



RINGING ROUND DEVON

GUILD OF DEVONSHIRE RINGERS

Newsletter 82: July 2011

2011 GUILD FESTIVAL AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

As forecast, Saturday 18 June - the day of the 2011 Guild Festival and AGM, hosted this year by the Mid-Devon Branch - dawned cloudy and overcast. Rain threatened. But fortunately, the forecast was less promising than the reality. Teignmouth, the focal point for most of the day's events, remained for the most part dry. Ringers from all parts of the county gathered in the centrally-located Teignmouth Baptist Church for sessions ranging from the Guild AGM which concluded the day, to a lively 'Any Questions' hosted by the Guild President, Lester Yeo, and a stimulating range of 'Drop In' opportunities, designed to cater for the interests of ringers of all levels of experience. Light refreshments readily available from the kitchen hatch helped to maintain energy levels throughout the day.

For some of those attending, the morning began elsewhere. In addition to an 'open ringing' session, the programme offered a choice of three focussed practice sessions – Doubles and Minor; Triples and Major; Surprise Major – all of which took place nearby (Stokeinteignhead, Dawlish and the two Teignmouth towers). For the learners who chose to attend one of these sessions, they provided an excellent opportunity for some concentrated practice, with advice and encouragement from teams of experienced helpers.



Tim (helper), Janet (Student) Alena (Tutor) and Lisa (Student) at Stokeinteignhead

Meanwhile, in the Baptist Church itself, the Estuary Handbell Ringers were ready with advice on tune ringing, and methods could be practised on handbells with another group, while elsewhere in the building the Frank Mack Garage Ring and the Saxilby Dumb-bell were available for those attending to test their skills. The experience of those who tried the Dumb-bell - which was linked to Derek Ballard's Beltower computer programme, with the image of the ringing circle enlarged and projected onto the wall – helped to confirm its real potential for training purposes at all levels from beginners to advanced ringers.

The room set aside for the Any Questions session, immediately before lunch, which was hosted by the Guild President, Lester Yeo, was full. Supported by a panel comprising Leslie Boyce, Janet Coles and James Clarke, the President dealt with a range of questions submitted by those attending – some highlighting immediate concerns, such as recruitment and retention of new ringers and effective approaches to training; others raising more long-term and speculative issues, such as the future of ringing in the next ten to fifty years. In relation to the latter point, the President placed emphasis on what he sees as the importance of collaboration between neighbouring towers. The availability of the Guild's Instruction Fund and its possible uses provoked considerable discussion both in this session and in the AGM which followed after lunch.

A confident three leads of Kent by four experienced handbell ringers introduced the service of worship preceding the AGM. The service was led by the Reverend David Witchell, from St Paul's Preston (Paignton). Although St Paul's has no bells, David's own experience as a ringer helped to make his comments about the relationship between churches and bellringers particularly apt. Inevitably a significant part of the AGM was devoted to the election of Guild Officers.



John Foster takes over as Master from Mo

Lester Yeo was re-elected as Guild President; Maureen Hawkins, Guild Master for 2010/11, handed the badge of office to John Foster; Ian Campbell was both identified as Master Elect for 2012/13 and elected as a Vice-President of the Guild. Most of the current Officers were re-elected – Janet Coles (Secretary), Sue Sawyer (Treasurer), Leslie Boyce (Librarian), John Foster (Report Secretary), Roger King (Publicity Officer), Michael Mears (Peal Secretary), Tim Bayton (Quarter Peal Secretary), and Lynne Hughes (Education Officer). Ian

Smith, reappointed as a Guild Bells and Belfries Adviser, was joined in this by Ian Campbell, as James Clarke who has been serving in this capacity, indicated his wish to stand down, in view of his role as Diocesan Adviser. Mary Mears, Ian Smith and Ian Campbell were elected as DCBRF Trustees, Ruth Rockey, appointed as Independent Examiner of the Guild's accounts. All of those who have served in the present year were warmly thanked for their work on behalf of the Guild. It was noted that no appointment was yet being made to the role of Safeguarding Officer (for children and vulnerable adults), as the precise details of the role have still to be identified. Advance notice was also given in relation to the role of Guild Publicity Officer, as Roger King indicated that he will not be available to stand for re-election in 2012. Anyone interested in taking on either of these roles was asked to make this known to the Guild.

Other matters raised during the AGM which gave rise to some lively discussion included public liability insurance for Guild members (this was agreed and will be pursued with immediate effect); dates, venues and methods for the six and eight bell striking competitions, and the venue (Aylesbeare Branch) and date for the 2012 Guild Festival and AGM. Attendance at this year's event, reinforced by comments made during the discussion, seemed to confirm that a Saturday in June was not the ideal date. Although the occasion was enjoyed by those who took part, and offered the range of activities that previous canvassing of opinion had indicated was what members wanted, attendance numbers throughout the day remained relatively low. While it was recognised that the administrative changes involved in shifting the date for the AGM would almost certainly mean that an alteration to the existing pattern would not be possible before 2013, the President encouraged both those attending and those unable to attend to contact him or one of the other Guild Officers as soon as possible with ideas of any kind about the future format and timing of the event. The aim is to provide an occasion which brings together Guild members – old and new – from across the County, and to offer a programme that members would be reluctant to miss.

