



RINGING ROUND DEVON

GUILD OF DEVONSHIRE RINGERS

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SAMPFORD SPINEY – A DREAM REALISED

One day, back in the 1980's, one of our local GPs breezed into the pharmacy at East Grinstead Hospital where I then worked, asking if I could help him out with a few bits and pieces he needed for his practice. As usual, when he left, he cheerily said: "Anything I can do for you, just ask!" This was quite a common occurrence; but that day I decided to take him up on his offer. Knowing he was an artist, and that he had just had an exhibition in town, I said: "Yes, how about one of your pictures." Several days later he appeared carrying a selection of oil-paintings. I chose one, a delightful rural scene: on the back was written – "Sampford Spiney, near Tavistock, 1978." I had it framed and it took pride of place in our drawing room.

Some years later, in 1991 we were staying with Duncan and Heather Weaver, former East Grinstead ringers who had relocated to near Torrington. Whilst with them, we did some walking on Dartmoor and, finding ourselves in the Merevale area, noticed the name Sampford Spiney on the map not far away. After our walk we drove round and found the exact spot from which our picture had been painted, and then visited the church. Being ringers, we turned immediately to the base of the tower. Everything looked pretty derelict – the remains of five ropes in various stages of decay, a rusty rope guide and plenty of cobwebs amidst the normal detritus of a disused belfry. Indeed, in the Devon Bellringers Handbook published at that time was the entry under Sampford Spiney of "Unringable. Not likely to be restored." That seemed pretty final. However on our next visit, in 1994, I was delighted to find a notice in the church porch giving details of a plan to restore the bells and augment them to six. The plan, hatched in 1992 by a local parishioner, though outside the auspices of the PCC, was abandoned in 1996, for reasons that remain unclear.



5 down. Reg with the old bells, etc.



Roger & Reg manoeuvring the tenor

And so things remained, with just the odd attempt to ring or chime the bells for special occasions, until 2004 and the Aune Head Arts project to make recordings of all Dartmoor's bells... the story continuing in a report in RRD70, March 2008.

Finally, after three and a half years of negotiations the order for the restoration of the bells was placed, and on Monday 7th April Nicholson Engineering arrived in the form of Reg McKenzie with volunteer helpers Ian Smith, Rob Franklin and Roger King, ready to dismantle the bells and frame.

Local builder Dave Woodhouse had already constructed a new trap door in the floor of the intermediate chamber and had removed an RSJ which was obstructing the removal of the bells. By the end of that day two bells were already on the floor, the remaining three following the next morning. The team fortified by lunch provided by Ros Pugh at Sampford Manor, turned their attention to the bell-frame and finally the floor. Much of the frame was acquired by Dave for use in his work, and some of the fittings were sold off as mementos for a modest sum! On Thursday morning, with the help of local tractor man – another Roger – the bells were loaded onto the lorry, which duly got bogged down in the soft grass, having to be towed out. Thus the first phase was over.

No local ringing had been done at Sampford Spiney for as long as anyone could remember, and the next task was to find some potential ringers and train them. John Pugh did a marvellous job delving around in the undergrowth of Sampford Spiney and Horrabridge and found no less than seven people who admitted to having rung before and several others to be taught from scratch. John himself confessed to having learnt to ring over 50 years ago at West Wickham in Kent, where his father was a ringer. Others included Bill and Nicola Blowey who rang at Lamerton, Jan Cooper who learnt in Dorset and has rung more recently at Marystowe and Lamerton, Bill Mullery who formerly rang at Modbury and Buckland Monachorum, Anne Stuartridge who learnt in Hertfordshire, but had not touched a rope for upwards of 20 years, and Keat Cawrse who formerly rang at Lezant just over the Tamar. (We have since been joined by Rita Hopwood from Walkhampton.) Starting from scratch were Ros Pugh, Helen Sims, and Peg and Dave Hall.

Practices were started on Wednesday evenings at Tavistock in mid July, alternating between using the two dumb-bells for initial teaching, and the front six bells as practice for the ready made ringers. Steady progress was made during the summer such that when their own bells were due back, the Sampford Spiney ringers could ring very competent rounds and simple call-changes; albeit with the odd prod from Ian. Ros and Helen were very nearly at the stage of handling on their own as well.



Ros and John Pugh hoisting their bell.



Ringling on the first Sunday after installation.

Next came international recognition when, at the beginning of September, the complete bell installation was on display at the Ringing Roadshow at Stoneleigh Park in Warwickshire, as described in RRD September 2008. Never before has a ring of bells been seen by so many people!

September 15th saw the arrival of the main supporting beams and the bell-frame, accompanied again by Reg McKenzie and the volunteer working party, this time including Ian Campbell, all looking forward to more cordon bleu dining at the Manor. In the interim Dave Woodhouse had cut the pockets and laid the pad-stones for the sub-frame – so accurately that Reg thought his spirit level was playing up. Another three and a half days and everything was assembled, albeit with some grunting and #####ing. (As Andrew Nicholson said, it's really just a big Meccano set!) Then came a week's respite while Dave constructed a new floor under the bells, and back-filled the pockets..... or so we thought!

The following Tuesday Ian was having a meeting with John Pugh at the Manor discussing the way forward, when Dave knocked on the door. "Everything's finished; I've just done the floor. By the way, who's back-filling the pockets?" After a stunned silence John and I said: "You are!" "Hm," said Dave: "I'm off to Barcelona with Pat tomorrow." Miraculously he was able to offload his afternoon job, rustle up some more help, and by the end of Wednesday everything really was done.

And so to the exciting bit, the arrival of the new bells. We were all there waiting before 10 o'clock on Monday 29th September... and we waited... and waited, cameras poised. An hour later, still nothing. Eventually, just before 12 noon the van arrived. Believe it or not, the driver who had successfully delivered the bell-frame two weeks earlier had forgotten the way to Sampford Spiney, got lost, been directed across narrow bridges he could not possibly negotiate, and had taken nearly 4 hours over the journey from Bridport. Anyway, he was here now, tractor man was summoned, and amidst many clicking shutters the bells were unloaded and placed in the base of the tower before lunch was taken, this time courtesy of Ros's daughter Joanna.

The next three and a half days went more or less to plan, the highlight on Tuesday being Ros and John Pugh operating the chain hoist to lift their own bell into the tower. By Thursday all

that remained were a few minor adjustments, fitting ceiling bosses, adjusting the rope guides and touching up the paintwork. By mid afternoon the job was done, and Devon had a brand new ring of six.

The try-out was planned for 6 o'clock on the Friday evening. All the local band were there, plus Andrew Nicholson fresh from a bell inspection at Egg Buckland. Also present were Guild President Lester Yeo, SW Branch Chairman Geoff Hill, Rogenia Bond from Whitchurch, Wendy and Ian Campbell, Roger King and Ian Smith. Sadly Reg McKenzie and Rob Franklin were unable to make it. The bells were raised after which the Rector Geoff Lloyd said a prayer. The local band rang rounds and call changes, and the "experts" rang Stedman Doubles and Cambridge Minor. All agreed that they are a cracking ring of six, one of the best light rings in the county.

