



# RINGING ROUND DEVON

## GUILD OF DEVONSHIRE RINGERS

Newsletter 79: September 2010

### CHARMBOROUGH RING AT THE MID DEVON SHOW

The North-East branch of the Guild covers 16 towers largely around Tiverton & Cullompton. The Mid-Devon show is a very local immensely popular mini-county show held right in the centre of our patch. What better place could there be to advertise ourselves and recruit more ringers. In previous years, we have had display boards with a small bell at the back of a shared tent, but this had not proved very effective. So this year we decided to have a stand of our own with purpose designed display boards and to bring in a mini-ring of six bells. Fortunately we were able to hire the Charmborough Ring from the Charmborough Bell Trust ([www.charmborough.org](http://www.charmborough.org)) and on the Friday evening before the show Roger Booth duly arrived with the ring on its trailer.



Unloading the Ring from the trailer....

.....and a trial ring on the finished assembly.



Two of the many visitors 'having a go'

With Roger's expert guidance and a willing group of helpers it took less than two hours to have the Ring up and working. We were very lucky with the weather, an enormous black cloud passed us by, while the sun shone. The Charmborough Ring is the heaviest portable ring available in the country, the bells ranging in weight from 39lb (18 kg) for the treble to 94lb (43 kg) for the tenor. They are rung without stays and have a very pleasing tone.

On the day of the show, we had demonstrations ringing every hour with a steady stream of members of the public having a go in between. The whole day was extremely successful with dozens of people having a go – sometimes there was quite a queue; over twenty indicated they would like to learn to ring and left their details. It was good to welcome the Bishop of Crediton to our stand. Bishop Bob is a great supporter of ringers in the North East Branch and the work of the Troyte Ringing Centre.

Our thanks go to Roger Booth from the Charmborough Trust and also to our ringers Richard & Marion Newman and Lesley Knipe from Shepton Beauchamp and Fred Sage from Trull, who helped with the demonstration and provided tuition. Our stand was jointly funded by the North East Branch of the Guild of Devonshire Ringers and the Troyte Ringing Centre and we thank all those who make donations to the Ringing Centre so that we can fund events like this.

*Tony Trigg*

## **CREDITON REVISITED**

It was one of those almost miraculously rare occasions when everything that could go right, did. The National 12-bell Final held at Crediton was a wonderful occasion for one who had only to bask in the sun and listen.

But on looking back, a couple of thoughts occur. One is that Birmingham's striking was detectably better than that of the other entrants and so the judges were spot-on in their agreement with me! However, I felt the winning band's performance just a little robotic and a trifle sterile because of it. Yes, yes, I know it was a striking competition, but if I had the choice of hearing any of the participants again, I should choose St Martin in the Fields for it seemed to me that there might have been the slightest widening of their open handstroke lead just before a back end roll-up – a sort of rubato effect introducing an element of drama and musicality to offset the relentlessness of the striking. Almost certainly, they did nothing of the sort but by this time my general euphoria was being much encouraged by the excellent Howard's Shout. However, I particularly enjoyed their contribution.

Invariably do I feel uncomfortable, having rung for Divine Service, to leave a nave of congregants fewer in number than those of us who have just left the ringing chamber. How different on this memorable Saturday when nearly everyone attending gathered for Evensong – the church was packed. By this time I think the visits to the beer tent were making their mark for when the service came to "our hymn", my concentration was beginning to wander. Unbidden thoughts like getting "Unchanging God, who livest . ." from Rounds on Eight into Queens for "To men the power thou givest . ." with only the row of "Enthroned in realms on high" in between, required some nifty footwork.

Clearly, it was time to go home."

*Dermot Elworthy*

## SEVEN DIFFERENT CALLINGS AT FIRST ATTEMPT - BLIMEY!!

Congratulation goes to Tom Waterson. After calling both his first Peal (Yorkshire S Major) and also another of Bristol S Major in June, Tom has now conducted his first Peal on 6 Bells less than a month later...!!

Once a month, we've been meeting in Mid-Devon and ringing a couple of 'social' peals at some new 6 bell towers (for most of the band) with a good pub lunch in between. It has been really easy to organise... one person gets the bands, one person gets the towers, and one person calls them - simples (as the well known car insurance advert puts it)!!

So unbeknown to the rest of the band a plan was hatched for Tom to call one, and just before starting the attempt at East Anstey, it was announced that Tom was in charge of this one!! They aren't the easiest of bells, but a good peal was scored - with all the calls being made in the right place!!

Most people start with some simple compositions for their firsts... but armed with all the information and a few 'aide memoirs', he managed to call each of the seven extents with a different composition - which also included three 'one-parts'!!

Well done Tom - I think you surprised a few!! So when is the 10 bell one booked for the next tick??