Thanks were expressed to the Mid-Devon Branch for hosting the day, to all who contributed to its organisation, and in particular to John Martin, Secretary of the Mid-Devon Branch, for admirably fulfilling the role of 'lynchpin' of the whole event.

Janet Ritterman

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE USE OF THE SAXILBY SIMULATOR AT THE AGM

One of the many ideas to try and attract members to the AGM this year was the use of the Saxilby Simulator set up in its frame. We had hoped that ringers would come running to try this impressive teaching tool. We borrowed it from the Salisbury Guild and thank them for their kind co-operation.

Although not quite the draw we had hoped the ringers involved found the exercise very interesting and gave much food for thought. One of the things I particularly wanted to investigate was the use of projected images from the Beltower program, developed by Derek Ballard of Honiton. This was an idea tried by Paul DeKok in Holland. The set up in Teignmouth Baptist Church was not ideal as there was not a suitable wall to get the images up to full size. However, there was enough room to give it a good try.

I must confess to never having been a fan of simulators, partly because I have never had a chance to spend a long time using one, and partly because I am naturally a "ropesight" ringer and the use of pure rhythm does not come naturally. I was therefore, very keen to give this idea a try.

At first we had quite a bit of difficulty getting it all to work but Derek's perseverance paid off and with a slightly "Heath Robinson" arrangement we were able to get things running. A Saxilby simulator is a virtually full sized bell wheel with plates bolted on the sides to replicate the 'feel' of a bell of about 2cwts. In this instance it is in a frame which lifts it about 8 feet above the floor. The bell has sensors attached which connect to a laptop computer running either Abel or Beltower. Beltower presents images of the simulated ringers, and we had

them arranged in a semi-circle, leaving out the ringer him/herself so you would only see the other ringers around you. Initially we tried rounds and it was relatively straight forward to pull off after the “virtual” ringer on the treble. I then tried a course of Cambridge minor and was really impressed that “ropesight” was aided by the virtual ringers. Paul had warned that the images became more difficult to use with an increase in bells so we then tried Yorkshire Major. It was true that it was harder but I still found it easier to use than ringing without the screen to watch.

Several less experienced ringers had a try and, in general, found the projected images useful. More experienced ringers, particularly those with experience of simulators, found the images less helpful and even, at times, distracting. Ringers old enough to remember Peter Cummings (the developer of the first simulators) will remember that on real bells Peter was quite difficult to ring with as ropesight meant very little to him. If I remember rightly his first experience of real ringers was a touch of Cambridge on the Hereford course. Hopefully this type of setup would mean that ringers who experience both real and simulated ringing at the learning stage can better integrate the two. Certainly the ringers involved felt that the idea should be taken up more widely and possibly developed further. In fact, Derek was so impressed, that he is looking into installing a projector in Honiton! (Watch this space!)

I would like to thank all those who helped to assemble and erect the simulator (and then take it down very quickly at the end of the day!) particularly Derek, without whose expertise we would have been lost.

If you get a chance to try this sort of set-up please give it a try.

Martin Mansley

EXETER BRANCH TRAIN OUTING

On Monday 2nd of May, 31 ringers and non-ringers got up early to catch the train for a lovely day out of ringing, walking (a lot of it) and going on the train.

We first all gathered at Exeter St David's station at 9:30 and caught the train to Bere Ferrers where we rang the nicely weighted ring of six bells. We then went for lunch at the local pub. The food was very nice but I think some people felt a bit ill after watching Andrew Digby eat four fried eggs!

Then we got on the train and continued to Calstock in Cornwall. The bells which are a ring of six bells were nice to ring but after having to climb up what felt like the side of a mountain everyone was completely tired out.

After walking down the mountain we then went for a quick drink in the pub, and then went up to the railway station to catch the train to Plymouth, where we rang at St Andrew's, a heavy ring of 10, where even the strongest of the party struggled to pull the tenor.

Finally we caught the train back to St David's and we all reflected on what a lovely day it had been.

I'm sure everyone would like to thank Heather for organising a lovely day out and Rob and Ian for arranging the ringing. Both ringers and non-ringers had all had a lovely day out.

Amy Gill



Mo & Derek en route



Enjoying the sun and peaceful surroundings

EXETER BRANCH SKITTLES AND SUPPER

On the 5th of March, 29 bellringers met at the Jubilee club, Pinhoe for a fun-filled evening of skittles and supper.

We started off by making the teams Boys VS Girls. Then we started to play. We played 2 rounds before supper and at the end of them we were all hot and hungry. So we enjoyed a lovely supper of sandwiches, chips and all sorts.

After supper we all played another round of skittles. By the end of the game the scores showed that the boys had beaten the girls. But only by a little bit.

Congratulations to Lesley Tucker who won a prize for having the highest score of the evening with 16 points.

As people started to disappear we played killer. Everyone who wanted to play gave 10p making a total jackpot of £1.20 !!!!!

I won last year and I wanted to keep my title of Killer Queen! But as we started playing, it proved harder than it looked. Most of us were knocked out quickly and it left Wendy G, Rob and Ian as the top three. Wendy was knocked out on the next throw, then Rob and that left Ian as the new Killer King!

A raffle took place which raised £46 for the Bell Restoration fund.

I'm sure everyone that went would like to thank Heather so much for organizing this great evening.