Now the hard work begins! One slight dampener was that, shortly before the bells were installed, it was learned that one local resident was not too keen on her peace and quiet being shattered by the sound of the bells. Ironically her husband has been a great supporter and benefactor of the restoration scheme. (I wonder if they sit indoors glaring at each other.) During the first week after installation the bells were rung for service on Sunday, practice on Wednesday, a funeral on Friday and a wedding on Saturday. Our complainant was unable to resist a few grumbles!

With this in mind it has been decided to introduce ringing 'gently', with the bells being rung for the 3 o'clock service on the first Sunday in the month (a single bell being chimed for the other services), and for practice on the second and fourth Wednesdays at 7.30 pm. This is partly an expedient measure to allow the continuation for the time being of dumb-bell practices for the beginners at Tavistock on the first and third Wednesdays.

With there being a fifth Wednesday in October (fortuitously coming in Guild Quarter Peal Week) the opportunity was taken to allow six Tavistock ringers to ring the first quarter on the bells.

Wednesday, October 29th, 2008, in 41 minutes

1272 Kent Treble Bob Minor

1	Donna Baker	4	Ann Smith
2	Geoff Hill	5	David Pike
3	Sheila Williams	6	Ian Smith (Cond)

We are sure that many will wish to ring at Sampford Spiney. For the time being any are more than welcome to join us for service or practice ringing. Hopefully in the New Year (and after a little diplomacy!) we may be able to open them up more fully.

For those wishing to update their copy of John Scott's book, the details of the bells are now as follows:

Ian Smith

Treble:

(Frieze around shoulder)

DEO GLORIA

THE CAMPBELLS OF EGGWORTHY

On reverse side:

1

20 (Whitechapel roundel) 08

WHITECHAPEL

Diameter (inches): 24 1/8

Note: F sharp

Weight: 3-0-13

2nd:

(Frieze) 2008 (Frieze)
 THE PUGH AND SPEDDING FAMILIES
 REVD GEOFF LLOYD – RECTOR
 MRS ROSALIND PUGH }
 SIR PETER BADGE } CHURCHWARDENS

On reverse side:

THE HARLAND FAMILY
 2
 20 (Whitechapel roundel) 08
 WHITECHAPEL

Diameter: 25 11/16 Note: E Weight: 3-2-11

3rd:

LLEWELLINS & JAMES
 BRISTOL

On reverse side:

JAMES HENRY RECTOR
 1890

Diameter: 27 3/8 Note: D Weight: 3-1-22

4th:

LLEWELLINS & JAMES
 BRISTOL

On reverse side:

JOHN GODDEN DONOR
 JAMES HENRY RECTOR
 1890

Diameter: 29 7/16 Note: C sharp Weight: 4-0-19

5th:

o AMBRES o FORTESQUE + IO + GODE WARDENS + I.P:1674
 (o = coins of Charles I, + = fdl cross)

Diameter: 30 15/16 Note: B Weight: 5-2-27

Tenor:

JOHN BOOWMAN IOHN DENNING GENT CHVRCH WARDENS 1653 TP.IP

Diameter: 33 3/16 Note: A Weight: 5-3-19

EXETER BRANCH AGM

This year's Exeter branch A.G.M. was held at Newton St Cyres' on Saturday 15 November beginning with ringing and followed by a service led by Revd. Dick Potter. Pam Miller was the organist and it was good to have two of our youngsters, Amy and Gareth Gill, assisting in the service.

The Church was having its Christmas Bazaar on the same afternoon so we were able to enjoy refreshments provided by their helpers. The meeting followed, beginning with silence in memory of Ena Ford and Valerie Oates. After the reports the following officers were elected:

- Chair – Ian Campbell
- Secretary – Heather Somerwill
- Treasurer – Lesley Tucker
- Ringing Master – Andrew Digby
- Asst. Ringing Master – Matthew Hilling
- Publicity Officer – Ken Vingoe
- Guild Committee Member – Michael Cannon

Rob Neal, Lucy Davis and Laurie Kirkcaldy were elected as new members. Amy Gill was awarded her Guild Certificate.

The meeting closed at 5.30 p.m. and some members went on to have an enjoyable time on two mini-rings, the Frank Mack Garage Ring, now located at Ian Avery's house in Kingsteignton, and 'Ting Tong' at James and Elaine Grant's home in Bishopsteignton.

Heather Somerwill



Getting to grips with the complexities of mini rings.



Twice the complexity.....



Tower ringing at Newton St Cyres.

NEWS FROM THE N/NW BRANCH

The Branch AGM was held on 1st November at Black Torrington. Attendance was disappointingly low but the few managed to successfully navigate the narrow Devon lanes to ring on the sixes at Bradford and Shebbear, before joining with others for the Service, tea and meeting at Black Torrington. It was good to welcome Lester to the Branch again, and our thanks go to the local Ringers for organising the day and providing an excellent tea.

The Branch hosted the Guild Striking Competition on 18th October. Congratulations go to our young band, based at Inwardleigh, for their success in winning the 6-bell competition rung at Abbotsham; unfortunately, the 8-bell inter-Branch competition had to be cancelled after the first band to ring at Appledore discovered that the tenor stay was damaged (and soon broken!).

About a dozen Branch Members enjoyed a day of **Quarter peals at Exeter** on Nov 22nd. The idea was to get a group together and have a concentrated attempt to achieve some “firsts” in methods – and it worked very well. We were grateful for Wendy Campbell’s help in organising towers, Ian for ringing with us, and Fergus Stracey for his expertise in Conducting – despite having to ring mostly one-handed! The result was success in 3 out of 4 attempts with firsts in Lincolnshire, Stedman Caters and Yorkshire – the latter being Tom Waterson’s first as Conductor for a surprise major method. And a first ring on the superb Heavitree bells for a couple of people!

Finally, many congratulations to two Combe Martin ringers. We rang 5060 of Plain Bob Major on Saturday 6th December with Kevin Brooks on the treble for his very first peal, and Mike Squires getting his first peal on an inside bell.

Bruce Hicks
N/NW Branch Secretary.

CHILD PROTECTION – 2006 ACT UPDATE

Summary

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 affects both employers and voluntary groups engaged in activities with children and with services to vulnerable adults. The provisions of the Act are due to come into force on 12th October 2009; an initial review of the likely effect on ringing was given in the Ringing World, 2nd May, page 493. A follow-up article appeared in RW September 12, pp 962-963 and can be found at:

<http://www.mikechester.demon.co.uk/CoventryDG/childprotection.doc>. This clarified the areas of ringing that will fall within the Act and the extent to which adult ringers may have to be registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). Two sections (Local scenarios and The way forward) are reproduced below, and readers are encouraged to study the whole article. A further update in RW is planned for May 2009.

Local scenarios

Tower with no juniors being taught - no ISA registered person required

Tower with junior learners - at least those in charge to be registered, 16/17 years olds involved with teaching would also require registration

Tower with no learners of its own but which hosts regular visits by juniors from neighbouring tower (s) – ISA registered person required, this could be at the host tower or a registered adult accompanying the junior visitor.

Guild and Association meetings – ISA registered persons not legally required

Guild and Association training days and summer schools - persons involved with one to one teaching must be ISA registered.