*Paul Pascoe*

### GUILD OF DEVONSHIRE RINGERS

EAST ANSTEY, Devon, St Michael

Wed Jul 14 2010 2h 39 (8)

5040 Surprise Minor

(7m: London, Beverley, Annable's London, Bourne, Ipswich, Norwich, Cambridge)

- 1 Robert D S Brown
- 2 Mervyn C Way
- 3 Pauline Champion
- 4 Ian V J Smith
- 5 Paul J Pascoe
- 6 Thomas J Waterson (C)

First 6 Bell Peal as Conductor - each extent called differently!!

## THE EAST DEVON STRIKING COMPETITION 2010.

This year the Striking competition was held in the gloriously sunny Harpford. There were six teams in all that entered. Many thanks to all those that attended with special thanks going to the judges Lester Yeo and Roger King, and to Anne Bailey for putting it all together. There was very good ringing rung throughout the afternoon by all teams and the results went as follows:

| Position | Team              | Faults |
|----------|-------------------|--------|
| 1        | Sidmouth 1        | 13.25  |
| 2        | Ottery St Mary    | 25.25  |
| 3        | Honiton           | 39.25  |
| 4        | Farway/Northleigh | 41.25  |
| 5        | Sidmouth2         | 99.75  |
| 6        | Combe Raleigh     | 102.25 |

Many congratulations go to the Sidmouth team on winning the Edward Summers memorial trophy. A very enjoyable evening of skittles followed at the Otter Inn. We hope to see even more teams enter next year.

*James Harris*



Bowling them over at the Skittles Match

After the presentation: Mrs Summers and Andrew Harris, Tower Captain of winners Sidmouth, with the Edward Summers Memorial Trophy

### **EDUCATION GROUP MEETING 3<sup>rd</sup> OCTOBER**

There will be an Education Meeting on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> October, at 3pm, held at 64, Mount Pleasant Road, Exeter (by St James' Church). This is for the Education Officer of each branch, or other branch official, to attend, but is also open to anyone interested in Education in the Guild. We will be evaluating this year's programme, sharing ideas for next year, and seeing if we can get Guild training events spread round more of the Guild with the help of branches. If you have not already done so, please let both Lynne Hughes and Janet Coles know who is coming to represent your branch, or if you are coming as an individual.

[lynnehughes@hotmail.com](mailto:lynnehughes@hotmail.com)  
[janet.coles@tesco.net](mailto:janet.coles@tesco.net)

### **MONDAY RINGERS**

The Monday Ringers are holding their next outing on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> September, and warmly welcome new people. 10.00 Eggbuckland (6), 11.20 Tamerton Foliot (6), 12.30 lunch in the Seven Stars at Tamerton, 2.00 Laira (8) and 3.15 Plympton St Mary (8). We aim for good striking, and competent trebling or covering is the basic requirement. Special method for the sixes: Beverley Surprise Minor.

*Lynne Hughes*

### **GUILD QUARTER PEAL WEEK 2010**

This year's Guild Quarter Peal Week is **Friday 29<sup>th</sup> October to Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> November**. For best results, start organising NOW! *Have you considered organising sponsorship for your branch, tower or individual quarter peal? The Aylesbeare branch proved last year that this is well worth doing!*

Suggested donation: £1 per rope. Proceeds to the Devon Church Bell Restoration Fund.



For more information, see page 23 of the 2009 annual report or contact the Quarter Peal Secretary:  
Tim@TimBayton.co.uk / 01392 499286 / 07743 066225

## **SEVEN FROM DEVON ON A NARROWBOAT**

On a relentlessly sunny week in late June, a party from Devon beat a hasty retreat from the Guild AGM, heading for a week's holiday in the Midlands. The canal boat holiday was originally intended to coincide with my 30th birthday at the end of May but postponed due to various other commitments.

A number of incidents occurred during the week, mainly due to lack of practice at steering a canal boat. Nonetheless, we did manage to return Oakthorpe in one piece. One such event was recovering the barge pole from the water whilst reversing the boat out of a very prickly tree - the scratches on my hand are still healing at the time of writing. We also managed to ground the boat on several tight corners. During the quarter at Flore, our temporary home even made an unmanned trip to the other side of the canal!

Our canal route ran from Stoke Golding to Weedon Bec and back, taking in the Ashby, Coventry, Oxford and Grand Union canals as well as fourteen towers. A quarter peal was scored at each tower in addition to two handbell quarters, the first of which was rung entirely within Braunston Tunnel and was most memorable for the occasional drips down our necks from the tunnel roof! The last tower bell quarter was a 20th wedding anniversary compliment to Lesley and Graham Tucker.

A whole week spent together in a space as confined as a narrowboat has the potential to either make or break friendships. However, with ringing of almost exclusively excellent quality despite the heat and some challenging bells, we are all hoping that this trip will not be our last together.

Thank you to those who joined us to make up the numbers and to the six people who made my belated 30th birthday celebrations so enjoyable.