Amy Gill

BBC SPOTLIGHT - DENMISCH SIMULATOR

Calling all ringers...! BBC Spotlight (South West regional news) is doing a feature on the 10 simulated bells located in the garage of Mischa Thompson in Okehampton. The filming is to take place on Sunday 24 July from 2.30pm onwards.

Mischa needs commitment from ringers who are capable of ringing on the 10 bells, either in methods or in call changes. Additionally, she would like to attract some young ringers to show that ringing is for everyone.

She will be interviewed and I'm sure others will get to be on TV too! There will be pasties, cakes, tea and coffee available for anyone who can be there to help out. There will be no charges.

Please contact Mischa (mischa@mdthompson.me.uk) if you require more information or to let her know you can help.



The DenMisch Campanile in use in 2010 before augmentation to 10.

MARION BAKER RETIRES AS CHAIRMAN OF THE EAST DEVON BRANCH.

Marion has decided to step down as Chairman of the East Devon branch after giving many years of service in the position. On behalf of all the ringers of East Devon I would like to say thank you to Marion for all her years of hard work and dedication. It will definitely be a hard act to follow and we wish Laurie Palmer all the best in his new role as Chairman. To commemorate Marion's years of loyal service, a celebratory meal and presentation was held with many of the branch members attending. We also would like to wish Marion a swift return to ringing as she is currently recovering from a knee replacement.

James Harris



Outgoing Chairman Marion Baker of Sidmouth, with new Chairman Laurie Palmer of Ottery St. Mary

STOKE CANON BELLS

Following the article in the March 2011 *Ringling Round Devon* we are extremely pleased to report that Stoke Canon has been successful with its grant request to the Heritage Lottery Fund, receiving £44,000. With money already raised a further £12,500 is required.

The work involves a new steel frame, all new fittings, and four new or recast bells, together with re-tuning of all of the bells. The old fifth (17th century) will be hung dead and used as a clock bell. A new ringing chamber is being created in the old clock room, with a sound deadening floor installed above it. An order will be placed with Nicholson's Engineering Ltd in July with the expectation that the bells will be in place by autumn 2012.

Events have been planned for the year to involve the whole local community, including the local school. This begins with a bell ringing exhibition on Saturday and Sunday, 17th and 18th September in the newly-refurbished church, where the Guild's mini-ring (the Frank Mack Garage Ring) and the training bell will be on display and available for use to encourage people to take an interest in bell ringing. The exhibition will also feature an art competition for various age groups. A special session and presentation is being held for the pupils of the school on the Monday following.

Ian Campbell



The 6 bells removed from Stoke Cannon ready for renovation

LEEDS 2011 - A CLOSELY FOUGHT 12 BELL FINAL

After qualifying in the top three at the most fiercely contested 12 bell eliminator this year at Coventry in April, the Exeter band made the 600 mile round trip to Leeds to compete in their second consecutive final of the National 12 Bell Competition on Saturday 25th June. Our focused practice in 2010 enabled us to beat St Paul's Cathedral in the eliminator and to then finish 5th in the very closely contested local final at Crediton.

After a long and difficult journey to our final practice at Wakefield on the Friday evening, we went our separate ways to enjoy our evening's accommodations at various hotels and friends. But looking ahead to the forecast of heavy showers throughout the competition day - some were rather more pleased to be able to try the bouncy castle that was available to all of the younger generation, and the young at heart on the day!!

Instead we were to be treated. Apart from the occasional 'spits of rain' that didn't amount to much, the day turned out to be a wonderfully sunny one. Some of the band felt the heat from exposure to the sun during the day, others looked like a lobster by the end of the afternoon, and some turned rather red during the course of the evening! Two words of note for future attendees of a 'final' – sun screen, or maybe just opt for playing with the team mascot 'Toby' in the shade underneath the trees.

Our draw in the morning was favourable, but we were drawn to ring immediately after the many times past champions - Birmingham...

We've been working on our style of 12 bell ringing through consistent 12 bell competition practice in the last couple of years, which is more measured and pleasant to listen to... and on the day we did just that – we rang our style, and we rang our test piece to a 12 bell rhythm that we can all be proud of!