The way forward

The intentions and application of the 2006 Act as it affects ringers is now becoming clearer and Guidelines will be issued by the DCSF (Government Department for Children Schools and Families) on definitions for regulated activities and exemptions thereto. A window of contact has been made between the implementing Government Department and the Central Council through its Tower Stewardship Committee (of which I am a member) will seek to ensure that a workable system is agreed. Similarly, close contact will be maintained with the Church of England to ensure that interpretation of the legal requirements is consistent across the Dioceses.

In the meantime individual towers, their parent parish councils and local Guilds and Associations need to be prepared so that as far as is possible to comply with the legal requirements applicable from October 2009. To this end a first step may be to arrange their own register of ringers currently CRB checked as a starting point.

Further relevant information will be advised as received but, on a personal basis, if anyone has questions I will endeavour to answer them and can be contacted on 01926 402273.

Chris Mew

On behalf of the CCCBR Tower Stewardship Committee

SUCCESSSES IN EAST DEVON.

Here, in East Devon we have been trying to ring a quarter peal every month, for anyone who would benefit. This usually means a first for one of the band: first QP, first on the treble, first inside, or a first in method. Last year we recorded a First QP for Graham Fish (Feniton), First QP for Sue Tucker (Farway), First QP inside for Hannah Barrows (Feniton).

Naturally we don't get every quarter, but below are some of our recent successes, this year.

9/8/2008 at Farway

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

1. Hannah Barrows
2. Sue Tucker (1st)
3. Paddy Priscott
4. Geoff Morgan
5. Derek Ballard (C)
6. Alan Tucker

First QP on inside bell for Sue Tucker

23/10/2008 at Farway

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

1. Alan Tucker
2. Sue Tucker
3. Crispin Denny
4. Keith Matthews
5. Derek Ballard (C)
6. Mary Boulton

First QP on treble for Alan Tucker

22/11/08 at Buckerell

1260 of Stedman, Grandsire and Plain Bob Doubles.

- 1 Derek Ballard
 - 2 Kath Matthews (C)
 3. Geoff Morgan
 - 4 Keith Matthews
 - 5 Paddy Priscott
 - 6 Sandra Roberts
- First QP for Sandra Roberts

Derek Ballard

SOUTH-WEST BRANCH OUTING

Saturday, 27 September saw around 20 members of the South-West branch, representing a number of towers (Tavistock, Bere Ferrers, Whitchurch, Stoke Damerel, Emmanuel, St Andrews Plymouth) setting off to visit some of the Dartmoor towers, using cars rather than a coach - which has definite benefits when negotiating Dartmoor lanes and bridges.

Beginning at the six-bell tower at Bickington, we kept mostly to fairly light rings with one foray to a heavier ring at Chagford (18-0-22). With two keen young ringers from Stoke Damerel, this meant that they could ring at every tower and everyone was pleased with their enthusiasm.

The weather was perfect and the countryside at its best, with autumn colours just beginning to display their glory. There was not too far to drive between the towers and we arrived at Holne in good time and then at Buckland in the Moor, where those who hadn't seen it before were interested in the *My Dear Mother* clockface.



At Buckland in the Moor

Across the valley and hardly any distance as the crow flies (unfortunately we weren't using crows so it was an unexpectedly long drive), we could also see our next venue, the beautifully positioned church at Leusdon, which was worth the drive if only for the wonderful, far-reaching view across the rolling countryside and (on a clear day) out into Plymouth Sound. It's also worth visiting if you want to ring a quick peal – very quick indeed, since Leusdon has only one bell which is, for some reason, hung for ringing. The 'ringing chamber' is in the vestry which is pretty cramped anyway, but we all had a pull and agreed that it was an Experience.

The next venue was Widecombe-in-the-Moor, where there was time for lunch and most of us patronised one or other of the two pubs and enjoyed meals of varying heartiness. In the tower we were joined by Peter Bazeley and his dog Gipsy who evidently thought nothing of climbing up the spiral stairs to the ringing chamber, and behaved perfectly (Gipsy, that is – Peter was his usual self). In fact, the complement of dogs grew through the day from one to begin with, to five at Gidleigh, all black and all sitting in the church listening attentively to the ringing. We half expected them to hold up score cards at the end.

Chagford and Gidleigh followed Widecombe, and our final tower was South Tawton where we were told very firmly indeed not to tie knots in the ropes. In fact, most of the towers, being

call-change towers, had notices forbidding this evil practice and most of the ringing was done with a handful of coils. Just one of those things you have to expect in Devon towers.

The whole day was most enjoyable and the best-attended branch outing for some time. We look forward to equal success next year.

TAVISTOCK ANNUAL OUTING

This year's outing for Tavistock ringers was postponed until 1 November but this failed to daunt 25 stalwart ringers and friends, not to mention two dogs, who boarded the coach soon after 8am to set off for the wilds of Somerset, with a variety of ringing from rounds and call changes through Grandsire and Stedman to Spliced Surprise (Cambridge, Yorkshire and Rutland) all of which are now regular features of practice and service ringing.

The morning was bitterly cold and frosty but the first tower, Woolavington, seemed surprisingly warm (maybe anywhere would have seemed warm that morning) and everyone had a ring while those who stayed in the church itself were entertained by our fine travelling organist Maurice and his young fellow-organist Christian, whose contribution added immeasurably to the day's pleasures.

Banwell, our next venue, known as the Cathedral of the Fens, possesses one of the most sumptuously beautiful ringing galleries I have ever seen. Visible from the church behind a clear glass screen, the ten ropes fall in a perfect circle from a mellow domed ceiling with an array of carvings, subtly lit from below. (It's true that some of the carvings are of rather threatening and grotesque faces, probably of past tower captains, but no doubt this serves to keep the standard of the ringing high.) The outer wall is almost entirely of brilliantly coloured stained glass and the whole effect is stunning.

Banwell, however, is not an easy place to get to or leave. Although a small coach like ours, with an expert driver, can be taken right up to the entrance of the church, it presented some difficulty in getting it out of the narrow road and we had no choice but to go the wrong way, turn round and come back through the village. After several trips along increasingly familiar narrow streets we had begun to form an escape committee when we suddenly burst out of the maze and set off the wrong way along the main road for our next venue at Blagdon, eating our lunch as we went, and arriving not very late for some more ringing.



The group and one of the (non-ringing) dogs

Chilcompton, which has a fine hall attached to the church by a glass-covered way, also has a fine car park, where there is plenty of room for a coach, or would have been had there not been a Christmas Fayre being held at the same time. This had its advantages (once poor Andy had managed to manoeuvre the coach into a position whereby we could all get out) in that cups of tea and toilets were available, not to mention an array of home-made soft toys, scarves, jewellery etc. Being bellringers, we were of course more interested in ringing the very attractive peal of 10, which we enjoyed very much.

Our last venue was Huish Episcopi. By this time it was dark and the rain, which had begun around lunchtime, had set in in earnest. It was the only church at which Maurice and Christian were unable to entertain on the organ, as there was a choir practice which also curtailed our ringing time, but the bells were very enjoyable and the Spliced Surprise at its most successful. After a dash through the rain, we piled back into the coach, all looking forward to our carvery meal at the Inn at Sampford, which was excellent. (A word of warning here: if you choose this venue, make sure you arrange the coach driver's free meal in advance or they won't give it!)