*Tim Bayton*



The Seven, safely back on dry land. L-R: Lynne Hughes, Lesley Tucker, Janet Coles, Graham Tucker, Tim Bayton, Sue Sawyer, Guy Collins

## DON ROBERTS IS 80



Don (4<sup>th</sup> from left, back row) with other members of the Marychurch peal band

It may come as quite a surprise to many but Don Roberts became an octogenarian on 5<sup>th</sup> August. No-one meeting Don can fail to notice his zest for life and his many enthusiasms – from swimming (and many other sports) through family history and, of course, ringing.

Swimming has been a life-long passion and he can still be found most mornings (and some evenings) at his beloved Plainmoor Pool. Don was one of the driving forces when this major facility for Torquay was built and he has continued his involvement ever since. The morning visits are at 6-30am and he has coached countless youngsters at these sessions. But, this is not just a local interest – Don is a nationally respected coach and he regularly drives hundreds of miles to enable his young trainees to compete in national events. For a while he was national coach of the water polo team – another, related, passion! And he still retains a strong interest in the sport.

At least once a week he can be found delving through the records at the Devon County record office in his tireless quest for information about his very extended, family. But Don's involvement does not stop with mere facts on a family tree. He has contacted scores of people throughout the world in his researches and then maintains contact with them through his, at least once annual, letters. These are written in his famous long hand with a traditional pen – no modern technology for Don! I once met a member of his family who told me how much she looked forward to Don's annual letter which kept her in touch with other members of the family and told of his latest findings.

Another great passion is his almost lifelong connection with Torquay Boys Grammar School - first as a pupil and, still, as a member of staff. He is enthusiastic, of course, about keeping in touch with past pupils and knows the doings of hundreds of these "boys" all over the world and looks forward to meeting many of them at the annual get-togethers.

And, of course, there is his ringing. Don learned to ring in the early 1950s at Babbacombe and has retained his interest. He was a driving force when St Marychurch bells were finally resurrected after

the devastation of the wartime bomb which demolished most of the church with such tragic loss of life. He became the first captain of ringers and loves the bells with a passion (despite the long climb!). He was adamant that they should be augmented to 10 and was part donor of one of the bells on which his name was cast. He has held many offices at Guild level (including General Secretary at the time of the Guild Centenary) and has been a CC rep for many years – he finally retires at the next AGM. He has an encyclopaedic knowledge of Guild doings over the last 50 odd years and is a vital link with those pioneers of method ringing in Devon. He also runs a regular practice at Upton in the centre of Torquay. Of recent years Don has joined Tim Bayton's Friday night bands and his repertoire of methods has grown tremendously as a result. He regularly requests the line of (often quite obscure) methods so that he can learn them for the latest enterprise.

So, the celebrations encompassed several of Don's interests (although to be accurate, the ringing celebrations had actually started two days earlier when a peal of *Don's Delight Major* was rung at Thorverton!). He started the day with his regular 6-30 trip to Plainmoor where he was deluged with gifts – I'm sure it didn't make him any less strict with the swimmers! At mid-day several members of Don's Upton band (plus Peter Bill who tagged along for a tower grab) had an enjoyable ring on the fine 4 at Tor Bryan followed by lunch at the famous Church House Inn. Don rounded off the day by ringing a full peal in fine style at St Marychurch. Mike Mears had been unable to find a 5080 (Grandsire doesn't quite run to that!) but compromised with a challenging 6 part 5076 which kept the back bells constantly changing position and 2,3 and 4 coursing throughout. At the end of the peal Don was congratulated on a fine performance (although anyone who had been in his 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary peal 2 years ago expected nothing less). Helen Mansley had baked a cake which was quickly despatched while everyone toasted Don's health and wished him many more happy years.

The following day his family were allowed in on the act and the celebrations continued!

Congratulations Don and please let your enthusiasm continue un-abated for many years to come!

*Martin Mansley*

**Quarter peal:** West Raddon, Devon (Rose Cottage). 6 Aug, 1272 Spliced S Minor (6m): Sue Sparling 1-2, Sue Sawyer 3-4, Tim Bayton (C) 5-6. With the compliments of the band to Don Roberts for his 80th birthday yesterday.

## **MORE TRAVELS WITH LILLIE**

I had a nice time on 1st June listening to a peal from my usual perch in the tower at Withycombe Raleigh (but I did laugh when two ringers nearly lost control of their bells when their ropes snatched!) and settled down to sleep as usual afterwards. But 10 minutes later (just time for a very quick pint in the local) the door burst open again and Ian Campbell collected me and took me home in his car. We had some more outings to go to!

On 12th June we set off with all the other paraphernalia that seems to go with me (handbells, computer, loud speakers, cables, etc) and headed for Taunton for a "party" arranged by Wendy Harvey. I was so excited that I clanged every time we went over a bump or round a corner because we were going to meet up with some friends that I hadn't seen for a long time. We arrived at Sheppey's Cider Farm just as Frank Mack's Garage Ring were being setup in the yard. We last met in Frank's garage when I was being installed in my frame - I was very impressed with the new legs and fittings on the Garage ring. The bells were very busy most of the morning demonstrating ringing to visitors from MENSA - and also some of the public.





