becoming restless with the delay, Geoff Hill took to the stage and gave an impromptu rendition of the folk song 'The Bellringing (The Men of Northlew)' – the star of the day!

Eventually, the three judges were located and presented their findings, particularly mentioning 'inconsistent leading', and gave the results. Exeter Branch took the top spot.

The Mid Devon Branch were awarded fifth place. However, as the other five teams had all rung Grandsire, the branch claimed first place for the Bob Major competition!

It was great to meet so many ringers from across the Guild on what was a pleasing and sociable day. Everyone went home feeling rather tired, very happy, and incredibly proud of their achievements and successes, regardless of the 'official' competition results.

Thank you to everyone who took part, whether that was in a ringing or non-ringing capacity, and, well done!

Catherine Saunders, Mid Devon Branch

Note from the Guild Ringing Master



The Guild Master enjoying his tea

I was invited to judge the 6-bell competition and I enlisted the help of the very experienced Ian Campbell. It was a pleasant autumn morning and Ian and I were able to sit outside in a lovely garden nearby which enabled us to hear the bells very clearly. Six teams took part with methods ranging from plain courses of Grandsire Doubles to Cambridge Minor. Interestingly (and to my relief) Ian's marking and my own were almost identical, so much so that it was impossible to choose between first and second place. Consequently for the first time in very many years joint first place was awarded to Exeter Cathedral and Tavistock with just four faults apiece. Well done to everyone who took part.

Michael Cannon

Results

6-bell Competition for JP Fidler Cup - Bishopsteignton

Joint 1st Exeter Cathedral and Tavistock, 4 faults

3rd Exeter, St Mark, 6 faults

4th Withycombe Raleigh, 25 faults

5th Plymouth, Emmanuel, 29 faults

6th Dawlish, 38 faults

7th Topsham, 55 faults

Judges: Michael Cannon and Ian Campbell



Notice outside Bishopsteignton church before the competition

8-bell Novice competition – Dawlish

1st Aylesbeare Branch, 33 faults

2nd South West Branch, 59 faults

3rd Dawlish, 101 faults

Judge: Richard Johnston



Aylesbeare Branch awarded the certificate by Richard Johnston

8-bell inter-branch competition for the Andrews Trophy - Dawlish

1st Exeter Branch, 10½ faults

2nd South West Branch, 17 faults

3rd North East Branch, 41 faults

4th East Devon Branch, 42½ faults

5th Mid Devon Branch, 47 faults

6th Aylesbeare Branch, 70 faults

Judges: Carolyn Howell, Hayley Young, Jonathan Young



David Hird is awarded the certificate on behalf of the Exeter band

DCBRF Round Up of 2022

During 2022 several projects have finally come to a conclusion after the lock down and restrictions of Covid. By the end of the year, we will have paid out £33,500 to six towers:

Milton Abbot	£9,000	Full rehang with new frame and mainly new fittings
Cadbury	£6,000	Rehang with renovated frame and new fittings
East Anstey	£5,700	Rehang with new fittings
Butterleigh	£2,400	Conservation of the bells, hung for chiming only
Denbury	£9,200	Rehang in a new frame, two bells replaced and augmented to six
Cotleigh	£1,200	General renovation and overhaul of existing bells, frame and fittings

Inspections continue to be a large part of our work and during the last twelve months. quinquennial bell inspections have been completed at Cadeleigh, Clayhidon, Stoke Gabriel, Holcombe Burnell and East Portlemouth. Other inspections have taken place at nineteen towers in the County and on top of this, completed restoration work has been checked and signed off at the towers shown above. This means that during the year the Trustees have inspected the bells at over thirty towers in the County. All of this is done in their own time and at no cost to the bell fund, Guild or Association.

We have held our usual face to face meetings during the year, the first on 11 April in Exmouth and the second one on 12 November in the Jubilee Hall, Chagford prior to the Association's AGM. We are also in constant contact with each other, providing updates on outstanding projects, making decisions that cannot wait for the next in-person meeting, paying out grants and arranging the inspections mentioned above.

You will be pleased to know that all three Guild Trustees, Mary Mears, Ian Smith and Janet Deem together with our Chair, David Hird, are working incredibly hard on your behalf.

Mary is our Treasurer and not only keeping on top of the ins and outs of the bell fund bank account but has also spent considerable time setting us up on Smile Amazon and CAF to make giving easier. She is now looking into getting a QR code for the account. Ian continues to travel around the County providing the most impressive reports on towers and bells. Both Ian and David inspect completed work, ensuring the Trustees only pay out for what has actually been done and to an acceptable standard. Both have exceptional knowledge of all things bell-related and David's financial knowhow is also proving very useful. Meanwhile Janet does all things admin, having taken over as Secretary at the beginning of the year. This seems to involve many more hours sat at the computer than expected!

The bulk of our financial assets remain in the form of the investment portfolio purchased from the William Smale Bequest, and continue to be managed through the Discretionary Portfolio Service of Cathedral Financial Management Ltd of Exeter. The approximate value is currently a little over £320,000, however, values are very up and down and are unlikely to stabilise any time soon.

Our income so far in 2022 of £14,733 currently breaks down as follows:

- Investment Income - £7,927 (one more payment due in 2022, expected total £10,000)
- Association towers and events - £863 (300 club income expected in April 2023)
- The Guild and its Branches - £3,333
- Personal and miscellaneous donations - £1,271
- Donations after tower inspections - £320
- CAF both Guild and Association - £347.04
- AmazonSmile - £64.98

Tax refunds following gift-aided donations and bank interest make up the balance.

Grants agreed this year but not paid:

Huntshaw	£3,700	where all three bells are to be rehung for chiming
Tiverton St Paul	£300	for six new clappers to improve the sound and go of the bells
Stoodleigh	£900	to have the cracked treble bell removed, welded and returned
Sampford Peverell	£380	where new gudgeons are required in the tenor headstock
Uplyme -	£950	for scraping down and repainting the frame plus a general overhaul of the bells and fittings.

There are also a further three grants promised from previous years but not paid:

Hatherleigh	£8,100
Ilfracombe, P&J	£2,000
Bigbury	£6,250

Assuming all eight grants agreed to date are taken up, the uncommitted liquid balance of the fund stands at approximately £25,000. There are also four application forms outstanding but not returned. Whilst this sounds healthy, it only takes a couple of requests similar in size to Hatherleigh or Denbury and this will soon be swallowed up. As ever your continued support and donations are required, however big or small. We are extremely grateful for every penny received.

Janet Deem

Guild Library Update Library Opening in 2023

The Library will be open at St Petrock's, Exeter for borrowing and research on the following dates in early 2023:

Saturday 21 January	11:00 – 13:00 (Guild Committee pm)
Saturday 18 February	15:00 – 17:00
Saturday 18 March	15:00 – 17:00

As always it is advisable to contact the Guild Librarian (librarian@devonringers.org.uk) if you are coming to St Petrock's to consult a specific item. He can then check that the item will be available. Internet access is now available in the library.

Recent Additions to the Library

A couple of significant new publications have been purchased for the Library:

Linford, Simon *The Core Seven and Beyond: A guide to Treble Dodging Major inspired by Project Pickled Egg* The Ringing World 2021

This a substantial book of 220 pages using culinary and ski zone analogies to introduce a progressive pathway into Surprise Major ringing. There are tips for learning each method and clear explanations of the value of each. A well-produced book, it is very good value at £12.50.

Stoecklin, Tina and Gay, Simon *Change-ringing on Handbells. Volume 2: Advanced Techniques.*

Following on from the excellent introduction to handbell ringing in Volume 1, the 286 pages of this title take the reader from Surprise Minor through to Maximus. There are general explanations of how to learn methods and on how to conduct handbells.

We have also received for the archives the peal book and other records of Norman Mallett along with the minute book of the South-West Branch, 1919-1975. We are grateful to John Steere for arranging these donations.

Les Boyce

Debrief by Guild Central Council Representatives

Following 2022 CCCBR meeting

We recently received a debrief from our Central Council representatives following their attendance at the 2022 CCCBR meeting in Nottingham. A recording is available for those who weren't able to attend.

<https://youtu.be/l3joCmilVIs>

The Central Council meeting in 2024 will be held in Devon and as you will hear (about 20 minutes into the recording) we have an opportunity to influence some of the additional activities which will take place over the course of the weekend. The Guild officers would be very interested to hear any opinions or requests you may wish to put forward to the Central Council organising team in readiness for the 2024 visit.

John Martin, Guild Secretary



Obituaries

Yvonne Porter 1932 - 2022



Yvonne celebrating ringing in the Millennium

It is with great sadness that we report that Yvonne has died. Until recently there was hardly a Sunday when she wasn't in church, singing in the choir after hurrying down from the tower where she had helped ring the call to worship. As the years went by she became unable to ring, but her commitment to the ministry of music as a chorister remained undimmed. These two aspects of Yvonne's contributions as an active member of the Church were carried out with the quiet modesty central to her way of being.