We were back in Tavistock before 9.30pm after an interesting and enjoyable day, with good company. But that's just what you expect on a ringing outing, isn't it!

A TOP TIP FOR TOMTOM TINTINNABULATORS

When you are searching for village churches in a maze of country lanes and using your TomTom satnav to direct you there, don't bother with the church's address or postcode (even if you know it) or fancy programmes. Just enter the name of the village and your TomTom will deliver you right to the gate – because, after all and as all ringers know, the church is the 'centre' of the village - isn't it!

(NB This may not work quite as well in towns where there are a lot of churches – unless you are going to the cathedral, anyway. Maybe someone could try that, and let us know!)

Donna Baker

NEW ITEMS IN THE GUILD LIBRARY

All the stock of the Guild Library is now in store in Tiverton. Members may borrow many items on application to the Librarian, Les Boyce. Please telephone him on 01884 256819 or e-mail: lesboyce@gmail.com . The following new items are available for loan:

Books and Pamphlets

Steve Coleman:

- The bellringer's bedside companion (5th ed., 2005)
- The bellringer's early companion (2008 ed.)
- The bob caller's companion (3rd ed., 2008)
- The method ringer's companion (4th ed., 2008)

John Harrison

- The tower handbook: Answers to 1001 questions about ringing
Central Council, 1998

Pip Penny

Teaching unravelled: an evidence-based approach to teaching bellhandling
Central Council, 2008

Videos and CD ROMs**Central Council**

Bells and bell ringing: A slideshow [Microsoft PowerPoint presentation.CD ROM].
Central Council, 2007

Pip Penny

Ringling practice toolkit: Foundation skills, doubles, minor, all change.
[CD ROM copy of the website at:
<http://www.cccbr.org.uk/education/practicetoolkit/>]

George Perrin

The craft of bellringing: A film [DVD]
George Perrin, 2007

Troyte Ringing Centre

Huntsham bells. [VHS video record of the Huntsham restoration project]

Les Boyce

LAIRA CHILDREN'S LAMERTON SUCCESS

Julia House, whose energy and generosity resulted in the fine ring of eight bells being installed seven years ago at Laira in Plymouth, has had another great success. She has taken her skill into Laira Green Primary School and taught a band of children to ring tunes on handbells.

They only began learning to ring at the start of this school year, but were runners-up at the annual Lamerton Handbell Festival junior section in October. Fergus Stracey, who judged the competition, also awarded them the cup for the most improved band because they had reached such a high standard for complete beginners.

Pupils presented Julia, who also plays the organ at St Mary the Virgin, Laira, with a bouquet of flowers to express their thanks. The ringers, mainly from years 5 and 6, were Ellie Tungate, Jessica Lazarus, Hannah Longworth, Chelsea Renton, Kelly Burley, Thomas Bennett, Bethany Cotter, Morgan Bishop and William Wilkinson.

John Steere

EXETER BRANCH SKITTLES AND STEAM

What can be said about a skittles match? Well this one was special in more ways than one. Michael Cannon steamed up his magnificent half-scale Showman's Engine named "The General", which looked resplendent in its turnout on arrival in the pub parking area. Both Michael and the engine looked very pleased to be there on Saturday 4 October, and there was enough steam to give plenty of rides to those who felt adventurous and perhaps a few steam whistle hoots for those who needed more encouragement to take advantage of the opportunity.

As a demonstration of the adage that many hands make light work, the numerous light bulbs were fitted by many hands and the engine was then illuminated with the electrical power being provided by the engine's own belt-driven generator.

Later, when we'd all had enough fresh air (and it was very fresh!), we adjourned to the main event inside the cosy atmosphere of the pub. Within no time, teams were organised into 'Wendy's Team' and 'Ian's Team' and I counted a total of forty names on the score board before we started the match. We played the first two legs before our break for a buffet meal, which went down very well with everyone. There were one or two people who arrived without previously booking, but it was pleasing that there was just enough food for us all. I expect that the "extras" made a little more money available for the Devon Church Bell Restoration Fund, which was the charitable cause that we were all supporting. Once the meal was finished and tidied away, we resumed the match with one or two exceptions for those who retired either hurt with bashed ankles, or with sheer exhaustion from the excitement of it all and played the third and final leg. The result was a win for Ian's Team, although I'm left wondering if Wendy's Team just graciously let us win. I am also wondering if it is harder to get a clearance of nine pins with three balls or to get three balls to the other end of the alley without knocking any pins over.

I'm sure everyone would like to thank Michael Cannon for his efforts in making the evening the special event that it was and a special "thank you" to the children, who tirelessly reset the skittles and returned the balls via the chute, keeping the momentum going for us all.

Ken Vingoe



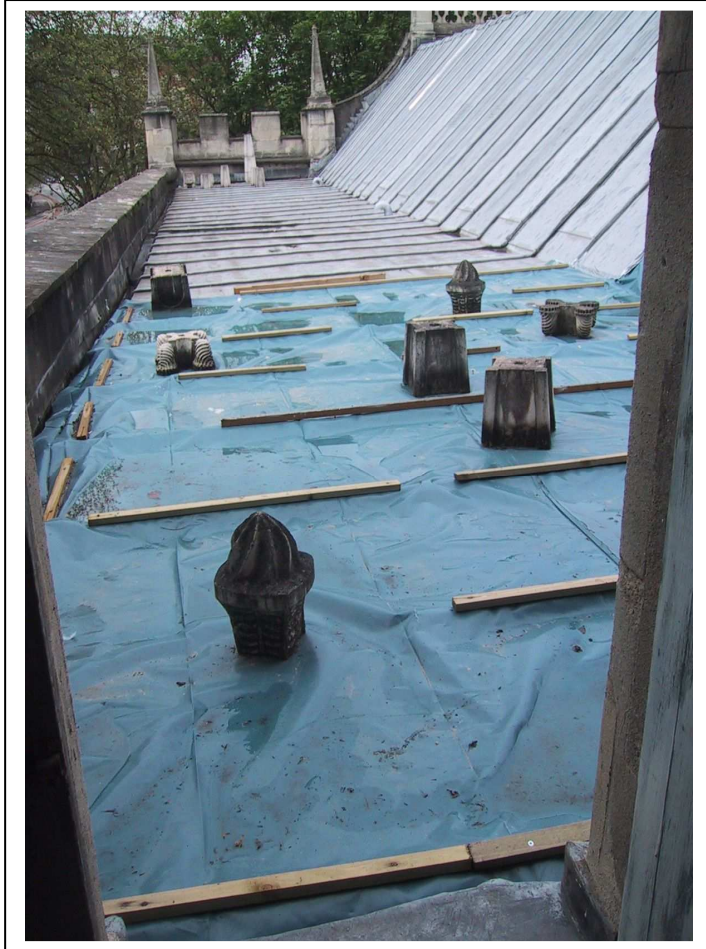
The General



Hitching a lift

LEAD STOLEN FROM CHURCH ROOFS

Police have warned of a crime wave sweeping Britain as thieves strip millions of pounds' worth of metal off buildings to ship to countries where demand is soaring. Recently, we were informed by email from Mike Webster that the churches at Ashburton and Bickington had been targeted for their metal. Mike also provided contact details for notifying or seeking advice in connection with lead or other metal thefts from churches.