The mini-ring set up in Sheppey's Cider Farm



With the Guides at Heavitree

Many of the visitors had a go, some of them staying for a long time until they finally mastered the delicate handling needed. I was able to show off as being the only "proper" bell there with a stay and slider, and people were interested in trying me as well, though even more delicate handling is needed for me to avoid banging my stay too hard.

Following lunch Ian gave his usual talk, using me and a set of handbells to demonstrate different features of ringing, and also a computer to provide demonstration ringing sounds. With the help of Ian, Lester Yeo and Richard Newman six handbells were rung to plain hunt minor. After the talk we went outside and the ringing continued on the Garage Ring until the time came to pack up and say our goodbyes.

I thought that this would be the end of this trip out, but a few days later we went up to Pinhoe Church where I was put in place at the bottom of the tower while a large group of Beaver Scouts climbed the tower and looked at the bells. Lots of them had a go at ringing me, but they didn't understand about hand and back strokes so none of them managed to get me right up (apart from Ian).

After this we went back home to Exeter and I was thrilled when Ian set about cleaning me up, and tightening my clapper and frame. I felt so proud, and was really pleased a week later when I was taken to Heavitree church to demonstrate ringing to a group of Guides - you can just see me in the corner of the photo. They were all given a quiz to complete which included questions like "how many steps are there up the tower", and "name four things you can see from the top of the tower". They took it in turns to help wind the clock (most were too short to reach properly!) and were shown how a real bell rings. With a bit of luck two or three might be interested in learning to ring when they are tall enough.

But now it is time to go home to Withycombe Raleigh for a rest!

*Lillie*

*(with a little help from Ian Campbell)*



## MUSICAL HANDBELL RESTORATION

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## **CORRECTION TO GUILD ANNUAL REPORT: Mid Devon Branch Officers**

The following officers were newly elected in November 2009:

**Chairman** Tim King, 25 Shelley Avenue, Torquay TQ1 4PF  
(01803 324851; [tim@gaspipe58.freemove.co.uk](mailto:tim@gaspipe58.freemove.co.uk))

**Secretary** Revd Russell Chamberlain, 5 Coach Place, Wolborough, Newton Abbot TQ12 1ES  
(01626 368889; [Russell@chamberlain70.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:Russell@chamberlain70.fsnet.co.uk))

**Assistant Ringing Master** David Robertson  
(01626 777880; [dthroberson@googlemail.com](mailto:dthroberson@googlemail.com))

The other officers were re-elected and are correct in the report.

## **YOUNG RINGERS' AUTUMN OUTING : SATURDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER**

The October Young Ringers Outing is as follows:

10.15 – 11.00: **Dodbrooke**: S. Thomas 6 bells 7cwt

SX739445

With church on your right, go beyond it under a footbridge and turn right to park in the rectory drive. Leave cars there to walk to the next tower and lunch.

11.15 – 12.15 **Kingsbridge**: S. Edmund 8 bells 11 cwt

SX733443

12.30 LUNCH: CREEKS END

Square's Quay, Kingsbridge. SX735440

2.00 – 2.45 **Salcombe**: Holy Trinity 6 bells 8 cwt

SX740392

3.15 – 4.00 **Galampton**: Holy Trinity 6 bells 6 cwt

SX686404

Please contact Lynne Hughes 01626 862797 [lynnephughes@hotmail.com](mailto:lynnephughes@hotmail.com) for more details and to register interest.

## **A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF A NOVICE BELLRINGER**

The bells of St Nicholas remained silent for almost half a century, then visiting ringers showed us how they sounded. 'How nice it would be if they were again rung regularly'. This thought presented problems, for a start we had no ringers, but it also presented an opportunity, some of us would have to learn.

A friendly tower captain agreed to take us on; he could have had no idea of the mayhem we were about to unleash upon his tower. Dear reader, can you remember what it was like to take a rope for the first time? We were not ringing the bell, the bell was ringing us! Some had a box to stand on, but when the bell took charge were thrown to the floor like a half deflated rugby ball, or clung to the rope and Peter Pan- like flew back to base. Worse was to come when the oldie lost the rope completely; snatched from his hand it whipped around the ringing chamber like the tail of a demented cow. It wiped pictures from the walls, dusted the light fittings far above our heads, coiled around another rope to give a passing imitation of snakes making love, finally, exhausted, it slithered to the floor. Our first lessons showed there is more to ringing bells than merely pulling on a rope.

Gradually, joining in with the regular practice night, we progressed and were even taken to a branch meeting, 'you'll see some good ringers in action, I think you'll find it interesting'. Expecting to be no more than innocent observers, we were panic stricken when invited to ring. Praise be, we rose to the occasion, though if truth were told, were saved from disaster by 'co-operative' ringing from the more experienced. Unless you are a new ringer, you cannot imagine what a thrill that was.