Aged just fifteen, she was singing in the choir of the Priory church of Chepstow, where her family lived at the time. The choir is often a source of recruitment of bellringers, and that is what happened to Yvonne. She became a member of the Llandaff and Monmouth Diocesan Association, and rang eight peals for that society, her first being on Boxing Day 1950. In 1955, she moved with her family to Saltash in East Cornwall to begin her career as secretary to a paediatric consultant. Unable to find the method ringing she enjoyed in Cornwall, she joined the band at St Andrew's – now Plymouth Minster. The Minster bells are majestic but Yvonne found them increasingly challenging, so in 1982 transferred to Stoke Damerel and immersed herself wholeheartedly in the life of the church family there. She greatly regretted no longer being able to ring even those much lighter bells in recent years. In all, she rang 165 peals, 138 of them for the Devon Guild, including 42 at Stoke Damerel, the last being in 2002.

Her commitment to ringing was characteristic of Yvonne. From 1978 to 1988 she served as General Secretary of the Guild of Devonshire Ringers, became Guild Master for the following year, and was then honoured as Vice President from 1990. She then served as secretary of the South-West Branch from 1990 to 1999. She was a long-standing member of the Society of Royal Cumberland Youths and of the Ladies' Guild of Change Ringers.

It was a joy to be able to celebrate Yvonne's 90th birthday with her in church in February this year. Only a few weeks later she had a nasty fall at home, after which she became more and more frail. Admitted twice to hospital in the following six months, Yvonne died peacefully in Derriford Hospital at the end of October. We give thanks for her commitment to her friends, her dedication to the causes she held dear, and her loyal service to her church. Her funeral service took place at Stoke Damerel parish church with half-muffled ringing before, and afterwards as a demonstration to members of her family.

Richard Shere comments:

In 1982 the NE Branch asked me to be the branch secretary. Yvonne was the Guild Secretary at the time and was very helpful guiding me through what needed to be done.



Cutting the cake on her 90th birthday



Does anyone remember Yvonne on her scooter?

Nigel Mack



Nigel was the second son and youngest child of Frank and Mary Mack, long term ringers at Withycombe Raleigh. He also rang there until a few years ago when he moved into Exeter and was occasionally seen on practice night at Heavitree and St Mark. We are all very shocked to hear of his passing. His funeral took place on 22 November in Exeter. We hope to publish a full obituary at a later date.

Wendy Campbell

Aylesbeare Branch Guild Striking Competitions

As is usual now, the Aylesbeare Branch was able to put in multiple teams in the striking competitions. Withycombe Raleigh and Topsham entered the 6-bell competition, coming fourth and seventh respectively.

The Branch was able to put a team into the 8-bell novice competition with Mike and Margot as our novices, and they came out victorious, beating the others convincingly. Massive congratulations to them both and the rest of the band.

We then went on to ring in the 8-bell inter-branch competition with exactly the same band as the one in the novice competition. Although we came sixth in this one, we did complete the test piece, not something

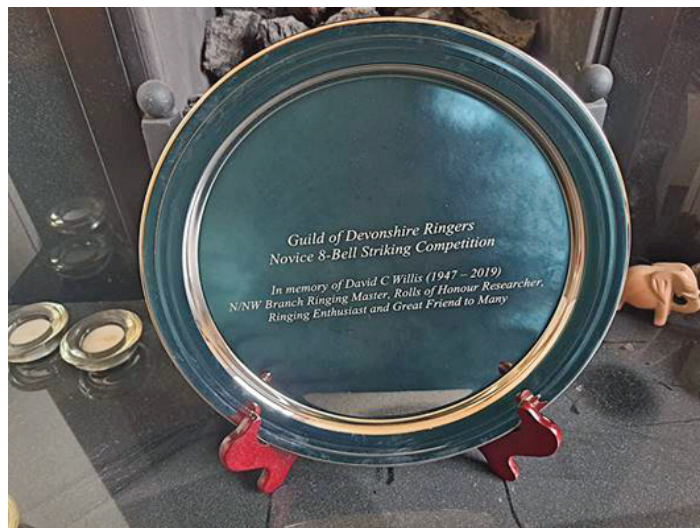
that all bands have managed over the years. Looking at the ringers in the other branches' bands, not one of them would have been eligible to enter the novice competition so this was a huge ask of Mike and Margot and they should be proud of themselves.

Congratulations go to everyone who took part, particularly those who were stepping up from the novice to the main competitions for the first time. We all know that the Branch is very small compared to the others but having these competitions as something of a focus through the year can have a very positive effect on the quality of everyone's ringing.

Janet Deem, Branch Secretary

Practice at Lymptone

November 9



The new David Willis trophy

I joined a very well attended branch practice here on 9 November. This was a new tower for me and I can only describe the bells as 'interesting'. Maybe a good place to hold a striking competition! Everyone present was catered for with ringing ranging from call changes to Cambridge. The superb David Willis trophy had only been received a few days earlier so it was decided to present this on the night to the winners of the inter-branch novice competition held at Dawlish only a few weeks earlier. I was honoured to be asked to present this trophy and the photo shows it being received by Margot Le Vesconte. Well done the Aylesbeare Branch.



Margot receives the trophy from Michael Cannon

Michael Cannon, Guild Master

Branch AGM

I would like to thank everyone who came to the AGM at Topsham. It was the best attendance in years! We had a very healthy discussion on the way forward for the branch and plans are already underway to put some of the ideas into practice.

Janet Deem, Branch Secretary

East Devon East Devon Branch 2022 Striking Competition

We all know that ringers have a wide range of hobbies, not just bell ringing, but it was still a bit of a surprise when one participant turned up, on what was possibly the hottest day of the year, carrying a wetsuit!

Covid is still having an effect and for some time there was a question mark over whether or not the competition would go ahead. As it happened eight teams turned up on the day, competing either in class 1 for regular tower teams or in class 2 for teams of any composition.

This being the season of summer weddings several (most) teams asked that they be given a dispensation and allowed to ring later. This was agreed but made a mockery of the draw as it resulted in the team drawn sixth having to ring second!

At Combe Raleigh the garden of the Barton has a gate directly into the churchyard and the Guinness family being away on holiday kindly allowed us to erect a large gazebo on their lawn and serve tea and cake in their garden. It was also a delightful spot to quietly sit and listen to the ringing. The cakes were pretty good too!

Eventually all eight teams had their time on the bells and the judges, Richard Coley and Laurie Palmer from Ottery St Mary, passed judgement. First we received their comments on each team's ringing which were mostly complimentary and with some useful advice for the future. As an example, after describing one team's ringing as very good they went on to say it was 'rung at a stately pace' and pointed out that it was easier for the judges to spot minor slips than it would have been had it been rung at a faster pace. Teams eagerly awaited the final positions which saw Honiton St Paul with 9¼ points as winners of Class 1 for tower bands, winning the Edward Summers Memorial Shield. Combe Raleigh were second with 15¼ points and Axminster Old Lags third with 52½ points. Axminster Spring Chickens and Colyton also took part.

In Class 2 (Open) the 'It's a Surprise' team with 4 points won the Alan Tucker Memorial Bell. Axe Valley were second with 9 points and East Devon Ladies third with 10¼ points.

All agreed it had been a very enjoyable afternoon and now look forward to next year's competition. Oh! I almost forgot, what about the wetsuit? Some of our number swim all the year round and one had just collected a new wetsuit in a local store's summer sale, all ready for next winter. Plan ahead, I say.



Class 1 winners, Honiton St Paul (Kathie Matthews, Theo Millard, Ian Rees, Alison Phelps-Beaumont, Kirsten Hawkins, David Brewer)



Class 2 winners 'It's a Surprise' (Theo Millard, Ian Rees, Patricia Slade, Lisa Clarke, Kirsten Hawkins, Peter Simpson)

Trevor Hitchcock

Jubilee Ringing in East Devon

Axminster



The Jubilee ring provided a great opportunity for Axminster. By the end of 2021 our band was unable to manage our heavier bells, and despite having a fabulous ring of ten we could not ring them together without importing help. Our January recruitment campaign yielded five new recruits, with four of them sticking with it and completing their training by the end of March.

Until the end of 2021 our staple ringing had been on the front six, so the leap from six to ten was enormous, with the Jubilee providing a focal point for us to work towards ringing all ten bells with just home band ringers. This mission had the effect of rekindling interest from a couple of good ringers who had stopped turning up regularly. With lots of determination over the preceding months we were able to perform rounds and call changes on ten to a respectable standard over the weekend.

Our 19:52 to 20:22 performance was co-ordinated with the town council's 'Lighting of the Beacon' ceremony. This provided a good audience to show off our capability with 14 ringers in attendance.

Peter Simpson

Colyton

I am happy to report that we rang call changes for the Queen at Colyton. We had nine ringers so that we could ring on eight bells and have a caller standing out which worked very well for us. Keith called the Devon 8-bell Queen's competition piece and then John called Dover White Cliffs Bob Triples, which in all took slightly longer than the intended 19:52 to 20:22 time slot, but nobody minded and sherry and nibbles were enjoyed afterwards.

Our ringers were Keith Smith, John Bass, Kathie Matthews, Maureen Davey, Chris King, Dave Webber, Anne Burn, Fr Steve Martin and myself.

Patricia Slade

Offwell



L to R: Clare Griffiths, Helen Sutton, John Tristram, David Pavey, Paul Hutchinson, Wendy Wayne

Uplyme

Rounds and call changes rung at 13:00 for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. New ringers Donna and Amber rang on six for the first time. The ringers were: Donna Heath, Amber Hussey, Andy Jarvis, Anne Burn, Jo Clarke, Janice Hodge, Matthew Smith, Peter Merson.