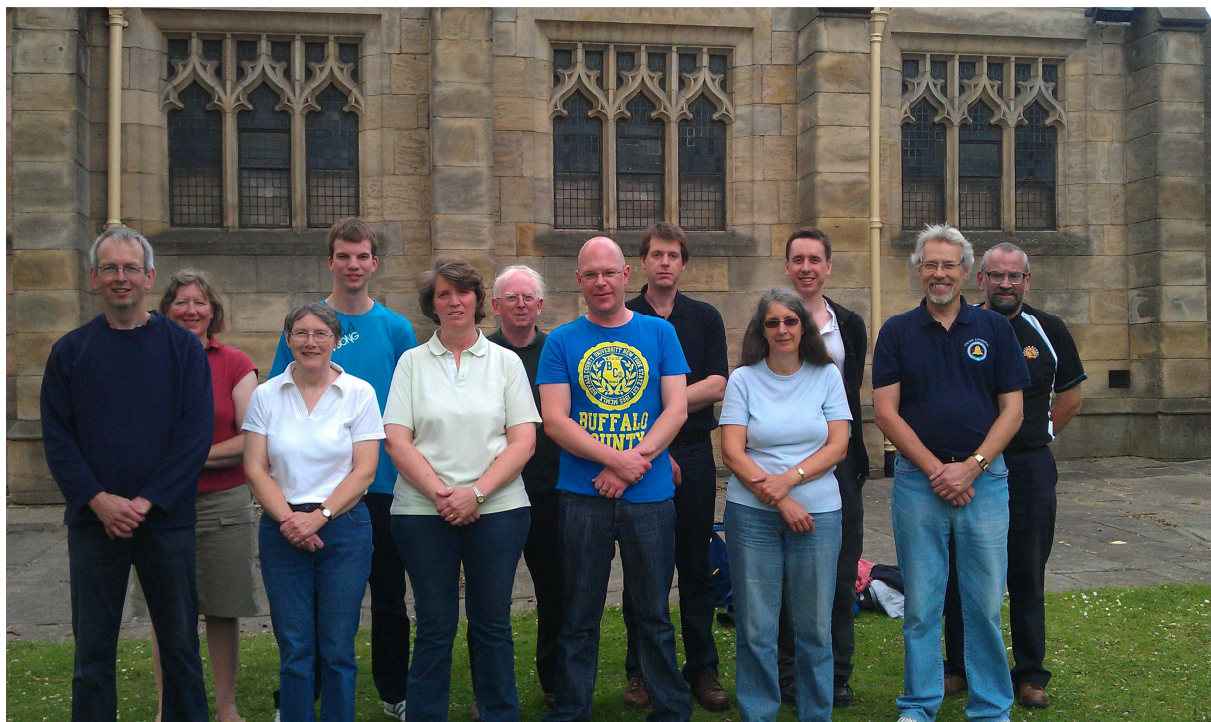
As is always the case with slightly slower ringing, the judges can have a 'field day' as it is much easier to mark down!! But, all credit to the Exeter band, we set out to ring in a particular manner, and we did just that, and rang it to an excellent standard.

Other 'graveyard' pundits said that it was a joy to listen to compared to other bands, who just rang too quickly, with their bells crashing through and falling over themselves on a 40cwt 12. Graveyard comments are always there to be taken lightly, but the judges too gave us some very favourable comments during their summing up prior to the results.

In the competition, the judges placed Exeter finishing 7th, in a final of the top 9 teams - this should always be looked at as a positive, with a total of 21 12-Bell entrants from across the UK this year. We set out to ring in a particular way, and we did just that. We should be proud to have a Devon band representation now producing consistent results in such a 'high-brow' national competition final. And of course, we beat St Paul's Cathedral again; to quote... 'it's a long way to just ring and come last' - THEY did and we didn't!!

The Leeds band produced a wonderful setting and atmosphere for the final this year, and it was always going to be a highly contested final on such a good sounding set of challenging bells. Last year's 'blue-print' of the 'perfect' final at Crediton is still being set as the one to surpass (this one was not quite there yet) although the MC at the draw and the results at Leeds was rather good.

Full details of the competition, including the new 'hawkear/strikeometer' computer generated judging analysis can be found at <http://www.12bell.org.uk/>



The band - clockwise from front right:

1 Ian W Avery, 2 Susan M Sawyer, 3 Paul J Pascoe, 4 Alison C Waterson, 5 Susan D Sparling, 6 Timothy M Payne, 7 Pauline Champion, 8 Thomas J Waterson, 9 Ian V J Smith, 10 Andrew J Palk, 11 Matthew J Hilling (C), 12 Michael E C Mears.

Results - with brackets denoting the order of ringing and peal speed.

1	85%	(2)	(3h 34)	Birmingham
2	84%	(5)	(3h 30)	York
3	80%	(8)	(3h 37)	ASCY
4	72%	(9)	(3h 34)	Bristol
5	67%	(7)	(3h 34)	Melbourne
6	63%	(4)	(3h 30)	Cambridge
7	62%	(3)	(3h 47)	Exeter
8	61%	(1)	(3h 37)	Stockton-on-Tees
9	60%	(6)	(3h 34)	St Paul's Cathedral

Paul Pascoe

CONDUCTING COURSE: PART 2

14th May was the follow-up day for the four students who had previously attended part 1 of Tim Bayton's Conducting Course. After a quick re-cap of the theory, it was time to demonstrate just how much we had understood, retained and could put into practice. Two towers were used: Pinhoe a benign, user-friendly 8, and after lunch the somewhat independently minded 8 at Sowton. Several experienced helpers were enlisted to ensure almost continuous ringing, on 6 or 8, and all was set for us students to take turns at conducting.

Putting the calls in the right place was eventually mastered, though checking the coursing order and comparing with theory proved much more of a minefield, particularly whilst trying to keep right - having worked out what others are doing, it's just so easy to cross-over! Multi-tasking included counting the number of bobs/singles, praying that no-one would fall off the line, remaining calm when you've missed a call and remembering how to correct.

Eventually things made sense and there seemed to be more time for decision-making. Finally, a genuine sense of achievement when despite all the odds, a call at Home brings it round, after the right number of changes and you can confidently say 'that's all', as though this is something you've been doing for years.

The course was informative, enjoyable, frustrating and satisfying. Tim proved a very able tutor, with a good balance of patience, discipline and encouragement; the expert helpers were carefully chosen to reflect these qualities too.