'Don't bang the stay'. How many times did we hear that? Bang it we did with awful consequences. It really is no good trying to stop the rope once the stay is broken. The result - seven burnt fingers, a

chunk of flesh missing from the eighth and blood on the floor; sadly, it wasn't the last stay to be broken.

'Would you like to join us and ring on Sunday morning?' Oh yes, I certainly would, but hold on, this is April Fools' Day, was he serious? Apparently he was, oh joy, no disasters, perhaps I can become a ringer after all, though I fear waiting until seventy was leaving it a bit late!

Rounds and simple call changes were the limit of our ambitions, of methods we had no knowledge and surely the Hunting Bill had banned Plain Hunt. Apparently not and with it we now met a whole new set of challenges.

'I hear some of you are ringing with St Paul's on Sundays', said our Church Warden. 'Er, well, yes, but not very well.' 'Get to it then, because we have a wedding in August and they would like the bells'. This is no longer a case of learning at our own pace, we now have a date and we **have** to meet it.

A last practice, 'we're doing nothing fancy, please let nothing go badly wrong'. By now our nerves are shot. The Bride emerges, the bells ring out, we hold it together, a small hiccup and we get together again. All too quickly it's over. 'Not bad folks, not bad, apart from the bit in the middle where we sounded as if ringing for a divorce!' Next day the Vicar passes a message from the Bride's mother, 'thank you so much, it was wonderful'. Another highlight, another milestone, history made, the first time in 50 years the bells had been rung by villagers for a village wedding. It feels good.

That behind us, there is the annual ringing tour, five towers in one day. At least we'll get plenty of practice, but a ring of 10 bells and bells of over a ton, it's not possible. Oh yes it is; we now feel we can ring anything. It's time to start on methods.

Our second wedding follows soon afterwards. Now we ring regularly for the family service each month and for those special occasions, Harvest Festival, Remembrance Day, Songs of Praise and our first year draws to a close with the Christmas Carol Service. This is always combined with the Village Christmas Tea, a very jolly affair. As it ends a small group slips away while the Vicar thanks everyone for all their hard work, 'and finally, a reminder, the Carol Service starts in half an hour'. A minute later the bells ring out over a moonlit village. Finally it is time to ring down the bells and reset the clock hammer. As we slip into our seats in a crowded church the clock strikes and the Vicar begins, 'Good Evening everyone and welcome, and thank you Bell Ringers'. Bell Ringers, is that us? It surely is. What a year we've had!

This article would not be complete if I didn't thank all those who have contributed towards bringing our bells back to life. The many Churches and tower captains who have welcomed us, all those ringers who have been so generous with their time, for all the tips and encouragement that kept us going when we despaired of ever being able to ring, we owe them all a big **THANK YOU**. We are still only learners, so who exactly is this fellow Bob Doubles and why is his Grandsire so important?

*Trevor Hitchcock*

## **EXETER BRANCH SUMMER OUTING**

First stop on Exeter's Branch outing to villages north of Dartmoor was Bondleigh with its mainly 15<sup>th</sup> century church in this small parish. The four bells presented more of a challenge than might have been expected, particularly to members of the group who were perhaps not taking the ringing quite as seriously as they should!

Honeychurch with just three bells gave us plenty of time to explore this grade one listed church, said to be one of the smallest and most unspoilt churches in England. It dates from the twelfth century and has medieval benches from the fifteenth century. Part of an Elizabethan mural remains on the north wall.

We moved on to the much larger church at Sampford Courtney with its six bells and more ringers now joining us. A chance in this church for non ringers to brush up on their history as this is where the Prayer Book rebellion began in 1549. Next stop was Jacobstowe which was the setting for some impromptu hymn singing thanks to Amy Gill's organ playing, whilst the ring of 5 saw the Guild Master turning in the tenor. Then it was on to the fine ring of bells at Okehampton, once we'd mastered the unlocking of the west door! After the novelty of the lower number of bells earlier in the day it was nice to hear some good 8 bell ringing which ranged from call changes to surprise major.

The final port of call was the Denmisch ring, now extended to eight bells. Here we were able to continue ringing whilst enjoying pasties and much needed cups of tea (and wine!) thanks to Mischa's hospitality – a lovely way to spend an evening!

Many thanks to Rob for organising such a varied and contrasting afternoon and to everyone who attended for the fun and friendship enjoyed.

*Heather Somerwill and Jenny Young*



The group at Okehampton whilst waiting for the door to be unlocked



Ringing at the Denmisch ring

## CHANGES AT COMBE MARTIN.



Keith Wyer

At the end of June, the Parishioners of Combe Martin and the other Parishes in the North Devon Team had to say farewell to Keith Wyer, their Rector and friend for the past 18 years, as he retired from the Ministry. Keith moved into the Exeter Diocese, from the Midlands, in the early 80s when he was appointed Chaplain to Kelly College, where he also helped out at the Parish Church of St Eustachius at Tavistock from time to time. He spent about 10 years there before moving to be Rector at St Peter ad Vincula in Combe Martin in the early 90s, where he then spent a very active and happy 18 years serving the Church family and the village Community.