New ringers Donna and Amber as they appeared on the front cover of the Jubilee edition of *The Ringing World*

'Ringing Recovery'



Sue with Anne Bailey at Farway

Mine was a different type of ringing recovery... not getting back to ringing after various long breaks because of Covid. No, back to ringing after a hip replacement operation, just over three weeks previously.

It was East Devon Ladies' Wednesday ringing morning on November 9, organised by Kathie Matthews. And it was brilliant.

First I doffed the crutches to grab a rope at Gittisham to ring rounds and call changes. The only tricky bit was a couple of the few outdoor steps to access the tower. But once in the spacious ringing chamber it was all OK. And what a splendid view of the beautiful church. And its resplendent kneelers. Then, confidence boosted, I grabbed the tenor at the ground floor ring in Farway, covering for a touch of Grandsire, then a spot of Plain Hunt. All most enjoyable, and the shiny new hip kept me secure and solid whilst I rang. Not bad for just 22 days after my operation. All praise to Exeter's new Nightingale hospital, and my theatre team - including 'Robbie the Robot' - who did such an amazing job.

I missed the beautiful mediaeval bells at Northleigh as I had other commitments, but will look forward to it another time. Coffee and cake at Combe Garden Centre was magnificent. Thanks for organising such an excellent morning's ringing, Kathie, and thanks, everybody, for your great company.



Coffee time

Sue King

Hand bell ringing at Whitford Village Show 6 August



Pictured at Whitford Show - as well as Trevor Hitchcock and Kathie Matthews - is a chap called Andy, a music teacher from an island off South Korea.

He was most excited at the idea of introducing handbell ringing into his music lessons. We also rang Rounds and Queens with several interested visitors, including a group of very keen youngsters. Yay! Tried some tunes but they were less successful and more practice is needed as I can't ring two Handbells, conduct and read music notation at the same time! Also had a go at Plain Hunt on six with a couple of tower bell ringers who had

never rung handbells. Great fun. Like tower bells, the hardest bit with starting to ring handbells is learning to handle your bell and strike it correctly. Interesting, yes? All in all, it was a really nice afternoon. A good test of focus and concentration with so many interesting and exciting other things going on. Not least the Shanty singers, brass band and exciting dog show announcements. Very pleased to be invited to attend by show organiser and local ringer Maureen Davey.

Sue King

Honiton Outing

24 September



L to R: Ian, Kathy, Lisa, Anne, Derek, Kirsten, David, Theo

For most, it was a Saturday much like any other. But for the inhabitants of five small towns, it would be a day long remembered for the reverberating sounds of bells swallowing up the air of the village and treating the ears to the wonderful noises of campanologists at work. Upon that day, the ringers of Honiton St. Paul and their various regular visitors set out to take the wonderful sounds of their ringing to Dorset. And so it was that we arrived in Bradpole at ten o'clock, hands itching to grab hold of sallies. Coincidentally, the ring of eight found within Holy Trinity church were the perfect chance to practise Grandsire Triples for the upcoming striking competition.

Following that, we made our way towards Loders, wherein was found the church of St Mary Magdalene. Though the bells were muffled and we were barred from ringing the tenor, we made do and the other bells proved heavy enough. Though the noises maybe weren't as clear as usual, the striking seemed on point throughout our Plain Bob Doubles and we managed to leave satisfied.

In contrast, the church of St Martin in Shipton Gorge provided a less challenging experience, light bells found there in abundance, and all ready for use. We took full advantage to serenade the village, ensuring that the ringing barely stopped for all the time we were there and easily working up an appetite as the fruit of a long morning.

By this point, much energy had been expended in the pursuit of our beautiful music, making it the perfect time to indulge ourselves with a meal. As soon as we were able to find it, those in cars beaten there by the walkers, our merry band stopped at the New Inn in Shipton Gorge and filled ourselves to bursting, purchasing the very last of the ham, egg and chips as we did so. The food came relatively quickly, allowing us to stay on schedule, mouths alternating between wolfing down bites and exchanging friendly conversation.

Stomachs fully replenished, the ringing continued. This time in Burton Bradstock at the church of St Mary. Following a touch of Grandsire Doubles, we were informed by our greeting in the tower how they rang 'slow' Grandsire in the tower themselves. The practice of using cards on the wall was new for us all and provided a new avenue of ringing to pursue once we had got our collective heads around the method. Each ringer had their own poster to follow, with the direction needed to change noted next to a number. When the conductor called the number, all the changes were made at once, thus ingeniously combining call changes and method ringing. Despite initial difficulty, the band quickly adapted and provided the surroundings with Grandsire in a second style.

We approached our final tower with heads held high and closed out our ringing in style at St John the Baptist in Symondsbury. It was decided not to challenge our taxed minds and we stuck to simple Doubles

methods, focusing more than ever on accurate bell placement and providing a good account of ourselves for any listening.

And so, as often happens later on, the day drew to a close. However, though the ringing was finished, our outing was not quite, as we all settled down in Symondsbury Kitchen for warm drinks. These were, of course, necessary to wash down any stray crumbs of our cakes. The refreshments combined with genial conversation to provide the perfect capstone to our tour of Dorset. And as the sun set, we looked over our shoulders and were joyous as the chiming of bells softly faded into the evening.

Many thanks to all present, particularly Ian Rees who did such a wonderful job of organising everything, and the towers who allowed us to ring there.

Theo Millard

East Devon Branch Meeting

St Michael's, Shute 8 October



Representatives from Kilmington, Axminster, Sidmouth, Ottery St Mary, Dunkeswell, Colyton, Combe Raleigh, Feniton, Offwell, Honiton and Shute enjoyed an afternoon of ringing at St Michael's church. All abilities were catered for, culminating in a touch of Cambridge rung by some of our more experienced members before a service mindfully conducted by the Vicar, Julie Lomas. Could the afternoon in this wonderful setting get any better? Oh yes, tea! A big thank you to Shute ladies for an excellent spread.

Finally there was a brief business meeting and three new members joined the Guild.

Anne Burn

Sidmouth Tower Outing



The happy band at Wellington St John

Jon Rose kindly agreed to organise a tower outing for the Sidmouth ringers and friends on Saturday 19 November to ring at some of the churches in West Somerset where he was an associate priest before moving to Sidmouth.

Eighteen ringers met bright and early at 8.15am on a crisp Autumn morning at The Triangle to wait for the coach to come and pick us up and take us to our first village church at Crowcombe, where we were met with a warm welcome and offered refreshments of tea and coffee and tasty cake and biscuits at the fine medieval Church House opposite the church.

The church has a pleasant-sounding anti-clockwise ring of 6 bells, (tenor weighing 17-3-18), where we rang for an hour including rounds, Grandsire and Plain Bob Doubles and Plain Bob Minor.

Next up was Minehead St Michael, where we had a chance to ring on the newly refurbished ten bells (tenor 22-0-23) for an hour. We managed among other things to ring half a course of Yorkshire Surprise Major, before making our way to The Old Ship Aground Inn by the harbour for what turned out to be a very pleasant lunch.

For our afternoon ringing, we headed back inland to Sampford Brett. Here, once again, we were made very welcome with more delicious homemade cakes and tea/coffee. This time, instead of going up a narrow staircase to an upstairs ringing chamber, we went back outside the church

round to the right to find a ground floor ring of 6 bells (tenor 7-2-10) with double doors open to the churchyard. Again, we rang to cater for all needs, including a course of Cambridge Surprise Minor.

After another successful hour of ringing, we made our way to our final church of the day at Wellington St John with its ring of eight bells (tenor 19-1-5). There I learned the names for the different numbers of bells:-

- Singles, Doubles, Triples, Caters, Cinques for ringing on an odd number of bells - 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11 bells respectively; and
- Minimus, Minor, Major, Royal and Maximus for ringing on an even number of bells – 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 bells respectively.

The last ring of the day was a very musical short touch of Stedman Triples, enjoyed by all ringing and present.

By now we had enjoyed several hours of ringing at some beautiful village and town churches and it was time to make our way home. We arrived back in Sidmouth at 6.30pm after a successful and satisfying day's outing. We will have many happy memories of our day in West Somerset.

Lesley Houghton, Sidmouth tower secretary

Exeter Branch Busy time for ringing at Exeter Cathedral

Following the passing of HM Queen Elizabeth II it was a very busy ten days for us all, and even with our local tower commitments we have proven once again to be very adaptable: cancelling a couple of weeks of ringing; tolling with 24 hours' notice with a TV crew in attendance; reinstating some ringing that was then required; lowering all the bells and fitting 27 muffles; raising the bells again and ringing for the Sunday memorial service; lowering the 11th to take off just one muffle before raising it again to ring a fully muffled quarter peal prior to the funeral; more tolling; and ending with a fully muffled peal and lowering all 14 bells again to remove all the remaining 26 muffles!

Many thanks to everyone that has been involved and made the last couple of weeks possible – it has been much appreciated by all and by the Cathedral.