The temporary roof at St Philip and St Jacob church Bristol was photographed by Ken Vingoe during the Exeter Branch visit in March. Thieves had recently stolen the lead, for the third time this year.

In a brief review of websites, it seems that thousands of properties - including hundreds of churches and other historic buildings with lead roofs - have been targeted by organised gangs who sell the metal on to unscrupulous dealers. It is then shipped overseas, either as scrap or after being melted down, to countries such as India, China and Dubai, which are struggling to find enough materials to keep their booming manufacturing and building industries supplied. According to Ecclesiastical Insurance, which provides cover for most Church of England properties, lead thefts have trebled while copper thefts have multiplied by 10 since 2005. In the past 16 months they have received 750 claims, totalling £1.2 million. If you find this worrying, read on.....

What lead theft means to those left dealing with it

Three masked men suspected of stripping lead from a village church roof were allowed to go free because they could have been enjoying the view. Police responded quickly after churchgoers reported seeing the trio on Treeton Parish Church, in Rotherham, South Yorkshire. The suspects were caught wearing balaclavas and gloves with rolls of lead nearby, but officers were unable to prove an offence had been committed. Thieves have targeted the church, which is mentioned in the Domesday Book, ten times in as many months at a time of rising lead prices. Eighty five per cent of the roof has been stripped and church officials need to raise £100,000 for repairs and as much again to repair the tower. Builders put up scaffolding to replace the roof with stainless steel sheets, but thieves have used it to get easier access and steal lead they could not previously reach.

Four police officers, including a dog handler, were sent to the church to investigate reports of people on the roof after a Sunday service. Chf Ins Jason Harwin, of South Yorkshire Police, said: "When the officers arrived they spoke with three youths who were on the scaffolding. Officers searched all three youths and thoroughly examined the surrounding area but found no evidence that any offences had been committed, nor that the youths possessed any articles with which to commit any offences. As a result of this officers had no power to arrest these youths and they were warned to stay away from the property."

Carole Robinson, whose husband Ron is a churchwarden, said: "It was beyond belief. The police said they could claim they had only gone up to look at the view. It left people furious. We have been plagued with lead thefts. It's so frustrating that after so much damage and trouble, we finally catch men on the roof only for the police to let them off. The police arrived and the men came down. Lead had been removed and rolled up ready to be carried off. But the police said lead was not the kind of material you could get fingerprints from and they did

not have enough evidence to take them to court because they could not link the men to the lead. I just felt totally vulnerable. It seems we are totally helpless and the law seems to be on the side of the criminals."

Roger King

A PLATINUM CELEBRATION AT LUPPITT

In November, a peal of Platinum Surprise was rung to celebrate Jack and Florrie Sage's **Platinum** Wedding Anniversary. It was one of those peals that almost never made it. The place was obvious, where mum and dad have spent almost all their lives and where many of the family have learnt to ring; but pointing of the tower walls caused a number of postponements and cancellations of practices during September and October. The date? The actual day was Friday October 31st, so Saturday morning should be best. The band? Those with strong connections with ringing around myself and Devon in particular, and enough if successful, for accreditation to The Guild of Devonshire Ringers. Mike Mears and Tim Collins have supported me on the conducting front, but both were already in peal attempts that morning and Mike also had another engagement in the evening, so it would have to be an afternoon squeeze. Edric Broom lived and learnt to ring in Luppitt and I called his first peal. (Edward) John Manley and I rang in the first quarter by a King's School band at Ottery St. Mary (Edric is also ex King's), and were together at Reading for two years. I called Richard Shere's first peal at Luppitt (same bell) in 1984 for the 10th anniversary of the augmentation to eight. Mike and Jill Hansford have been fellow ringers and officers of the Taunton Branch, Bath and Wells Association since I moved to Trull in 1993. Platinum Surprise was chosen for obvious reasons. The tower was given the 'all clear' in mid-October, and all looked well; until I returned from tea and cake with the family at 6pm on the Friday. A message from Tim on the answer phone saying 'don't think I can ring tomorrow, put my back out while moving logs for a bonfire!' Message left for Mike Mears 'can you call tomorrow?' another quick cup of tea and off to Shepton Beauchamp for a quarter peal. When picking up the key asked Jeff Knipe if he could fill the gap, but with builders in next day would prefer me to find someone else. Failed quarter, Mike on phone when I get home, that's OK, Edric asked to swot method for inside in case I can only find a Treble ringer. Saturday with no success after some 30 phone calls, and time running out, about 10.30am Jeff asked for place notation and agrees to fill the gap. Left Trull in plenty of time to check ropes before 2.30pm meet, but on reaching Blagdon Hill find a Police road block, serious accident near the hair-pin bend so have to divert through Pitminster and Corfe. We raise 6 + 2 and wait. Almost 3pm when Mike and Jill arrive having also been caught by the road block. The rest is in the record, except it was also close to the 80th anniversary of the augmentation from 4 to 6. May I thank those who helped make this a success, including those who could not make it on the day.

Fred Sage

Guild of Devonshire Ringers
Luppitt, Devon. St Mary
Saturday, 1 November 2008 in 3h1 (10-3-21)
5056 Platinum S Major
Composed by: D F Morrison (No 911)
1 Edric W Broom
2 Jill M Hansford
3 Richard C Shere
4 Edward J W Manley
5 Frederick J Sage
6 Jeffrey Knipe
7 Michael C Hansford
8 Michael E C Mears (C)

Rung to celebrate the 70th wedding anniversary of Jack and Florrie Sage
DEVON YOUNG RINGERS ROUND OKEHAMPTON

On 4th October a group of Devon Young Ringers from Dawlish, Exeter and Petrockstowe converged on the Okehampton area. We started with an hour's ringing on the light six at Inwardleigh, then moved on to the Denmisch Simulated Campanile for some three and a half hours, until only Gareth was still keen for more! Adult helpers blended into the background as the young people investigated the dumbbells in the roof space, rang on the six together, or rang alone with the 'Abel' programme to challenge their listening skills. There was a short break for lunch, but Ali and Tom were pitting themselves against the computer even then. Our sincere thanks go to Denis and Mischa for their hospitality, and as several young ringers were unable to come on the day we hope to go back there soon.

Lynne Hughes.



Jasper practicing listening



Young ringers on the DenMisch ring

MID DEVON OUTING TO BATH

The sun rose on a clear autumn morning, a train pulled out of Newton Abbot station, and the Mid Devon October outing was under way. More joined the train at Teignmouth, Dawlish, Exeter and even Bristol, until around twenty ringers spilt out onto the platform at Bath Spa.

A short walk took us to Widcombe, where a few more joined us by car, and there was ringing from rounds to York S Minor on the 12cwt six. The day became unseasonably warm, and layers were shed as we walked along the canal to Bathwick. This 19cwt ten were easy going, with good ringing resulting, and Penultimus Caters as a refreshing novelty.