Keith was very much into music (occasionally playing his trombone in Church!) and he sang with and encouraged our Choir. He was equally supportive of those of us who make that special kind of music on the tuneful bells in the Tower at St Peter's (although we could not persuade him to take a rope!). He was appreciative of our regular commitment to Sunday Service ringing and was happy for the bells to be put to good use for Quarters, occasional Peals, and to welcome Visitors.



He always attended our annual dinner and this year's, in May, was of course especially poignant as we dined him out prior to his retirement. We also said farewell in traditional bell ringers' style when we rang a quarter peal at St Peter's (see below) when three of our regular Band were able to participate. We wish him a long and contented retirement and hope that he continues in his usual friendly and happy frame of mind as captured in the photo!

*Bruce Hicks*

**Quarter Peal.** Combe Martin. St Peter ad Vincula, 21<sup>st</sup> June. 1344 PB Major: Val Hicks 1, Rachel Taylor 2, Christine Harris 3, Bruce Hicks 4, Ken Edwards 5, Mike Squire 6, Stephen Taylor 7, Mike Rose (C) 8.

## ST MARK'S TARKA TRAIL TOUR.

On Saturday 14 August, fifteen ringers from St Mark's Church in Exeter went for a cycle tour on the Tarka Trail in North Devon. Waking up to a grey and misty morning we did not know what the day would turn out like. It soon started to clear up and by 12 o'clock the sun was starting to shine.

Our first stop was at Little Torrington which had six nice but long roped bells. Then we cycled 1.6 miles to The Puffing Billy which is a lovely pub built where Torrington station used to be. Gareth got worried when it looked like his lunch was not coming!!!

After a 7.6 mile ride we rang at Westleigh which were challenging but a nice ring of six. We then cycled 2.4 miles and were glad to stop for refreshments at an old train carriage come cafe which did really lovely cakes. Then we cycled over a long bridge where we held up all the traffic!

We went on to ring at Bideford Church, this church has eight bells, where we rang many methods from Plain Bob to Stedman and Bristol.

We then cycled 7.2 miles all the way back to Watergate bridge which is where we started from. A round-trip total of 19.6 miles.

At the end we were very tired but we had had a great day out and enjoyed all the ringing. All of us who went would like to thank Graham and Lesley very much for organising a lovely day out.

*Amy Gill*



Some ringing; Some cycling; Some eating & drinking





The group in the sunshine outside Westleigh church

## **A FAREWELL TO HELEN**

Helen Hitchins joined the ringers at Withycombe Raleigh, Exmouth in 2003 when she moved with husband and family from the Honiton area to nearby Lypstone. Her outgoing personality, ability to make easy contact with people and latent ringing skills meant she was quickly integrated into the band. Over the past seven years she progressed from simple methods on 6 bells to Surprise on 8, and last year scored a peal of Grandsire Cinques. As a music teacher the only arguments we ever had (and lost!!) were over which of the 13 bells at Withycombe we should ring – the front 5, the middle eight with the flat 6<sup>th</sup>.....

Not long ago her husband was appointed Vicar of a church in Norfolk, and much as we tried to ignore the fact, we realised that she would (and should) follow in due course. As a suitable send-off we decided to ring the first doubles peal in the tower. We practiced to increase our repertoire and on 17<sup>th</sup> of July successfully rang a peal of 10 methods and 32 variations.

We miss her very much and wish her every success in her new surroundings. Unsurprisingly, email messages received confirm that she has been eagerly welcomed into the Norfolk and Suffolk ringing communities.

*Roger King*



L-R: Patrick Foster, Helen, John Foster (C), David Wills, Richard Shere, and Roger King.

## REMINDERS

### SATURDAY 16<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2010 – STRIKING COMPETITIONS (6 bell, Novice & 8 bell)

|                    |                  |  |
|--------------------|------------------|--|
| 10.00 am – 1.00 pm | <b>Uplowman</b>  | 6 Bell inter-tower competition                                   |
| 10.00 am – 1.00 pm | <b>Bickleigh</b> | Novice competition for bands to include less experienced ringers |
| 2.00 pm onwards    | <b>Huntsham</b>  | 8 Bell inter-branch competition                                  |

To book a time slot for either the 6 bell or novice competition please contact Janet Coles, Guild Secretary on 01392 494365, 07775 424575 or [janet.coles@tesco.net](mailto:janet.coles@tesco.net). Book early to avoid disappointment.

Branch Ringing Masters should also contact Janet to inform her of their intention to enter a band in the 8 bell competition.

## DATE FOR YOUR 2011 DIARY

### SATURDAY 18 JUNE 2011 GUILD FESTIVAL including the AGM

The hosts in 2011 will be the Mid Devon Branch, venue to be confirmed. Look out for more details in forthcoming RRDs, on the Guild Website and posters in your home tower.



Both branch and Guild officers would be pleased to hear your suggestions regarding the content of the day in order to make it an event you want to be part of. All of our contact details can be found on the Guild website or in your 2009 Guild Report.