Guild of Devonshire Ringers

Exeter, Devon, Cathedral Church of St Peter

Monday, 19 September 2022 in 3h 56 (40–3–19)

5039 Grandsire Caters

Composed by Albert M Tyler

- 1 Ian W Avery
- 2 Paul J Pascoe
- 3 Jennifer R Sparling
- 4 Kevin J Skillings
- 5 Ian V J Smith
- 6 Peter G Brown
- 7 Ian L C Campbell
- 8 Matthew J Hilling (C)
- 9 David Hird
- 10 Michael E C Mears

Rung fully muffled on the minor 10, with the tenor open at backstroke, on the day of the State Funeral of HM Queen Elizabeth II

Paul Pascoe, Secretary

I'd be very grateful if you might pass on my - and Chapter's – thanks for your incredible work over the weekend. The fully-muffled peal yesterday was an incredible tour-de force, especially after your ringing on Sunday and yesterday morning. I was glad to be able to live-stream the afternoon. So far, it's reached 787 people online.

James Mustard, Canon Precentor

If you are in Exeter on Sunday or Monday, do listen out for our bells. They will be fully muffled. This is something that only happens at the death of the Monarch, so we hope it's a sound you won't hear again for a good twenty years or so.

The Dean of Exeter Cathedral



Exeter Cathedral does York (at last)

29 – 31 October 2022



York Minster, with the Oratory Church of St Wilfrid in the foreground

One of the joys of bell ringing is that no two churches and no two rings of bells are the same. The Exeter Cathedral ringers tour of York underlined this diversity. The tour was originally planned in 2020, but like many other activities was delayed for two years by the Covid-19 pandemic. Thirty ringers travelled by car or by train, arriving in York on the evening of Thursday 28 October. Some spent the evening in their lodgings, some went to the practice at the Oratory and some went out to hunt for food and drink. It was half term week, and the run up to Halloween. The city centre was heaving with people. Groups on guided ghost tours of the city, and hundreds of individuals with torches searching in every nook and



The ringers assembling at St Lawrence, York

cranny around the Minster, trying to find one of the 125 'Ghosts' hidden by 'The Ghost Merchant' each evening. These little porcelain figures usually retail for between £10 and £25.

On Friday morning, we converged on the church of St Philip and St James, Clifton, for the first tower of the tour. After a good Devon-style raise and call change peal, a variety of methods were rung including York Surprise Minor.

A short drive or brisk walk (for the younger and fitter) saw us regroup at St Lawrence, Hull Road for some enjoyable general ringing on this very easy-going peal of eight bells. The bells were installed here in 1999 by the ringers of York to mark the millennium. Four of the bells, cast in 1947, were originally hung at the Charrington's Brewery in London. Interestingly, the original church was demolished in 1883 to make way for the much larger building seen today. However, the tower of the old church still stands forlornly in the churchyard.

After lunch, it was time for some more serious ringing with a peal and four quarter peals being successfully rung at different towers around the city. Full details can be found at: <https://bb.ringingworld.co.uk/event.php?id=15527>

Saturday saw us venturing to towers to the south of the city. The Minster Church of St Peter and St Paul at Howden must have been a truly magnificent building prior to the reformation. Sadly, following the dissolution, it became the parish church and fell into disrepair. Although the nave and tower were restored in 1855, the choir and chapter house (the last octagonal one to be built in England) remain in ruins. A fire in 1929 damaged the tower, requiring further restoration work which included the installation of a fine Taylor ring of eight bells. Amongst other methods we enjoyed Stedman Triples, Bristol Major and Double Norwich.

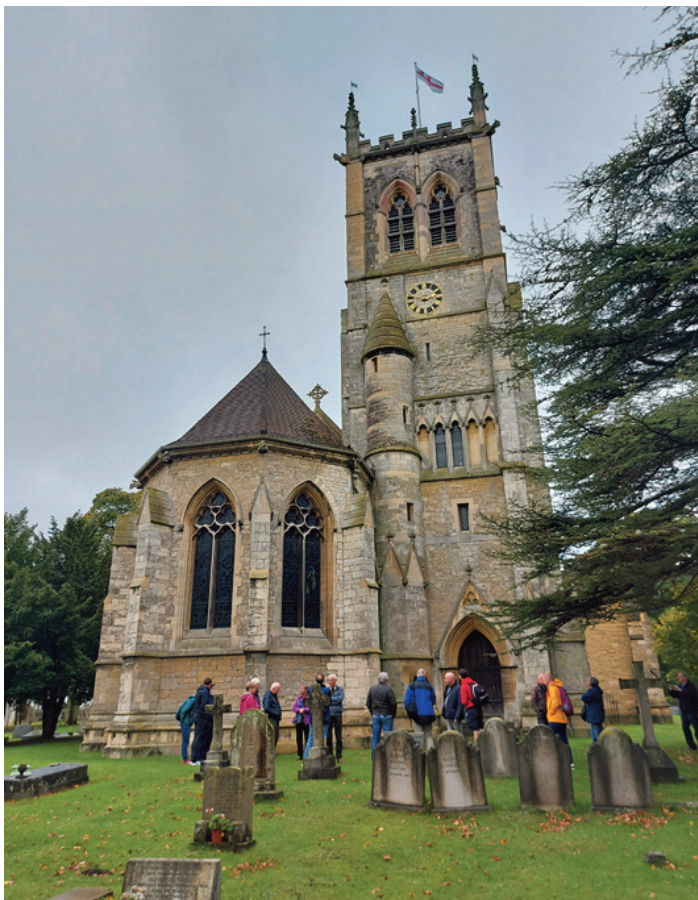
Selby Abbey is one of the few remaining abbey churches of the medieval period. It was ravaged by fire in 1906 and the peal of eight bells was destroyed. A new ring of ten was installed in 1907 and augmented to twelve in 1997. Everything from rounds to Spliced Maximus was rung.

The final tower of the day was the Oratory Church of St Wilfrid, back in the middle of York. There has been a church dedicated to St Wilfrid since medieval times. However, in the latter part of the 16th century, the church fell into disuse and was demolished. The first catholic chapel for public worship in York was built in 1760, but the present church was built on a nearby site in 1862. The church was designed in the Gothic Revival style and has been described as one of the most perfectly finished Catholic Churches in England. The tower contains a ring of ten bells. The back eight bells were cast by Gillet and Johnson for St John's Church Thornham in Lancashire in 1938 and were moved across the Pennines to York in 1993. The bells were subsequently augmented to ten in 1995. After a good ring including Grandsire and Stedman Caters, and Bristol Royal, we adjourned to the Duke of York for a most enjoyable group meal.

Sunday morning saw the group divided with some assisting the Minster band ringing for the morning service, while the remainder rang at St Olave's in Marygate. The bells here were the last peal to be cast by R Dalton of York in 1789 and were restored for full circle ringing in 1988 largely due to the efforts of Ron Dove (of Dove's Guide fame). There is a memorial to him in the ground floor ringing chamber at the west end of the church. Here, the ringing was in competition with a very good choir who were rehearsing at the other end of the church!

After a break for coffee (when we rather over-whelmed the staff of the Harlequin Café), some went to ring a quarter peal at St Lawrence, some supported service ringing at the Oratory Church of St Wilfrid, while others walked the city walls.

Sunday afternoon came, and what for many of us was the jewel in the crown, the chance to ring on the bells of York Minster. Another great set of bells cast by Taylors in 1925. The ringing ranged from rounds and call changes to Zanussi Surprise Maximus. While not ringing, many of the group took the opportunity to go up to the viewing platform to watch the bells turning over, and to enjoy the panorama of York from the rooftop.



The church of Escrick

The parish church of St Helen in the village of Escrick houses a ring of twelve bells which were originally hung in St Martin's in the Bull Ring in Birmingham. In 1991 the bells were removed in preparation for the installation of the new ring of sixteen. After a period of homelessness, with numerous plans that never materialised, the bells finally found a new home, and in 1997 they were installed in the small tower of St Helen's where it was a challenge to get all thirty of us to fit in! Once we got to grips with the bells we enjoyed some Grandsire and Stedman Cinques and Bristol and Zanussi Maximus.



Part of the York Minster Carillon amongst the ringing bells



The assembled group at York Minster

It seemed like no time at all before we were making our way back to ground level, saying our farewells, and dispersing to our respective

destinations. Arranging 16 ringing sessions over three days for 30 ringers (including five quarter peals and a peal) is no mean feat, and we are grateful to our Ringing Master Matthew Hilling for arranging the trip and to David Hull for his organisation at the York end. Of course, it was probably a 'walk in the park' for David compared with organising the Ringing World National Youth Contest! Over the course of the weekend, we had rung in churches that had been ravaged by fire, and on bells that had been moved from one tower to another, great reminders that 'where there is a will there is a way'.

Phil and Jane Dunn

Heavitree Christmas Dinner

In what is now becoming a tradition, ringers from Heavitree, Exeter, held their annual dinner on 8 December at the restaurant attached to Exeter College, which is used for training catering students. At Christmas they offer a multi-course dinner (I think it was just six this year) – most of which are small portions so that you still have room for the turkey and all the trimmings for the main course, four courses in!

The dinner was attended by sixteen ringers and their friends and was enjoyed by all.