John Langabeer, the senior student, successfully conducted his first quarter peal of bob minor on June 26th, having (as he said) waited 60 years to do so. Quite a testament to the value of the course!

Roger King

THE DEVON CHURCH BELL RESTORATION FUND

The trustees last met on April 18th. Over the previous year we had paid out over £20,000 in grants, nearly double our income over the same period, and it was with some relief that we were now experiencing a slight lull in applications, only two being received at this meeting. We were able to offer £400 to Chittlehampton towards the painting of their bell frame, and also increase our previous offer to Stoke Canon by a further £1,000 to £7,500.

Stoke Canon have just heard that they have been successful with their application to the Heritage Lottery Fund such that they can now plan for the reinstatement of their bells to go ahead in autumn 2012.

The work at Plymtree was completed in February, as was the major restoration of the 6 bells at Stoodleigh, the latter to be rededicated on June 26th; and the rehang of the 6 at High Bray (unringable for some 30 years) was completed in May.

The 5 bells at Brentor were taken out in May with the aim of having them ringing again by September when they have two weddings booked. We hope it isn't raining!!

May also saw the first outing of the new DCBRF promotional leaflets at the Devon County Show. A copy is included with this edition of RRD. Of course if you are able to use the Gift Aid donation form, please do! Alternatively, if you personally have no use for it, how about placing it on your church bookshelf? If you would like further copies of the leaflet please let me know.

Ian Smith



Brentor –the nearest the van could get!

VANDALISM AT MARY TAVY!

The street party was going with a swing down by the church in Mary Tavy on Royal Wedding Day. Suddenly somebody noticed that there were several ringers amongst the gathered company, and said: "Why don't you go and ring the bells?" So Ann went home and got the key.

As it happened, William Carew from across the Tamar was walking in the area with friends, and was crossing the churchyard just as the assembled ringers were going up the tower, so he followed them. Mary Tavy bells being what they are, it was decided to raise them singly. William raised the tenor. Gerry gave the 4th rope a good tug, at which point one strand broke inside the sally. It was decided to abandon that bell and just ring the other four, and the front three were raised without further mishap.

They caught hold; Ann and Mo on 1 and 2, Gerry on the 3rd and William on the tenor. Now Gerry had not rung for some years and very quickly got into trouble. While he was being rescued the 3rd rope snapped below the sally and the bell soon rang itself down. At this point they decided that ringing the bells was perhaps not such a good idea after all, so they started lowering the remainder, during which the ropes on the treble and second also broke, both inside the sally.

Surprisingly, those down below thought it sounded marvellous; it's amazing what alcohol can do. The tower captain on his return later that evening definitely did not think it was marvellous on learning that he had four ropes to repair or replace! While the cat's away the mice will play!!

Ian Smith



Repair or replace the ropes?



MUSICAL HANDBELL RESTORATION

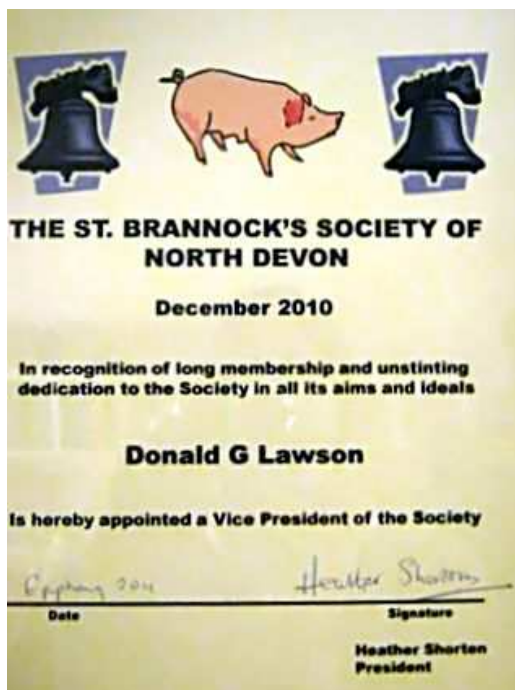
*Specialist repairs and restoration by
Geoffrey C. Hill*

**New Court Farm, Lamerton, Tavistock, Devon, PL19 8RR
Telephone (01822) 614319 or newcourtfarm@aol.com**

ST BRANNOCK'S SOCIETY

These photos show two of the founder members of the St Brannock's Society, who recently received recognition for their unstinting loyalty, effort, and major contribution to the maintaining and furthering of Method Ringing in the District of North Devon. At their AGM, the members of the Society were pleased to be able to honour and thank both Mike Rose and Don Lawson for all their efforts on behalf of St Brannock's, by presenting them with certificates and appointing them as Vice Presidents of the Society.

Christine Harris.



Mike (L), Don and their Certificates

CALLING ALL BELL RINGERS (& POTENTIAL RINGERS) IN THE FENITON AREA

Well it happened on time and in Grand Style!! St Andrew's Church, Feniton is open and in fine fettle. However some things are still in need of renewal and in particular the BELL RINGERS, they need new blood. St Andrew's has a fine light ring of six bells, but for various reasons we now only have four Feniton Ringers, and two who ring here and in Payhembury. This is not enough to cover illness and holidays. We need to at least double our numbers. So if you already ring or would like to learn, age is no barrier, we would be glad to teach you. Practise is weekly, day to yet to be confirmed. It would be wonderful to have a full tower for Sunday Services and Weddings.