Lunch was taken in various establishments around the city before the long, hot walk up hill to Lansdown. One ringer was rumoured to have commandeered a lift from someone asking directions! Lansdown proved to be a lovely 2cwt six, and several would like to return there for more. Another walk brought stunning views over the city and surrounding hills, on the way to Larkhall, an 11 cwt eight and the final tower of the day, where we narrowly missed meeting another Devon group who rang before us.

There was time for some well deserved tea and cake before the walk back to the station, accompanied by the impressive sound of the Abbey bells being rung by another band.

Thank you to Phil Stevens for the travel arrangements and Martin Mansley for the itinerary in Bath. A train outing has now proved very successful two years running.

Lynne Hughes.



Mingling outside bathwick

KINGSKERSWELL AND RADIO DEVON

A delightful article entitled *Learning the ropes* appeared on the BBC Devon website (details above) of 28 October. Subtitled *Bell ringing entices two Devon teenagers away from the streets and up in to the bell tower*, it describes the initiative of young ringers at Kingskerswell.

You don't have to be good at maths to be a bell ringer, but it helps, especially if you've also got rhythm. Thirteen-year-old Jack and Joshua, 16, are keen bell ringers at their local parish church St Mary's in Kingskerswell. Jack is still a novice, although he's been ringing for a year, while Josh started six years ago.



Jack



The boys are given careful tuition from Philip

It all started for Jack at an event in the village encouraging people to find out about what was going on around them. "I saw a mini ring, had a go and then found out about joining the ringers at St Mary's." It was different for Josh though, a friend encouraged him to join. "I just thought it was a good thing to learn and my friends and family think it's a good idea too. It's quite easy and straightforward and when we're ringing at a wedding it makes me feel appreciated."

They practice once a week under the watchful eye of Tower Captain Philip Stevens, who's been bell ringing for just over 50 years, having learnt at a school in north Devon in 1957 at Shebbear College. Philip has been Tower Captain for 21 years and says it's becoming more and more difficult to get young people interested. "We're very fortunate in having two. Josh has become quite an experienced ringer, while Jack still has quite a long way to go because he's only been ringing a year."

The two teenagers like the mathematical order of bell ringing. Jack says: "It's not really a tune, it's a pattern, it's just the order which you play the bells in, that makes it sound different."

Philip adds: "There's always room for improvement so one is always striving to ring perfectly. I try and encourage learners to hear what they're doing and ring by rhythm, then hopefully they will get better themselves." And if two teenagers can take to the ropes so easily then there's plenty of scope for the rest of us plus you don't have to have big muscles either!

With thanks to the BBC Website Devon > People > Your stories > Learning the ropes
http://www.bbc.co.uk/print/devon/content/articles/2008/10/28/bellringing_teenagers_feature.shtml

[The website also has a link through which to listen to an interview with Phil Stevens and also hear the bells being rung.]

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REPORT OF GUILD STRIKING COMPETITIONS

Saturday 18 October 2008

6 Bell competitions

The Inter-tower competition for the JP Fidler Cup was held at Abbotsham, when ringers could ring either 240 Doubles or Minor. The results are given below:

- 1 Exeter St Mark (Minor) 17.8 faults
- 2 Withycombe Raleigh 21
- 3 Tavistock 23.4
- 4 Exeter St Mark (Doubles) 24.4
- 5 Black Torrington 24.6
- 6 Stoke Damerel 43.4

Thanks to Donald Carter for judging.

The 6 Bell inter-tower novice competition for the John Longridge Award was held at Littleham, for ringers selecting 180 changes of Plain Hunt Doubles or Minor. Results are:

- 1 Black Torrington 20 faults
- 2 Exeter St Mark 38
- 3 Stoke Damerel 42.5

Thanks to James Clarke for judging.

8 Bell Competition.

The Inter- Branch competition for the Andrews trophy was arranged to be held at Appledore. Due to mechanical reasons, this competition was cancelled after the first team broke the tenor!

Teams could ring either a plain course of Cambridge S Major or the following touch of Little Bob Major:

224 Little Bob Major

W M H 23456

S S - 46325

- 24365

Repeat

REMINDER

The 8 bell Inter-Branch striking competition has been rearranged for Saturday 17 January 2009, at Okehampton. The original choice of methods (Cambridge or Little Bob Major) still applies. The draw will take place at 10.00 am and there will be tea and coffee available to help keep the cold out.

Janet Coles

NORTH EAST BRANCH ANNUAL DINNER

32 members, friends and partners had a very enjoyable, relaxed meal in the Conservatory room, the Verbeer Manor, in Willand, on Saturday 22nd November. During the dinner Diane Bowstead was presented with her Guild certificate and the evening was rounded off by a quiz set by Les Boyce and Sheila Scofield. At the end of the night many of the ringers took the opportunity to see the First Guild Peal Book that was being passed to Mike who is gathering material for the next phase of the branch display boards.

Sheila Scofield



Diane receiving her Guild Certificate



Dinner guests in the conservatory



Dinner guests 'doing' the quiz,

NORTH EAST BRANCH AGM

Our AGM was held at St Peter's, Tiverton, on Saturday 4th October. Ringing before the service was interspersed by visits by members to St Peter's 'afternoon tea' held in the Church as part of the Tiverton Festival week. We were pleased to be joined by the Guild President who also stayed for the Business meeting, excellent supper prepared and served by the local band and the members' forum all held at the Baptist Church rooms. During the meeting 3 members of the NE Branch were presented with their Guild certificates and 5 new members were elected.

Sheila Scofield



L to R Chris Bolt (Huntsham), Les Boyce (Chair, presenting certificates), Phillip Moss (Silverton) and Mike Heard (Tiverton, St Peter).

MID-DEVON BRANCH AGM REPORT

Excellent hospitality and strange handbells

22nd November was the day of the Mid Devon Branch AGM. Two hours of ringing at Babbacombe were followed by a service with a week-early Advent theme and a thoughtful sermon on the sheep and the goats of our final judgement. The Guild service book allows a slot for handbells as part of the worship, and this was accomplished with plain hunt hauntingly rung on a minor pentatonic six.

We always thank the tea providers, but the spread put on by Babbacombe was certainly one of the best. The business meeting followed (or overlapped!) the tea, and all individuals were elected to the same posts as last year. Amidst the routine business, a lively discussion arose on the perceived marginalisation of those not on email, and the purpose and inclusivity of the Guild 8-bell competition.

17 branch members and 4 other Guild members attended the AGM, though others had rung earlier in the afternoon.

*Lynne Hughes
Mid Devon Branch Secretary*

STOKE CANON BELLS

The Exeter Express & Echo of November 4th carried an article on work on the bells at Stoke Canon. The following is an edited version of the article, and Express & Echo newspapers are thanked for the provision of photographs and text.

The six bells which hang in the Norman tower of St Mary Magdalene Church, in Stoke Canon, near Exeter, were last taken down in the 19th century. And the complex process of removing them for vital repairs began again yesterday by three volunteers and one professional bell-hanger. The bells have actually been silent for the past two years having been declared "out of tune".

Treble and 2nd are by Llewellyn and James, Bristol 1885

3rd and 5th are by Christopher Pennington, Lezant, 1691

4th by Thomas Pennington, Exeter 1641

Tenor: Evan & William Evans, Chepstow, 1724



Removing the bells. Note the power saw!