L to R: Richard Johnson, Caroline and Russell Chamberlain, Michael and Lesley Cannon



David Hird with new hair arrangement

Mid-Devon Branch Branch AGM Bovey Tracey

The Mid-Devon Branch AGM was held at Bovey Tracey on Saturday 12 November, the first time to my knowledge it has been held there.

Open ringing took place from 3pm, with the service beginning at 4. This was well attended and enjoyed by all. The sermon was light but informative and based on the ringers' hymn, which we had sung heartily (including the descant in the final verse!) as the opening hymn.

An excellent ringers' tea was provided by the Bovey Tracey band - very many thanks to them, and especially tower captain Chris Dell, for all their hard work in making the afternoon such a success.

The main business of the day, the AGM, followed and was attended by 35 members. It was a delight to welcome the new Guild President Tim Bayton, along with the Guild Ringing Master, Secretary and Treasurer. Business was dealt with quickly and efficiently by Chairman Rodney Horder, including the award of Guild certificates to John Stern of Teignmouth and Judy Ferris of Upton, and the Edden Clapper trophy for progress this year was awarded to Teignmouth.

Under election of officers, the posts of chairman, secretary, treasurer, ringing master, librarian and IT officer remain for a further year. We were delighted to welcome Mike Wigney as deputy ringing master, Robert Law as branch representative and Katie Law, without portfolio, to the committee. Grateful thanks were recorded to Mike Tompsett, Jeanette Thompson, Cath Saunders and Ann Bailey, who all stepped down this year.

The Branch was very pleased by the welcome received at the Torbay Steam Fair, held on the first Saturday in August, and all agreed it was a good form of outreach. It was agreed to repeat the exercise again next year and we were encouraged to hear from Michael Cannon, who regularly attends with his steam engine, that the organisers were delighted with our presence and have decided to waive our entry fee next year!

The meeting closed at 6.15pm. Evening ringing at Kingsteignton was sadly cancelled due to many members having other commitments. Hopefully this part of the day can resume again next year.



John Stern receives his Guild Certificate from Tim Bayton



The Teignmouth ringers receive the Edden Clapper trophy from Michael Cannon

Nigel Birt, Mid-Devon Branch Secretary

Extracts from Mid Devon Tower Talk Autumn 2022

Raising and Lowering Course at East Ogwell

It is very pleasing that, not only do we get a full quota of 'students' for this course, but we always have enthusiastic helpers to repeatedly raise and lower bells. One of the aspects that make it so useful is the tips and hints that are given by experienced ringers – these are usually between each 'touch'. Feedback tells us that these are very much appreciated by those trying to master this very difficult aspect of ringing. Even experienced ringers find it doesn't always go to plan!! Plenty of stamina is required and once again we were very grateful to Janet for providing bacon rolls for our mid-morning break. The warm welcome we received from the correspondent at East Ogwell made the day even more special. It was also great to meet new faces and we look forward to seeing you again soon. There is no doubt that this is well worth repeating.

Branch Outing with a difference - Saturday 1 October

We advertised this outing as being an outing with a difference – not knowing how true that would be! Fortunately, we did not need to buy tickets for the proposed train outing until the day – in the event we coincided with a rail strike and so had to change plans. In the end we all went in cars, and it was such a pleasure to see so many members supporting this event. Another slight surprise was the number of ringers visiting new towers so close to home.

Due to problems getting towers most of the ringing was centred on Exeter. The first tower was St Thomas where the slightly cramped ringing room gave a few problems but we managed well in the end. On to St David's which are a pleasant eight and we produced some of our best ringing of the day. Due to train times we had been forced to have a long lunch break but with our change of transport we were able to add another tower. We are extremely grateful to the St Petrock ringers for making arrangements at the very last minute but a very enjoyable time was had on this light six in the very centre of Exeter. The final Exeter tower was St Mark's – now a ring of ten with its slightly cramped ringing room – but again we managed well on these very pleasant bells. The last tower was taking us down the river Exe to the delightful village (town?) of Topsham. This riverside spot has some lovely old properties, some of which show a Dutch influence. The ground floor ring was soon being put to good use and we finally managed a group photo here although some had left by the time it was taken.

Our final stop was for a meal at the Lighter Inn where our orders had been sent in advance, and a convivial evening was spent reflecting on a successful day with good ringing and excellent company.

Catherine Saunders is leaving Devon

As many of you will know, Cath is moving to Cambridgeshire very soon. We will miss her very much at St Marychurch in both tower and handbell (tune) teams and also in the Guild where she has been an enthusiastic member at branch and Guild level. All the very best for the future – we do hope you find somewhere to carry on with your ringing.

Mike's handbell exploits

During lockdown many of us kept up with ringing and each other by using a brand new website called Ringing Room. If you have tried it you will know that it is a marvellous tool but not without the occasional glitch. Some time ago we reported that Mike Tompsett had been linking up with others to progress his handbell ringing on eight bells and had pulled off the magnificent feat of a quarter peal in each of the standard eight methods. The other ringers were all over the country and even in France. When mentioning this last time I asked Mike if 8-spliced was next on the menu. Despite several near misses due to technical issues they finally achieved that milestone:

Ringing Room, UK and France

Sabarat, Wickford, Oldham and Paignton

Thursday, 17 November 2022

1280 Spliced Surprise Major (8m) Standard 8

1–2 Simon A Rudd

3–4 Paul A Cammiade

5–6 Peter C Randall (C)

7–8 Michael H Tompsett

First 8 Spliced in hand, 7-8

Many congratulations to him and we look forward to reporting more from this band.

A visitor to St Marychurch

The St Marychurch ringers were delighted to meet a ringer visiting Torquay again where she learned to ring with the Babbacombe ringers in the days of Don Roberts and Bill Simmonds.

The lady who came to ring with us at St Marychurch some Sundays ago was Judy Aplin who I knew at Babbacombe in the late 1950s as Janet Winkles. She was introduced as a learner at Babbacombe by Pam Stephens. She now lives in Banwell and rings there regularly. Previously she lived in Worle, rang there for many years and is still called up to ring there. On 1 January 1962 I have a footnote to a quarter peal of 1260 Grandsire Triples rung at Babbacombe as a wedding compliment to Janet Winkles (one time ringer at this church) and her husband, married at Holy Trinity, Torquay the previous Saturday. It was my first quarter of Triples as conductor.

Don Roberts



Don Roberts with Judy Aplin

Branch 8(?) bell practice Highweek

Was it the weather or the football, but we had an unusually poor turn out for this practice. We know that several regular attenders were away or otherwise engaged. As it happened there were a few issues with the bells including a metallic 'ching' on some strokes and the third bell being difficult to keep up. We are aware that there has been quite a bit of work on the mobile phone equipment in the tower and there is a possibility that this has had an effect on the bells. We therefore rang mainly on six with the second bell deputising for the third. It was particularly disappointing as our new Guild Education Officer (Christine Harris) had joined us from Plymouth. Please come again, Christine, we may even manage Pudsey – great to see how many had come prepared to ring it! Let us hope we are more successful at Babbacombe in the New Year.

Martin Mansley

News from Dawlish

The sudden news of the Queen's death came when the Dawlish tower captain and steeple keeper were away, but the rest of the band rose to the challenge, fully muffling the bells (tenor open at backstroke). Ten ringers rang on the day the news broke, and six more for a memorial service. Nicola and Kevin tolled the tenor on the day of Her Majesty's funeral.

In October, we were honoured to host two of the guild striking competitions, and put two teams in, coming sixth in the 6-bell at Bishopsteignton (pictured) and third in the novice 8-bell. Tea and cakes were served all day.

North-East Branch Heritage Open Days

Using 'HODS' for PR and Recruitment

The tower AGM resulted in a new ringing master (Michael) and tower secretary (Cath), although Lynne remains tower captain for now. This is future-proofing for Lynne and Phil's planned move away at some point. Kevin and Lindsay have taken over steeple keeping from Phil.

Ten members of the band are on the 'Learning the ropes' scheme. Recently, Lindsay passed her level 1 (bell handling), and Kevin passed level 3 (with a second quarter peal). Five members were elected to the Guild in November: Becky, Sonia, Hannah, Lindsay and Amrik.



Finally, we managed to get a picture of all eight ropes being manned, using a wide angle lens on a phone!

Lynne Hughes

An American visitor at Berry Pomeroy

At a recent practice night at Berry Pomeroy, Anne England brought along a visiting American friend, Tom Dunlop. He had no knowledge of ringing and was fascinated to see the bells and how they are rung. During the busy practice he was able to ring a few backstrokes to get an idea what a bell feels like, and he joined us for our regular post-practice session at the Church House in Marldon.

It was only later that we learned that Tom is both a writer and an actor, whose credits include a role in the film *Jaws 2*. It's probably a good thing that we didn't know this at the time, or we might have been too star-struck! One of the great things about ringing, though, is that status, occupation, gender, race, religion and other such attributes are of little importance because it is the simple fact that we are ringers that binds us together, and we tend to treat visitors in the same way. Of course, we're interested in where they are from and why they are here, but for a while at least, they have entered the world of ringing.