*Janet Coles*

## **GUILD HANDBELL DAY**

It was a smaller group than last year who gathered for the Guild of Devonshire Ringers' handbell workshop in Okehampton on 4<sup>th</sup> July, as many were away on holiday, but we still had two groups going most of the time. Mischa made us very welcome to her home, prepared a tasty lunch and kept us sustained with food during the afternoon, as well as fitting in some ringing herself.

Plain Hunt, Plain Bob Minor, Grandsire Doubles, Kent T B Major and Grandsire Caters were practised, and during a break we had a go on the 8-bell Saxilby simulator, augmented since last year. Mischa was keen that a handbell quarter be rung to mark the day, so Kent T B Major was rung in the dining room, an earlier attempt in the conservatory having been disturbed by a strident mobile phone! The quarter was rung on Mischa's 15 in C set, one of many sets of bells in use on the day, some hemispherical bells and a pocket set providing variety.

It is intended to hold the event again at a similar time next year, everyone interested being welcome.

*Lynne Hughes.*

**Okehampton, Devon.** (5 Moorcroft Close) 4 July, 1280 Kent TB Major: Lynne Hughes 1-2, Margaret Chapman 3-4, Tim Bayton (C) 5-6, Sue Sawyer 7-8. Rung at the Guild handbell day, with thanks to Mischa for her hospitality.



Naturally, there was lots of handbell ringing....



Mischa Thompson (left, front row) and attendees of the GDR Handbell Workshop at Okehampton.

## **DEVON YOUNG RINGERS AT WOLBOROUGH – THERE'S A CHANGE IN THE AIR**

On 10<sup>th</sup> July young ringers in Devon enjoyed a Saturday at Wolborough, with ringing and a barbecue, for the fourth time in the last five years. Numbers were down to eight as many 'regulars' had other commitments, but it was great to have three new young people, including one who had not rung beyond his own tower before. The ringing was run by Tom Waterson and ranged from rounds to a finishing flourish of Cambridge Major, with the help of some oldies.

Amy and Laurie played the organ for a short service over at the bell-less but BBQ compatible St Paul's Newton Abbot. It turned out Chris could play too, and the organ was put to good use by these three young people after the BBQ. Some others had a go at handbells with a choice of sets: large, small or coloured.

We wish to thank Russell for the use of both churches; and Caroline and her team for organising all the food yet again, including delicious puddings. The July Young Ringers' Days will continue, as well as the spring and autumn outings, and we already have plans for a new venue next summer!

*Lynne Hughes*





Amy and Chris preparing for a course end at the barbecue

## OBITUARY

### JOHN P (JACK) SIMS 1912 - 2010

Jack, born on 10<sup>th</sup> August 1912, was the youngest child of William and Laura Sims. His mother died when he was 5 years old and Jack spent some time in foster care until his father remarried. He left school at 14, as most people did at that time, and started work for the Plymouth Water Authority. One of his first tasks was the provision of fresh water to the Plymouth fishing fleet. He progressed through the ranks to finish his career as an inspector going out at night listening to the stop cocks for leaks. He retired in 1977.

Jack joined the choir at Charles Church, Plymouth mainly because his father pumped the organ there. When his voice broke in 1927 he volunteered to take up bell ringing. The vicar used to give 2 parties a year, one for the bell ringers and one for the choir, and so it was that Jack first met Phyllis who was working at the vicarage as a cook. They were married in 1938 at Charles Church; theirs was one of the last weddings with bells before the war. The marriage lasted 63 years until Phyllis' death in 2001. During the war Jack took custody of the tower keys as the Tower Captain, who was in the Territorial Army, had been called up. Some ringing practices did take place during the war, with the bells tied and silent. During the war Jack was out and about during the bombing raids helping to keep the supply of water going which was so vital in putting out the fires. Although he was not called up, partly on medical grounds, he was certainly on the front line. He saw Charles Church the morning after the Blitz but for safety reasons was prevented from entering the burned out church by the police and firemen. He didn't visit again.

After the war he and Phyllis joined Emmanuel Church; whether this was to do with Emmanuel having a ring of 8 bells we don't know. The tower captain died during the war and there was no one amongst the combined group from Emmanuel and Charles Church capable at that time of leading the band. Harry Myers the tower captain from St Andrews took the practices until Jack had sufficient experience to take over as tower captain. After organising the ringing for many Sunday services and for weddings he retired from the role when he was 80 after almost 40 years.

Jack was an active member of the Guild of Devonshire ringers. He was elected as a Vice President in 1969 and Guild Master in 1981. In 1953 Jack rang his first peal as conductor (Grandsire Triples), and 45 years later he rang his last quarter peal. Grandsire Doubles was rung for Ted Bickle's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday and Jack (85 at the time!) was most insistent that he rang in his friend's first quarter peal. A steady puffing & wheezing accompanied the ringing!