John Woods, 69, captain of Stoke Canon bell-ringers, said he was looking forward to the day when the bells would once again ring at the church. "We have not been able to ring here for two years because the bells were out of tune and in danger of ruining their frame," he said. "We have been ringing at nearby Rewe and Poltimore instead, and it will mean a lot to us to

have the bells back. First we've got to raise more than £54,000 to get them tuned, cleaned and up to scratch, so we don't know how long it will take. Hopefully, we'll get them done within 12 months."

Fellow bell-ringer Bill Blake, 87, also from Stoke Canon, said: "I'm hoping they will be done pretty soon while I'm still able to ring them. I've been ringing Stoke Canon bells for 19 years and I want to be able to ring in my tower, as I call it. You feel attached to your own tower."

As well as fitting a new frame, two of the bells will be melted down and recast, while another will be completely replaced, with the original kept in the church for preservation. "We don't know if we will keep or scrap bell number three, but bell four is okay, and the tenor is fine, too," said John.

Reg McKenzie, of Nicholson Engineering, is heading up the dismantling operation together with three volunteers: Neil Deem, of Exmouth, Ian Campbell, from Exeter, and Rob Franklin, of Pinhoe. All four men are seasoned bell-ringers and have years of experience dismantling and erecting church bells. Ian, 58, who has been ringing for 40 years, said: "We've done this sort of work before, so people asked us if we could help in Stoke Canon. It's interesting and makes a change from other things I might be doing. It keeps me out of mischief." Rob added: "It is an effort and it is quite dangerous work."

Churchwarden Maureen Owen-Jones said that in due course the bells would go back into the tower. "Then, once more the bells, which are an iconic part of village life, will be able to be rung for services, weddings and other special events," she said.

In the meantime, the bells are stored at Nicholson Engineering, Bridport.

QUARTER PEAL WEEK

Quarter peal week this year raised the outstanding total of £450 (after gift aid) and produced a total of fifty-five quarter peals, rung in fifty different locations. Of the performances during the week, the first quarter peal on the newly restored bells at Sampford Spiney deserves particular mention as an example of what can be accomplished with assistance from your donations to the Devon Church Bell Restoration Fund. The number of personal achievements during the week must also be emphasised, demonstrating that quarter peal week supports not only the maintenance of the bells themselves but also the advancement of the exercise throughout the county. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the success of the week and especially to those who took on the considerable task of organising events.

Congratulations also to those who achieved notable firsts, some of which are listed below.

- 1st quarter: Roger Hawkins
- 1st inside: Philip Moss, Richard Partridge
- 1st away from cover: Chris Wills
- 1st of Doubles: Elaine Filer
- 1st of Plain Bob Doubles: Margaret Elms
- 1st of Minor: Liz Wood
- 1st of Plain Bob Minor: Gwyrie Mossop
- 1st of Beverley S Minor: Nicholas Waterson
- 1st of Plain Bob Triples: Val Hicks
- 1st of Grandsire Triples: John Roberts, David Willis (as conductor)
- 1st of Major: Kevin Brooks, Maff Glover, Martin Gentile (and as conductor)
- 1st of Stedman Cinques inside: Rusty Hartley

On an administrative note for next year, please ensure that your donation is payable to the Guild of Devonshire Ringers and gift aided to the Guild of Devonshire Ringers. Although quarter peal week is held in aid of Devon Church Bell Restoration Fund, the money raised is administered entirely through the Guild. Therefore, any donations not payable to the Guild cannot be included in the total for the week.

Tim Bayton

TALK GIVEN TO THE PARKINSON'S DISEASE SOCIETY

Following his series of presentations on bell ringing Ian Campbell gave a talk to the Torbay & District Branch of the Parkinson's Disease Society on 23rd September in Torquay. It included a number of clips and audio simulations to which the audience was invited to guess the number of bells ringing. Particularly successful was a simulation where they were invited to identify each time a call change was made. An attempt at "lapping" on handbells was less successful although very enjoyable - the bells didn't come round after a course of plain hunt! Three of the Devon Ringers' bags were sold and a number of people commented afterwards that they felt that they now had a better idea of what went on up the tower.

Ian Campbell

CALENDAR 2009

JANUARY 2009

Sat	9	Branch practice (19:00)	NNW
Sat	17	8 Bell Striking Competition (10.00) Okehampton	
		General Committee meeting (15:00) Okehampton	Guild
Sat	31	Branch AGM	SW

FEBRUARY 2009

Sat	7	Annual Dinner (19:00)	ECG
Sat	7	Branch practice (19:00)	NNW

MARCH 2009

Sat	7	Branch practice (19:00)	NNW
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STEDMAN TRIPLES TRAINING – A TRAINEE’S PERSPECTIVE

I thought it was about time I had a concerted effort at learning Stedman, so having had a few attempts at Doubles it was opportune that a Triples training weekend had been arranged. At Wolborough on the Friday evening, the students in turn, each had a go on a chosen bell with a good band around them and a helper to give directions as required.

On my turn I chose to ring the 3, mainly because it starts the same way as in Doubles without having to worry about double dodges for a while. I had memorized the blue line – essential – but hadn’t expected 8 bells to be such a massive increase in number over 6!

The first time I got to 4-5 dodging it all fell apart. At each stroke it felt like looking for a needle in a haystack in thick fog as to which bell I was supposed to be following, or which bell I was supposed to be dodging with. I even had trouble following what was going on when not ringing.

At the end of the session I was not very impressed with myself and everybody else seemed more competent than me. At this point it would have been easy to get disillusioned. I kept thinking that loads of people ring Stedman – so it must be possible to learn it!

Back home, I had a look at one of Steve Coleman’s books, which had a few hints, and then on the Saturday morning at St Marychurch, Martin Mansley, who was leading the sessions, held a tutorial session providing more hints and explained what happened in bobs and singles. I thought I won’t be needing that today!! Loads of hints, that of course I couldn’t take in all at once, but who to follow during double dodges was one thing that I would try to concentrate on.

Ringing sessions started and I was advised to follow the treble ringer for a better view of proceedings. The fog didn’t seem to be so thick – and patterns seemed to be appearing.

On my turn on the treble, still with a helper, I felt things were starting to work. After that, when not ringing, I continued to watch what others were doing, but it was really hard work. Surprisingly I found it easier to be ringing than to be watching.

My next turn, Martin said “We’ll ring a touch”. A quick panic attack on my part, but then thought that if Martin’s got confidence in me to do it, then I’d better oblige. I didn’t do too badly, but keeping track of all those 6-7 dodges at bobs, that I knew I had to do, was thankfully provided by my helper.

Next ring, there weren’t enough helpers to go around, so I was more or less left to my own devices. At this stage I felt able to physically relax, and just let the brain do the work. I felt really satisfied with my progress, staying focussed, and through ringing it over and over again, seeing things more clearly.

On behalf of all the students, thanks must go to all the expert ringers (you are from our point of view), who had to ring Stedman Triples over and over again, and had to get it right every time for our sake. I can see that it’s an interesting ‘principle’ to ring so I trust your interest was sustained throughout.

The next thing to do is to keep practising Stedman Triples, wherever possible, but that’s another issue.....