Please contact the Tower Captain Josephine Chown, email jo@jochown.plus.com

A NEW METHOD "DISCOVERED"

One Sunday morning recently, whilst waiting for enough to ring, one of our band, John Fosdike, showed us a copy of Bell News, dated March 12, 1887. It is a family heirloom and inside, on page 416 was an article that had special significance to him and his family "A New Method by Jno Fosdike, Woodbridge, Suffolk" his great grandfather. He asked me if I knew if it had been rung, knowing that I liked looking at strange plain methods for us to try on practice nights. We sat down with a pencil and paper and wrote out the lead as printed, and proceeded to produce the blue line from this. Not having enough to ring Major on the Sunday morning I asked if he would like me to try and find out what I could about it and I promised to let him know the next Sunday morning. It was most interesting to read the old copy of Bell News, Smiths of Derby were advertising in 1887, along with Warner & Sons of Cripplegate. There was also a James Shaw, Son & Co, from Bradford, Manufacturers by Steam Power of every description of Church, Turret and Public Clocks. What a wonderful sight that might have been. Also both Part I and Part II of *A treatise on Treble Bob* by Jasper W Snowdon were for sale, at 3s 2d and 2s 1d respectively, direct from Wm Snowdon, Becketts Bank Chambers, Leeds.

Arriving home after ringing I proceeded to look through all the books I had, interrogated the web pages, looking for all variations of Fosdike, Woodbridge, and Suffolk in the hope that something would pop up. Alas it was not to be. Having exhausted all my lines of enquiry I turned to a source of information that we had used in the past for all the doubles we had been ringing recently, Anthony Smith. I sent him an e-mail with the place notation and a resume of the article. It was not long before I received a reply back, not from Anthony, but from the Methods Committee, which I printed out at the time and gave to John Fosdike.

It had indeed been rung, but not until 1987, when it was rung to a quarter-peal and named HMS Coventry Bob Major. A pity as we were going to challenge John to learn to ring the treble to plain hunt on 8 and then ring a quarter of it and name it Fosdike Bob Major. Perhaps we will still get him to rise to this challenge. As a result of this I inputted the place notation into Beltower and produced a print out of the blue line, and then composed a reasonably musical quarter peal, based on some Bob Major compositions that are around.

Below is a copy of the original article and you can prick out the blue line for yourself. It is not too difficult, and would be worth looking at for something different to ring on a practice night. I suppose we should get a band together at WR, obtain a suitable composition for a peal and ring it and name it Fosdike Bob Major but we believe convention states that if it has been rung to a quarter and provisionally named then you are sort of honour bound to keep this name. But I see recently that a band have rung a triples method to a peal and did not use the provisional name, they renamed it. So you never know!

John Foster, Withycombe Raleigh

A NEW METHOD.

BY JNO. FOSDIKE, WOODBRIDGE, SUFFOLK.

12345678
21436587
24136857
42318675
43281765
34827156
38472516
83245761
82354671
28536417
25836147
52381674
53218764
35127846
31527486
13254768
13527486

This method is founded on four-bell work, before and behind. In the work the treble is a plain hunt as in Bob Major. Three other bells are hunts or quick bells, with the treble throughout the lead. At the start the tenor is a quick bell, and hunts from behind, passes the treble in 4-5 down to lead, and passes the treble again as they return. The other two, fourth and fifth, are quick bells, and pass in 4-5, when the treble is laying her whole pull behind. These quick bells are kept from their quick

work when the treble leads, and the dodging takes place. The other four are slow bells, hunting in the four-bell work. The second and third are in their slow work before, and sixth and seventh in the slow-work behind. The treble lead and seconds place is made, and every bell dodges in their respective places, as in Bob Major, which closes the work of the first lead.

The rule for ringing it is, I think, very easy. First understand the position the slow and quick bells are in, as above, at the end of each lead, and you have the work of the next lead before you. The bobs are made in 4th place, and the calling the same as in Bob Major.

HOWARD RINGS SOMETHING NEW FOR BIRTHDAY

Howard Egglestone was 75 in April and he wanted to ring a peal on handbells in his favourite method – Bristol S Major. So we hatched a plan for having some practices and ringing a practice quarter during the weeks before we were going to attempt the peal. At the first practice it became clear that some more homework was needed! At the second practice we duly rang a quarter peal and things were beginning to come together.

So it was that we meet in Crediton on Sunday 10 April to attempt the peal. Neither Sue nor Howard had rung a peal of Bristol “in-hand” before and this was only Matt’s second peal attempt of the year. So things were against us. But we quickly settled down into some accurate ringing which lasted all the way to the end. Any mistakes were quickly corrected by a gentle nod from Tom and so after 2h32 (Howard’s quickest ever peal of Bristol!) the peal came neatly back into rounds.

Well done Howard: nobody should ever say ‘you can’t teach an old dog new tricks’!

Matt Hilling

Guild of Devonshire Ringers
Crediton, Devon
Mill Cottage
Sunday, 10 April 2011 in 2h32 (15)
5088 Bristol S Major
Composed: M B Davies (No.1)
1-2 Susan D Sparling
3-4 Thomas J Hinks
5-6 Matthew J Hilling (C)
7-8 Howard W Egglestone
First of Bristol in hand: 1-2, 7-8.
A 75th birthday treat for HWE.