When I later asked Anne if she thought Tom would mind if I wrote a note on his visit for Tower Talk, she put me in touch with him and I thought it would be a great opportunity to get his impression of ringing. After outlining what an outstanding visit he had to the UK, this is what he wrote about his evening at Berry Pomeroy:-

Had you told me before I flew over that I would have the chance to be part of your rehearsal, I could not have accurately imagined any part of it. I think that if you ever actually see Jaws 2, you'll note that my role was pretty modest. But at the pub I would have done all I could to steer the conversation back to this wondrous craft you practise. That evening of rehearsal amazed me! In New England, my home, we don't have churches dating back six hundred years, and just climbing that tightly turning stone staircase up to the steeple, as the faithful have been doing since the 1400s, thrilled the historian in me. To see the great bells themselves, poised upside down for your practice, was a revelation — I had no idea that that's how they were set for ringing. The precision, strength, and patience required of the ringers to make each ancient pattern 'play' as it should, and hearing the bells sing out just over our heads in response, was mesmerizing. I am most grateful to the bell ringers of St Mary's church, Berry Pomeroy, for giving me this unique chance to get to know them and their wondrous skills. That's one night I will absolutely never forget.

*With best wishes to each and every one of you,
Tom*

We often are so used to what we do that it can be quite a surprise to hear the views of an outsider, particularly when expressed with the eloquence that we hear from Tom. Thanks again for this.

Michael Tompsett

Heritage Open Days (HODs) have been a fixture in the calendar of several Devon towers for a number of years. At St Peter's, Tiverton we have used HODs almost every year since 2014 and recruited several of our current ringers through those open days. We had run tower open events previously, but we find it beneficial to have the wider exposure and national branding which HODs give us. In the last two years we have also used Eventbrite, the event booking website, to manage our bookings and control numbers. There is no charge to use it for free events and we like the additional functionality Eventbrite gives us to publicise our open days and to communicate with those who book in.

Accordingly, weeks before this year's open day at St Peter's we had six tours of ten people fully booked. Everything was in place for Saturday 10 September. Then on the Thursday evening the news of the Queen's death broke. What to do? Possibly rather presumptuously we thought 'What would the Queen have wanted us to do?' and we decided she would have wanted us to go ahead, albeit with some due acknowledgement. The demonstration rings for all six parties were rung half-muffled, but otherwise nearly all our sixty booked guests appeared and had the full tour to the ringing room, clock chamber, bells and onto the roof for views of the town in glorious weather. Although we didn't immediately recruit new ringers (but who knows what seeds may have been sown?), we got a lot of appreciative comments and as a PR exercise it was a great success.

At Bampton, some of us ran a similar event the following afternoon for three groups of six. Access to the bell chamber is more difficult here, so our tour number had to be strictly limited. Again, Eventbrite proved really useful in controlling numbers and getting visitors into organised parties. Silvertown also held an open morning on the Saturday. They had distributed leaflets all around the village and as a branch we co-ordinated press publicity across the three locations.

With ringing to mark the Queen's death, for the open days and to celebrate the new King's accession on the Monday, it was an exhausting few days, but well worthwhile in terms of public relations. We used local Facebook pages to keep people informed of what we were doing and why. Next year's HODs event is already in the diary, but we hope we will be teaching people to 'Learn to Ring to Crown a King' before then.



St Peter's, Tiverton – clock room



Ringing demonstration at St Peter's, Tiverton



On the tower roof – St Peter's, Tiverton



View from the roof of the tower at St Peter's, Tiverton



Demonstration at Bampton

Les Boyce

South West Branch Branch Practice at Bridestowe

On 26 November the South West Branch met at St Bridget, Bridestowe for the final practice of the year. It was a grey and misty day, making the journey across Dartmoor from Plymouth particularly atmospheric! The practice on the six bells (13-0-15) was attended by ringers (and one ringer's dog) from across the Branch and it was particularly great to see learners getting to know ringers from other towers. The ringing ranged from rounds and call changes to touches of Cambridge, with something for everyone to enjoy. Helping to look after Pico the dog proved to be a popular activity while sitting out! This practice concludes our 2022 programme and we look forward to more opportunities to ring together in 2023.



Elena Brake

Branch Annual Dinner

The South West Branch held its 103rd Annual Service and Dinner on 12 November and a fantastic evening was had by all. The service was held at Buckland Monachorum, with open ringing immediately preceding the service. The service was beautifully written, and a great reminder of why we gather to ring the bells and the service we provide for the church.

Dinner was at the Yelverton Golf Club where the food and service was fantastic: there was an incredible amount of food and we all left feeling rather full. Thanks go to Trevor and Alena for organising another brilliant event.



Elena Brake

Learn to Ring to Crown a King

As I'm sure you are aware, the coronation of King Charles III will take place on 6 May 2023. This will be a time of national celebration, and it is hoped that the ringing of church bells will make an important contribution to the soundscape of these festivities. The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers (CCCBR) has estimated that in order to enable all the bells in the country to ring simultaneously, 8000 additional ringers will be needed, and it is promoting a 'Ring for the King' recruitment campaign. This is a tall order: by comparison, the Ringing Remembers campaign of 2017–2018 recruited about 3300 new recruits. Nevertheless, this is too good an opportunity to miss, and the Guild of Devonshire Ringers (through its Recruitment and Retention work group), will be promoting this campaign under the title 'Learn to Ring to Crown a King', which we feel is slightly more specific than simply 'Ring for the King'.

Because the needs and resources of towers differ around the county, the Guild is keen that recruitment should be organised at a more local (branch/cluster/tower) level. However, members of the work group will be happy to support and give advice.

It may be that you already have plans in place, in which case the work group would love to hear about them, so we can share ideas and encourage other branches. If you don't yet have any recruitment plans, perhaps you could start thinking about what you can achieve in your branch. Whether or not you already have plans in place, here are a few thoughts you might like to consider:

- How will you attract recruits? Where and when will you advertise? How might you use social media, open days, taster sessions etc? Are you trying to appeal to all age groups? If you

hold an open day, consider inviting your MP (or a significant local person) and ask if they will help you advertise your event/promote ringing.

- Is there an organisation you can partner with locally? The local Women's Institute, sports clubs, choirs/bands etc to help advertise and attract recruits. They may provide some other activity during an open day to help attract interest. Do you have any links with local schools?
- Where will events take place. Consider factors such as accessibility, toilets, a kitchen for refreshments, car parking, and a clean, welcoming environment.
- When will you hold an event? Time of day, weekday or weekend, during school term time or during school holidays? Can you piggyback onto another event happening in or around the church/alongside a local event?
- Will you have enough ringers and helpers? A mix of experienced ringers and newer ringers who can remember what it is like to learn can chat with potential recruits.
- Do you have supporting resources? Information leaflets, laptops with videos, using (borrowing) simulators, using the Guild mini-ring, demonstration bell and Guild information boards. If you need help finding appropriate resources, ask the Guild Education Officer/Publicity Officer/Work group for help.
- Consider providing some information about training options. This may help potential recruits make a commitment to learning to ring.
- Where will training take place? This need not necessarily be at the tower nearest the home of the recruit. Who will give the training? Do you have enough competent instructors?

'Taster' sessions can be very effective, but it is important to get contact details of potential recruits, because many who seem very enthusiastic fail to follow through after their initial introduction, unless further contact is made from the ringing community. The work group has created a GDPR compliant form, which you might like to use to collect contact details. If possible, try to find out a recruit's potential availability for training and if a more intensive approach to training with other learners would appeal to them.

Experience from ART and the Birmingham School of Bell Ringing has shown that those who learn as a group at dedicated practices are more likely to continue ringing and to make faster progress than those who are taught singly as part of a general practice. Intensive teaching at the early stages is strongly recommended.

You may have a particular tower in your branch which is best suited to teaching learners, both for the 'go' of the bells and the size/condition of the ringing room and other facilities. Consider choosing the tower which will give recruits the best possible learning experience, even if this is not their nearest tower. This is important if offering an intensive training option.

As with any event, communication is key. Some posters are available on the Guild website, which you may find useful either as they are, with minor modification, or as inspiration to create your own.

In addition, the Guild will have a fresh recruitment leaflet printed, which will be available early in the new year. Further publicity material is also available on the CCCBR website at: <https://cccb.org.uk/resources/publicity-material/>. And do tell us if you have any success stories or novel ideas!

Phil Dunn (phil.dunn.3cc@btinternet.com)

GDR Recruitment and Retention Work Group

ART Awards

In another sign that the world of ringing is returning to normal, the ART Awards are back. Do you know someone who's making a difference and making things happen? Then don't be shy. Say thank you by nominating them for an award, and if they win, they'll receive a substantial cash prize to spend on a ringing related activity or product.

It doesn't matter if they are an ART Member or have never even heard of ART, anyone can apply, anyone can be nominated and anyone can win. If you already have someone in mind, then fly over to: <http://www.ringingteachers.org/awards> and download an application form straight away. You have until 31 December 2022 to get your nomination in, so now is the right time to start collecting quotes, photos, statistics and testimonials, to show just how good your ringing hero is. More information here: <https://cccb.org.uk/2022/11/15/the-art-awards-are-back/>

Mark Elvers, ART

Help for Bell Maintainers

The Central Council Stewardship and Management Workgroup has announced the availability of a new online document aimed at the Steeple Keeper – the person responsible for keeping the bells in order. The aims of the document are:

- To help you understand the installation in your tower
- To describe the checks you should carry out to identify any problems
- To advise you on the maintenance tasks that you should be able to carry out, possibly with expert advice or assistance
- Most importantly, to help you recognise the tasks that require specialist knowledge from a bell hanger or other expert

The document can be found at:
<https://belfryupkeep.cccb.org.uk/>

John Martin (Guild Secretary)

Every single tower captain should read this and maybe even a copy for church PCCs as they often, if they are non-ringers, have very little idea of what is actually involved in keeping the bells in good order.