Jack (right) with Ted Bickle (Aged 80) after ringing Ted's 1<sup>st</sup> quarter

In his ringing career Jack had travelled and rung bells all over the country, including most of the churches in Cornwall and Devon and many in London too.

Jack had a life-long involvement with the church and was a faithful member of the Emmanuel fellowship for many years and was a regular attendee on Sundays until very recently. He stopped ringing when the stairs became too much but always had a comment on the choice of method and the standard of the ringing.

Jack's funeral took place on 25<sup>th</sup> June and was attended by family, friends and ringers including current office holders of the branch, the Guild President and five Vice-Presidents. The bells were rung open both before and after the service. Later in the day some of the Emmanuel band rang the bells again, watched by his family, including his daughter and 2 grandchildren who were went up the tower to see 'where great-granddad rang'.

*Alena Wardle*

#### Local quarters rung to celebrate Jack's life

Emmanuel – Plain Bob Doubles on 27<sup>th</sup> June: 1. Sam Peck (1<sup>st</sup> Q, aged 10), 2. Joe Peck (1<sup>st</sup> inside, aged 11), 3. Fergus Stracey, 4. Chris Wardle, 5. Alena Wardle (cond.), 6. Sarah Peck

St Budeaux – Stedman and Grandsire Doubles on 5<sup>th</sup> July: 1. John Bowler, 2. Claire Harris, 3. John Steere, 4. Alena Wardle, 5. Chris Wardle (cond.), 6. Peter Sparkes.



## THE TROYTE RINGING CENTRE PROVIDES HELP FOR HEROES

It all started when the Bampton PCC decided to postpone a "Weekend of Fun" for parishioners programmed for 7 and 8 August. So we were left with a free Saturday – unbelievable! We decided it was about time we did something to help all those brave young people who return wounded from Afghanistan and Iraq. And so the idea of "To ring or not to ring to provide Help for Heroes" was born. We divided Saturday, 7 August into half-hour slots between 10.00 am and 6.00 pm and invited friends of the Troyte Ringing Centre to become sponsored to either have the Bampton bells ringing or silent for each half hour.

With a little care we programmed the day so that the ringing slots were between 10.00am and 1.00pm and between 3.00pm and 6.00pm, giving just enough time for one peal in the morning and another in the afternoon. The period between 1.00pm and 3.00pm could be periods of silence or periods of ringing by the local band. Life got just a little complicated when various Bampton ringers were either on holiday or at the Taunton Flower Show on the Saturday in question.

Some late night mental arithmetic suggested that if we raised £1.00 per minute throughout the day, we could total £500. Therefore, we set ourselves a target of £500. By mid July, we realised we could comfortably reach this target and so we raised our sights to £1,000. We produced a "thermometer" with increments of £50 up to a maximum of £1,400 and wondered if we were being too ambitious. By 1.00pm on Saturday, 7 August as the first peal ended at exactly 1.00pm – well done Robert Brown – we had burst the thermometer and we reached £1,500 during the first period of silence. At 6.00pm we stopped fund raising just as Tim Collins completed the second peal in less than 2 hours and 56 minutes; Fred Sage led us down with less than 10 seconds to spare. Who was it who said ". . . take a calendar with you when ringing a peal with Tim Collins"?



The 7-Surprise Minor band: Lesley Knipe, Jeffrey Knipe, Sheila Matthews, Michael Hatchett, Mervyn Way and Robert Brown.

We served tea and coffee, biscuits and cakes throughout the day. We had a collection box in the town during the morning and another in the church all day. During the post-6.00pm reckoning, we found the "tea ladies" had pockets full of banknotes totaling £300 and our collection boxes raised nearly £350 – fantastic! Pledges and additional funds are still coming in but we know we have raised in excess of £2,550. So our original hopes of raising £1 per minute resulted in us raising more than



£5 per minute and has exceeded our wildest dreams. A very big "thank you" to the friends of the Troyte Ringing Centre and to the Bampton parishioners. You have all been absolutely wonderful. **AND**, we did not receive a single complaint. So just remember, all you tower representatives who don't like your bells rung too often just in case there are complaints, this particular day touched the hearts and minds of a very generous small town population.

Just imagine what we could do if every tower held one such event during the year. The world in which we all live might just become a better place for many of those who are disabled or disadvantaged in some way. Two peals (7 Surprise minor and 11 Surprise minor) were rung for The Devonshire Society, together with Devon Call Changes.

Life is just amazing at times! Thank you all so much.

*Michael Hatchett*

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**RINGING ROUND DEVON** is the newsletter of The Guild of Devonshire Ringers and is circulated free to all affiliated towers. 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. Any comments and inaccuracies in articles contained in this newsletter are the responsibility of individual contributors, and the opinions expressed do not necessarily represent those of the Guild. Items for inclusion may be sent by post to Ringing Round Devon, 215, Exeter Road, Exmouth EX8 3DZ or by e-mail to [rogerking60@aol.com](mailto:rogerking60@aol.com)