The Bristol Major peal band in order from left

BELL-HANGING NEWS FROM NICHOLSON ENGINEERING

Sampford Peverell: Nicholson Engineering will shortly commence a heavy overhaul of the bell installation and the work should be complete at the end of June. This will be the first major work to the bells for very many years.

Stoke Canon: have recently been successful in applying for a substantial grant from the heritage lottery fund towards the cost of the remodelling and rehung of the six bells. As soon as everything else is in place it is hoped that this work will be able to commence soon. The scheme will see four of the bells replaced or recast and the whole peal rehung with entirely new frame and fittings and will result in a very fine six.

Newton Tracey: due to have their three bells rehung for stationary chiming, the frame not being capable of supporting the loads generated by full circle ringing. The work is due to begin in the autumn of this year and be completed in February 2012.

TRAINING DAY – KALEIDOSCOPE RINGING – 9 APRIL 2011

'I think my head is beginning to hurt!' said one of the participants at the end of the day devoted to Kaleidoscope Ringing. 'But it's a good kind of hurting, I think', he added quickly. The other learners agreed: the consensus was that it had been a really worthwhile day and a very effective way of helping to develop key skills. There were several suggestions in the afternoon about a repeat, or a follow-up day. Howard Egglestone led the morning session, which was held at Wolborough (Newton Abbot). For the afternoon session the group moved to Highweek, on the other side of the town, where (after lunch in the pub) Lynne Hughes took over and supervised the afternoon's practising of what had been introduced during the morning. The ideas put forward in the Central Council publication - 'Kaleidoscope Ringing – a Method Ringer's alternative to Called Changes' by Gordon Lucas – formed the basis for most of the activities during the day.

Howard began the morning by outlining the reasons that he regards Kaleidoscope Ringing as a particularly effective way of developing certain skills for method ringing and then quickly had the group (eleven learners, four helpers) practising various patterns of 'longs', 'shorts' and dodges, first changing at handstroke, then at backstroke - ringing on the eight, but working in pairs (2-3, 4-5, 6-7). As a further stage, he invited pairs to invent their own patterns. What became clear was how useful this was as an exercise - not only for the ringing itself but also for the pairs to gain confidence in using appropriate terminology to describe to each other, and then to agree, what they intended to ring. Under Lynne's supervision some of the pairs invented increasingly challenging variants of this during the afternoon, before moving on to ringing some typical call change patterns, called using the terminology from the earlier kaleidoscope exercises, rather than conventional call change terminology.

It was clear that for aspiring method ringers, this type of intensive focus on the skill of changing places – which demands that places are constantly counted and where repetition is built in - can significantly improve handling and listening. (And judging by the level of challenge of some of the morning exercises, it could well offer something in the development of conducting skills as well.) At the end of the day several of the learners vowed that they would seek out a fellow ringer and try to do some regular practice of the patterns tried during the day.

The hope that Kaleidoscope Ringing might be used more systematically in the teaching of ringing was evident as an undercurrent to many of the remarks during the morning. It raised the question of whether the name itself - Kaleidoscope Ringing - is a help or a hindrance in getting such ideas more widely adopted. In other areas of activity, where skills of co-ordination were involved, the principle of putting one of the key elements 'under the microscope' and making an exercise of it is a normal stage in skill development.

For those familiar with the concept of Kaleidoscope Ringing, the name clearly conveys what is involved. But perhaps for those for whom the term is less familiar, 'Kaleidoscope Ringing' sounds like a 'frill' – an optional extra, rather something that gets to the heart of the matter. Yet this it certainly does, as the learners at this Training Day came to realise.

Janet Ritterman



Howard (right) with Kaleidoscope participants

MORE FIRST QUARTERS IN EAST DEVON

Alan and Sue Tucker of Widcombe Barton, Farway celebrated their Ruby Wedding anniversary last October. It had been intended to ring a quarter peal to mark the occasion, but due to Alan's illness it had to be postponed. Now, rather belatedly, though Alan is still not well enough to ring a quarter, friends from across East Devon got together on 11th June at the Church of St Michael and All Angels, Farway, to ring a Quarter peal of Bob Doubles, as shown below. I'm sure all ringers would like to offer their congratulations to Jeanne and especially to Alan and Sue on 40 years of marriage and wish Alan a speedy recovery.

Trevor Hitchcock

11th June 2011, St Michael, Farway 1260 Plain Bob Doubles

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Sue Tucker | 4. Crispin Denny |
| 2. Jeanne Mills (1st on inside bell) | 5. Derek Ballard (C) |
| 3. Brenda Coley | 6. Terry Rowland |

Rung as a Ruby Wedding Anniversary compliment to Alan & Sue Tucker

Additionally, as part of the programme to ring (or at least attempt) quarter peals for anyone who would benefit (could that be most of us?), we are pleased to report another first: Lisa Clarke rang her first quarter inside to Plain Bob Doubles.