*Ian Dodds
Teignmouth*

SIMILARITIES

During the latter part of WW2, when J.A.Trollope was the editor of *The Ringing World*, he produced a lengthy serialised article on the Revd. Henry Thomas Ellacombe which ran to 19 pages from the 4th August to the 19th November 1944. In it he referred to ‘The Church Bells of Devon (1867 & 1872) as Ellacombe’s *magnum opus*’ which it is if only his ringing books are considered. However if one looks at the sum total of all the books written by Ellacombe there

is no doubt in my mind that his true magnum opus is 'The History of the Parish of Bitton in the County of Gloucestershire' which was completed in the last few years of Ellacombe's life.

Looking at the basic facts there are a few remarkable similarities which can be compared with John Scott's *magnum opus* 'Towers & Bells of Devon' viz

TOWERS & BELLS OF DEVON was researched over a period of 54 years, John had two ringing colleagues as collaborators and it was published in two volumes by The Mint Press Exeter (2007).

THE HISTORY OF THE PARISH OF BITTON was researched over a period of 55 years. Ellacombe had two clerical collaborators, his son Canon H.N.Ellacombe who wrote the chapter on the flora of Bitton, and the Revd. H.H.Winwood who provided a chapter on the geology of the area. The book, which cost 2 guineas was privately printed for the author in 2 parts in 1881 and 1883 by the Exeter printer William Pollard. Only a limited number were produced so it is rarely that one can find a copy for sale in the present day. One did appear at an auction of antiquarian books in 2006 and it went to a dealer for £500.

To sum up:-

1. The research for both books took a period of just over 50 years.
2. Each author had two collaborators
3. Both books were printed in two parts.
4. Both books were printed in Exeter
5. Both authors died shortly after publication.

Richard Bowden

TROYTE RINGING CENTRE COURSE

Dec 6th may have been cold outside but in the Troyte Ringing Centre things were getting warm. The conducting course, run by Mike Hatchett as a practical follow-up to the previous Wednesday theory evening, kept us all alert and frantically searching for clues in coursing orders beginning with plain bob doubles then minor and finally triples. Students on the day came from the North East Branch, Somerset and South Devon. We were all pleased to have a warm lunch break, thanks to Pat, in the middle of the day, not only to warm us up but also to give our brains a chance to rest. Now it's back to home towers to try out our new skills. If only people would not swap over their bells we would be fine!

Sheila Scofield



A break in proceedings....warm chilli & apple pie

140TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INAUGURATION OF THE ST. PETER'S SOCIETY OF CHANGE RINGERS, TIVERTON

The Guild carol Service is to be held in Tiverton this year, and the following article seems particularly appropriate:

Some weeks ago I was given a photograph of a peal board which Rachel Taylor had taken in my native tower, St. Peter's Tiverton. The board is very colourful, but it is high up on the wall and not easy to read.

It gives the following details:-

On Saturday November 28th 1868. A true and complete peal of 5040 Grandsire Triples was rung in this steeple by eight members of the Ancient Society of St. Stephen's Ringers Bristol, assisted by C.A. W.Troyte Esq.of the Society of College Youths. The bells were admirably struck and brought round in two hours and fifty five minutes. The peal contained one hundred and ninety four bobs and forty six singles. It was conducted by Mr. Alfred Jones and is the first peal ever rung on these noble bells. The band was stationed as follows:

A.Jones	Treble	W.Bowling	5	
T.Willing	2	W.Thomas	6	
I.Morgan	3	W.Staddon	7	
A.York	4	C.A.W,Troyte Esq.}		
		J.Bryant		} Tenor

The name of the composer is omitted but it is likely that it was John Vicars. Thomas, Staddon, York and Morgan are names that can still be seen on faded 19C Bristol peal boards. Alfred York was a foreman bell-hanger for Llewellins & James, and Alfred Jones called the first peal of Stedman Cinques at St. Mary Radcliffe, after the bells had been augmented to 12 in 1872. In the College Youths library there is a collection of well-known 19C members. Alf Jones appears alongside H.T. Ellacombe, J.E.Troyte, C.A.W Troyte and Harry Trelawney. I find it very strange that there is nothing on the peal board to indicate that it was rung for a very special occasion - but it obviously was, as is evident on the hand-posters that were circulated

in the town from November 23rd 1868 onwards, giving details of the Inauguration Festival of the St. Peter's Society of Change Ringers. The events listed were as follows:

Thursday November 26th 1868 7.30pm at The Athenaeum, Tiverton, a lecture on Church Bells and Ringing by the Revd. H.T Ellacombe, illustrated by models and diagrams, with touches on handbells by members of the St. Stephen's Society of Change Ringers, Bristol.

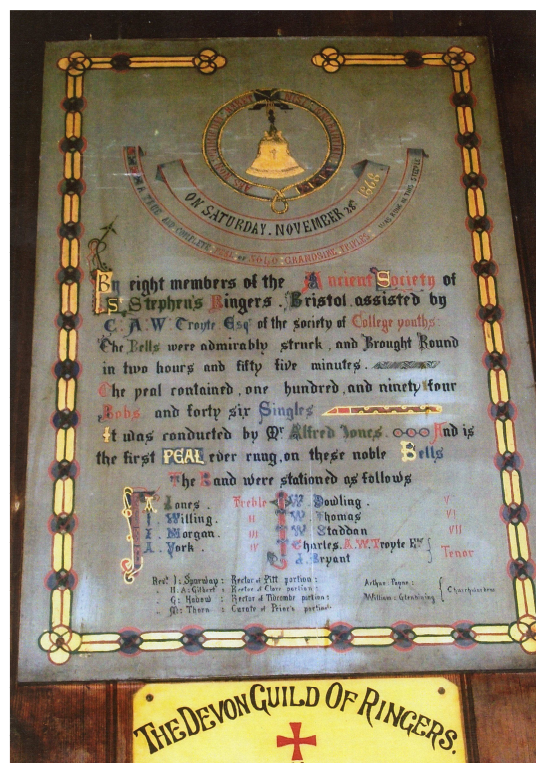
Friday November 27th. A series of touches of 400 to 600 changes will be rung on St. Peter's Church Bells.

Saturday November 28th. It is proposed to ring a peal of 5040 changes.

Although the hand-posters contained a list of 35 patrons it was left to Charles Troyte to pay the ringers costs and to provide the peal board.

Ellacombe's lecture must have gone down fairly well as he repeated it a few months later, on January 28th, to a crowded audience at the Athenaeum in Exeter. On this occasion the handbell ringing was performed by Coll. Harry Trelawney, his wife and four children (aged between 10 and 14). Their impressive repertoire included Grandsire and Stedman Triples and Grandsire Cinques.

Richard Bowden



St Peter's, Tiverton commemorative peal board 1868



**A Happy Christmas to all our
readers, especially from the
Ringing Master of the
Aylesbeare Branch**

*Photo courtesy of the Express and
Echo*

RINGING ROUND DEVON is the newsletter of The Guild of Devonshire Ringers and is circulated free to all affiliated tower Any individual members who wish to subscribe should contact Roger King (01395 274776). The cost is £5.00 for four issues (cheques made payable to Guild of Devonshire Ringers). RRD is also available on line on the Guild's website, which holds back issues.

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