Michael Cannon, Guild Master

Notable Ringing Events

Peals

For the Queen



Picture from Jacob King/PA Wire/PA Images

Sadly, we had nothing to show for our second quarter peal attempt on 24 September after Her Majesty had died, but the peal successfully rung on 19 November serves to mark her Platinum Jubilee, to mourn her passing, and to celebrate the Accession of King Charles III (as appropriate for three attempts!). We hope a celebratory peal for his Coronation will be more timely:

Guild of Devonshire Ringers
Stoke Damerel, Devon, St Andrew
Saturday, 19 November 2022 in 3h 2m

5184 Plain Bob Major

Richard F B Speed

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 John C Mitchelmore | 5 Hellen V Williams |
| 2 John F Steere | 6 Mark F Williams |
| 3 Philip M Dunn | 7 Daniel T Calvert |
| 4 Elena L Brake | 8 Fergus M S Stracey (C) |

1st on 8 - 4

Rung in the Platinum Jubilee Year of Queen Elizabeth II to celebrate the Accession of King Charles III

Guild of Devonshire Ringers
Moretonhampstead, Devon, St Andrew
Saturday, 1 October 2022 in 2h 56

5088 Johnstone Castle Surprise Major

A J Cox

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1 John A Foster | 5 Michael C Hansford |
| 2 Charlotte A Boyce | 6 Fergus M S Stracey |
| 3 James Kirkcaldy | 7 John R Martin (C) |
| 4 Robert D S Brown | 8 Michael E C Mears |

Rung for the Accession of King Charles III

Rung a peal on every date in the year

Guild of Devonshire Ringers

Combe Raleigh, Devon, St Nicholas

Tuesday, 11 October 2022 in 2h 33

5040 Spliced Surprise Minor (13m)

(1) London, Wells (2) Westminster, Allendale (3) York, Durham (4,5) Annable's London, Norwich (6) Beverley, Surfleet (7) Ipswich, Bourne, Cambridge

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Peter L Bill | 4 John A Foster |
| 2 James Kirkcaldy | 5 David Hird |
| 3 Ian V J Smith | 6 Michael E C Mears (C) |

Completes the calendar:1

Rung in Memory

Guild of Devonshire Ringers

Bovey Tracey, Devon, Wobbly Bob's Campanile

Tuesday, 1 November 2022 in 1h 45

5040 Surprise Minor (10m)

1 extent each London/Wells, York/Durham, Beverley/Surfleet, Norwich, Netherseale, Bourne, Cambridge

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1 John A Foster | 4 Peter C Richards |
| 2 Peter L Bill | 5 Robert D S Brown |
| 3 Michael E C Mears | 6 David Hird (C) |

Rung in memory of Yvonne Porter and Nigel Mack.

First of Bristol Maximus

Guild of Devonshire Ringers

Withycombe Raleigh, Devon, St John the Evangelist

Saturday, 19 November 2022 in 3h 22

5040 Bristol Surprise Maximus

Composed by John S Warboys

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Ian W Avery | 7 Matthew J Hilling (C) |
| 2 Paul J Pascoe | 8 James Kirkcaldy |
| 3 Peter L Bill | 9 Richard Harrison |
| 4 Ian V J Smith | 10 John R Martin |
| 5 Timothy M Payne | 11 David Hird |
| 6 Stephanie E Hills | 12 Michael E C Mears |

First of Bristol S Maximus: 6

Quarter Peals

For the Queen

Stoke Damerel, Devon, St Andrew

Saturday, 28 May 2022

1260 Grandsire Triples

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Hellen V Richardson | 5 Christopher H Wardle |
| 2 John F Steere | 6 Daniel T Calvert |
| 3 Philip M Dunn | 7 Fergus M S Stracey (C) |
| 4 John C Mitchelmore | 8 Elena L Brake |

For the Platinum Jubilee of HM Queen Elizabeth II

Association of Ringing Teachers

ART Training Scheme

Another day course for teachers is planned in Devon in early 2023 led by ART Tutor, Les Boyce:

Module 1 (Teaching Bellhandling)

Sat 25 March – Chagford

Bookings can be made by registering at:
<https://events.bellringing.org/>

Module 1 is for ringers and existing teachers who wish to learn to teach or improve their teaching. Being a competent bellhandler yourself is the only entry requirement.

Courses run 09.15 – 17.00 and the fee is £25 plus a local cost for tower and refreshments.

Guild members can apply for course fees to be paid from the Education Fund – contact Les Boyce for details (lesboyce@gmail.com) or for more information about the course

First Quarter Peals

Many congratulations to Kevin Feaviour who rang his first quarter peal at Dawlish.

Dawlish, Devon, St Gregory
Friday, 4 November 2022 in 41m

1260 Grandsire Doubles

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Kevin Feaviour | 4 Phil Hughes |
| 2 Deborah Wallis | 5 Lynne Hughes (C) |
| 3 Michael Wallis | 6 Fiona Rock-Evans |
- 1st on the treble:1

Combe Raleigh, Devon, St Nicholas

Friday, 28 October 2022 in 46m

1260 Doubles (1p/2m)

60 Stedman, 720 Grandsire, 480 Plain Bob

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1 Maureen Davey | 4 Anne E Bailey |
| 2 Anne Burn | 5 Derek Ballard |
| 3 Lisa Clarke (C) | 6 Sarah Clinton |

Rung for the Devon Guild Ringing Festival, in support of the DCBRF. First quarter peal (6) at first attempt. Most methods (2).



The band l to r: Lisa, Anne, Anne, Derek, Sarah, Maureen

FIRST QUARTER PEAL FOR 44 YEARS

At Sampford Spiney practice on 14 September we were thinking what we could do to mark the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth. We decided to attempt a half-muffled quarter peal the following Saturday afternoon, albeit with some trepidation as it was some time since most of the band had rung one. Indeed, it was 44 years since Elaine had rung one, having only recently returned to ringing. Fortunately, everything went well and the quarter was achieved, made even more enjoyable by Kathy's refreshments afterwards.

Sampford Spiney, Devon, St Mary

Saturday, 17 September 2022 in 45m

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| 1 Edward C Cowd | 4 Katherine A Hayes |
| 2 Helen M Sims | 5 Ian V J Smith (C) |
| 3 Elaine E Cowd | 6 William (Bill) T Blowey |

First quarter for 44 years: 3.

Rung half-muffled in memory of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

What was even more appropriate, as we discovered afterwards, is that Ted's middle name is Charles and Elaine's middle name is Elizabeth.



L to R: Bill, Elaine, Ted, Kathy, Helen, Ian.

Other News

Radio programme on Loughborough Bell Foundry

A fascinating Radio-4 program about John Taylor & Co's bell foundry and some of their most iconic bells is currently available from BBC Sounds at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m001fwcz>. It includes a story about how Great Paul (17 tons) was cast in Loughborough in 1881 and transported to St Paul's Cathedral in London over eleven days where it was, apparently, hoisted up the stairs! And how the bell cast for the AC/DC band crashed through a stage in New York.

Ian Campbell

Historic findings from Rackenford

Following an inspection of the bells at Rackenford by the Guild Bell Advisors, Ian Smith turned up a cutting from *The Bell News* (precursor to *The Ringing World*) of January 5 1884. Two items are of interest:

...let us add a word of warning to parsons, churchwardens, and others who are about to have bells rehung, etc.: on no account allow the bellhanger to daub his stocks, wheels and stays with paint of any colour, for verily paint 'covereth a multitude of sins'....If painting is considered necessary it should not be allowed till after the work has been passed by those competent to judge, and have been appointed for that purpose; but to our mind nothing equals a good coat of varnish or two, or even linseed oil, renewed say, once a year.

To Messrs. Taylor was entrusted the fitting up of the bells, that firm supplying stocks, wheels, gudgeons and bearings, etc.; but to Mr. Harry Stokes, bellhanger, of Woodbury, Devon, was given the job of hanging them, and for that purpose a massive frame was constructed by him of well-seasoned oak presented by H. C. Devon, Esq.: the venerable rector, the Rev. E. Pole, with Mr. Yendell and others, being very energetic in raising the necessary funds. With the materials given him Mr. Stokes has done his work to the satisfaction of all concerned, the "go" of the bells leaving nothing to be desired. And here let us add a word of warning to parsons, churchwardens, and others who are about to have bells rehung, etc.: on no account allow the bellhanger to daub his stocks, wheels, and stays with paint of any colour, for verily paint "covereth a multitude of sins." Of course the majority of bellhangers can safely be trusted to use none but the very best materials, but still it is best that the woodwork should be seen in its native freshness by those who are appointed to pass judgment on the work. If painting is considered necessary it should not be allowed till after the work has been passed by those competent to judge, and who have been appointed for that purpose; but to our mind nothing equals a good coat of varnish or two, or even linseed oil, renewed say, once a year.

A numerous assemblage of round ringers attended from various parishes, and not a few from long distances, the parishes of Witheridge, Cruwys Morchard, Worlington, Puddington, Cadeleigh and Cadbury being represented. Among these several copies of the Christmas and back numbers of 'THE BELL NEWS' were distributed; many appeared only too pleased to receive them, but one individual to whom a copy was offered eyed it with evident suspicion, fearing that it might contain something referring to that horrible and deleterious invention, change-ringing, in his opinion no doubt a far worse and more dangerous invention than dynamite or other highly explosive substance.

Service being concluded, numerous six-scores of Grandsire were rung with some Minor, conducted by Mr. Coleridge and Mr. Munday; ringing being kept up till past four, when a public tea was held in the schoolroom, and at which a course of Grandsire Triples was rung on the handbells, much to the delight of a large audience. A numerous assemblage of round ringers attended from various parishes, and not a few from long distances, the parishes of Witheridge, Cruwys Morchard, Worlington, Puddington, Cadeleigh and Cadbury being represented. Among these, several copies of the Christmas and back numbers of "THE BELL NEWS" were distributed; many appeared only too pleased to receive them, but one individual to whom a copy was offered eyed it with evident suspicion, fearing that it might contain something referring to that horrible and deleterious invention, change-ringing, in his opinion no doubt a far worse and more dangerous invention than dynamite or other highly explosive substance; eventually, however, he accepted it, and let us hope it will be the means of stirring up in his manly breast a desire to learn the art, and persuade others to do so also. After tea more Doubles were rung, and the bells

I am pleased to say that this attitude seems rather less prevalent these days!

Ian Campbell

Call Change Update

With the change of monarch it would appear to be insensitive to continue ringing changes based on the Queen's change. It is therefore proposed that the well-known (at least in Devon) Queen's Peal used for 8-bell competitions be replaced with the equivalent King's Peal. To do this the bells first have to be called into the King's change (75312468), probably via Queen's (eg 6-7, 4-5, 2-3, 4-7, 2-5, 2-7 to Queens and then into Kings's 5-7, 3-7, 3-5, 1-7, 1-5, 1-3). Then each bell is called from the front of the change to the back as before, finishing back in Kings.

On six bells Sixty on Thirds will have to be changed to be Sixty on Kings in a similar way.

Ian Campbell

Note from Editor: I actually tried calling sixty on Kings at a recent wedding but it rapidly came up with Queens and then Rounds so it is not, perhaps, such a good idea. I have no idea if the King's peal proposed above would actually work satisfactorily! Perhaps you would like to try it and report back?

Previously unknown bell discovered



You can just make out the bell cote in the middle of the photo

The bell advisors received an unusual call from the primary school in Sampford Peverell. They had scaffolding around the school while the roof was being replaced, and they wanted to know if it would be safe to ring the old school bell which was hanging on the outside wall. Unusually it was not listed in the Devon Bells bible by John Scott et al so, having signed our lives away several times, the bells' advisors climbed up the scaffold wearing hard hats and steel-capped boots to inspect the bell.



The bell in its wooden bell cote

After a very close examination we discovered an inscription on the back of the bell, next to the wall, showing that it was cast by Mears and Stainbank (later the Whitechapel Bellfoundry) in 1905. Ian Smith

managed to find a catalogue from the founders from 1902 which suggested that such a bell, 12 inches in diameter, would weigh about 40 pounds (18 Kilograms).

The installation was found to be in a reasonable condition, considering that it had been outside for 120 years. Although the bell was a little loose on its headstock it was considered safe to ring, so the school is looking forward to using it regularly once the scaffold has been removed.

Ian Campbell and Ian Smith

Calendar of Events

January			
Tue 3	19:30	Triples and Major Practice, St Peter's, Tiverton	North East
Sat 7	10:00	Open Branch Practice, St Peter's, Tiverton	North East
Sat 7	12:00	Tower Captains' Meeting - with a bring and share lunch, St Peter's, Tiverton	North East
Sun 8	17:00	Open 10 Bell Service Ringing, Cullompton	North East
Fri 13	19:30	Surprise Major Practice, Pinhoe	North East
Sat 21	11:00	Guild Library opens, St Petrock's, Exeter	Guild
Sat 21	14:30	Guild General Committee Meeting, Newton St Cyres	Guild
Sat 28		Branch Activities and AGM, TBA	South West
February			
Sat 4	10:00	Open Branch Practice, TBC	North East
Tue 7	19:30	Triples and Major Practice, St Peter's, Tiverton	North East
Fri 10	19:30	Surprise Major Practice, Pinhoe	North East
Sat 11	14:30	Branch AGM and ringing, Honiton St Paul	East
Sun 12	17:00	Open 10 Bell Service Ringing, Cullompton	North East
Sat 18	15:00	Guild Library opens, St Petrock's, Exeter	Guild
March			
Sat 4	10:00	Open Branch Practice, TBC	North East
Tue 7	19:30	Triples and Major Practice, St Peter's, Tiverton	North East
Fri 10	19:30	Surprise Major Practice, TBC	North East
Sun 12	17:00	Open 10 Bell Service Ringing, Cullompton	North East
Sat 18	15:00	Guild Library opens, St Petrock's, Exeter	Guild
Sat 25	09:15	ART Training Scheme: Module 1 (Teaching Bellhandling) [weblink]	Guild Chagford

Editorial

We had just about got over the Queen's jubilee, with all sorts of extra ringing (some reported here) when I had long phone call on the afternoon of September 8 with Jane Flaxington (Thorverton) asking what the ringing protocol was when the Queen died. She must have known something that I didn't – the news of the Queen's death came at 6.30 that evening. I just had time to get up the tower at Heavitree to put on the muffles in time for the practice that night. In the event we rang a couple of touches and then the fourth clapper broke, but that is another story.

As with many others, I was not clear of what was needed in terms of ringing but a note describing 'Operation London Bridge' soon arrived from Exeter Cathedral and gave us details of what they required. I had told Jane to do her best with the resources that she had. So what with tolling a single bell, ringing fully muffled (with tenor open) and then ringing open for the proclamation of the King and with muffles back on for the funeral, the ringers all over the county did their bit. Some of this is recorded in this issue. And once this was all over, we had to put the muffles on again for Remembrance Sunday!

The striking competitions were held in October on a pleasant autumn day in the Mid Devon branch. It was lovely to see so many friends there after the austerity of Covid and a lovely tea was laid on at Dawlish.

On a sadder note, I attended two funerals in a week for ringing friends. Yvonne Porter became Guild Secretary a few years after we moved to Devon and I always saw her in that role. Nigel Mack was a more competent ringer than many people gave him credit for and helped us out at Heavitree on many occasions, including weddings and practices. A week or so after his death we heard the downstairs door at Heavitree bang near the end of the practice and the immediate response was 'it must be Nigel'.

For those that see the paper copies of Ringing Round Devon I hope that you enjoyed the last issue which we decided to print in full colour throughout because of the large number of pictures. This edition is unique because the page layout is being done in Hong Kong – John Foster is out there staying with his son who lives there but was happy to take his laptop and manage it all remotely.

On a separate note, some articles that were submitted didn't make it to the last issue because they were sent to the wrong email address. Please send all articles to newsletter@devonringers.org.uk or to my private address if you prefer. I will acknowledge receipt of all articles within a few days of them arriving.

Finally, Christmas is also a time of ringing for special services and festivals. It is a wonderful way of being a part of the community in which each of us lives. I wish you all a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Ian Campbell

First Peal at Exeter Cathedral by a Local Band
Western Times 16 January 1905



Details of the peal

DEVONSHIRE RINGERS AT EXETER CATHEDRAL

On Saturday evening a peal of Grandsire Caters, consisting of 5,003 changes, was rung in 4 hours and 13 minutes on the bells of Exeter Cathedral by the following representatives of the Guild of Devonshire Ringers: Messrs. Edwin Shepherd (Exeter), treble; Alexander Evans (Exeter), second; Wm. G. Hiscott (Plymouth), third; Ernest W. Marsh (Plymouth), fourth; Arthur W. Searle (Exeter), fifth; John Baker (Ottery St. Mary), sixth; Edgar Manning (Plymouth), seventh; Frank Davey (Exeter), eighth; G. Harry Myers (Plymouth), ninth; Wm. Ford (Plymouth), and Frank Murphy (Exeter), tenor.

The peal, Reeves' composition, was conducted by Mr. Edwin Shepherd. It is the first ever scored on the Cathedral bells by ringers resident in Devon, and is the longest in point of time yet accomplished upon them.

The striking after the initial stages had passed was considered excellent by numerous outside critics, and the effort aroused much interest in ringing circles, as the feat requires much skill and substantial staying power. The bells are, of course, the heaviest peal of ten in the world. The tenor alone weighs 72cwt.



The peal band from 1905

Note from editor: the bells were not augmented to twelve until 1923.

Ian Campbell

Some more pictures from the Guild Striking Competition



The church at Bishopsteignton



The Tavistock 6-bell band





The Exeter Cathedral 6-bell band



The Neal family from Broadclyst enjoying tea



Our very own Father Christmas (John Langabeer) – a few years ago!

Merry Christmas from Hong Kong



Seen in a shopping mall in Central district



View from the Peak



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