28th May 2011, St Andrew, Feniton 1260 Plain Bob Doubles

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Richard Coley | 4. Paddy Priscott |
| 2. Lisa Clarke (1st on inside bell) | 5. Derek Ballard (C) |
| 3. Brenda Coley | 6. Jeanne Mills |

Derek Ballard

60TH ANNIVERSARY AT ST MARK'S EXETER

On 28th April 1951 the 8 bells at St Mark's Exeter were rung for the first time. John Langabeer helped with the installation of the bells and was the first steeple keeper of the tower. John had a gap from ringing at St Mark's of about 45 years but we are now pleased that he is back ringing with us regularly. He recalls some of his memories of the installation and early ringing days at St Mark's:

"About 62 years ago, the Vicar Reverend C.J. Poulton put forward the idea of having bells at St Marks. After due consultation with committees and other interested parties fund raising was started. This was at a time of full congregations and keen church members so large events were organised with plenty of helpers. We were also lucky to obtain five old bells from another Exeter church which gave us some metal to cast new bells. We already had a service bell dating from the building of the church which became the 4th of the 8. We were also fortunate when a local benefactor gave us money for two trebles. When the monies became available the bells were cast by Taylor's of Loughborough and installed by Johnny Walker of Taylor's assisted by a labourer with a Newcastle accent whom I could not understand. He probably thought the same of my Devonshire Brogue!

"For a fourteen year old school boy this was an exciting time. Many days were spent assisting the bell hanger, hoisting the bells up the tower with a chain and winch and holding and passing parts. When they were installed I was allowed to ring them after the bell hanger had pronounced them OK. Oh, and I was also allowed to make the tea! By this time a small nucleus of young lads had been taught to handle a bell by visiting other local towers such as Heavitree, St. Thomas, St David's and also Holcombe Burnell (then a four bell tower). Before the new St Mark's bells were dedicated we were able to practice on them – though silenced of course.

"Reverend Poulton was Vicar at Holcombe before he came to St Marks. He had at that time a Mid 1930s Morris Minor with wooden floorboards. Three or four of us lads were crammed in the back with another in the front and the Vicar driving on the winding roads to Holcombe. The road could be observed through the holes in the floor! Going uphill was quite slow but going downhill was quite exciting.

"It was at this time it was decided who was to ring the bells for the dedication. This included some older ringers as there were not enough youngsters who were able to handle them. Hearing them in rounds for the first time was an unforgettable experience.

"Our Captain was a call change ringer so he led us to improving our call changes. We wanted to be able to execute the call change cleanly. A few of us were allowed to teach other people to ring: my aim was to teach to a standard such that the learner could raise and lower in peal, not allow the rope to interfere with anyone else and be able to stand the bell at will on hand and back. The ringing chamber became quite crowded. It was also at this time that I became proficient at changing stays!

"Eventually method ringing (I think it was still referred to as scientific) was introduced. The teaching of method ringing was not as structured as it is today. I have memories of having a copy of the plain course of Grandsire Triples given to me with the instruction: "have a look at this boy then us will ring it later"! There was no talk of plain hunt on a lower number of bells or even a pair of bells practicing dodging!

So this was a stressful time! At about this time I had to do my National Service when I returned there did not seem to be many changes. For many reasons I did return to regular ringing at St Mark's and later went to Dawlish with my wife. After a while we came back to Exeter and I started ringing at Clyst St George - just for a little while which has turned into years! Visiting St Mark's for old times' sake I was amazed at the high standard and the different methods rung. Certainly a far cry from our clashing and clipping of over half a century ago.

Hopefully ringing at St Mark's now is somewhat different! We are fortunate to have a good base of method ringing ability so we can try to stretch ourselves with new touches or new methods. Since the augmentation to 10 in 2006 we have been able to try out Caters and Royal and a number of the band have achieved firsts in the past year or two. And with a broad age range of people coming every week it is always fun and interesting.

So, back to our anniversary: no celebration would be complete without something to put in the record books. On the actual anniversary date the local band rang a quarter peal of Grandsire Caters. The composition of 1260 changes (a normal length for Doubles/Minor/Triples but not for Caters) was specially composed for the occasion.

Exeter, Devon. (St Mark) 28 Apr, 1260 Grandsire Caters: Richard Shere 1, Roger King 2, Maureen Hawkins 3, Sue Sturdy 4, Wendy Campbell 5, Ian Campbell (C) 6, Neil Deem 7, John Langabeer 8, Matthew Hilling 9, Robert Franklin 10.

Two days later, on Saturday 30th April, the Sunday service band met to attempt a peal of Grandsire Caters. Due to the indisposition of one of the band we were forced to stop after nearly 1 hour of respectable ringing. This would have been the first peal to be rung at St Mark's by the local band and included Amy Gill attempting her first peal, and John Langabeer attempting his first at St Mark's. We shall be having another go later in the year...

Matt Hilling



The quarter peal band in order of ringing clockwise from front left.

A BUSY WEEK FOR THE FRANK MACK GARAGE RING

One week in May saw two separate events for Devon ringers, in different locations... but involving the same set of bells.

Saturday 14th May was the Young Ringers' Spring outing. The first stop was the Frank Mack Garage Ring (FMGR) in its default location, above Ian Avery's garage in Kingsteignton. This ring, put together in 1963, is considered the earliest miniring, and was originally in Exmouth in Frank Mack's garage, until given to the Guild of Devonshire Ringers in 2007. With a tenor of less than 2 lb., the young ringers were quickly competent. Next was another miniring,

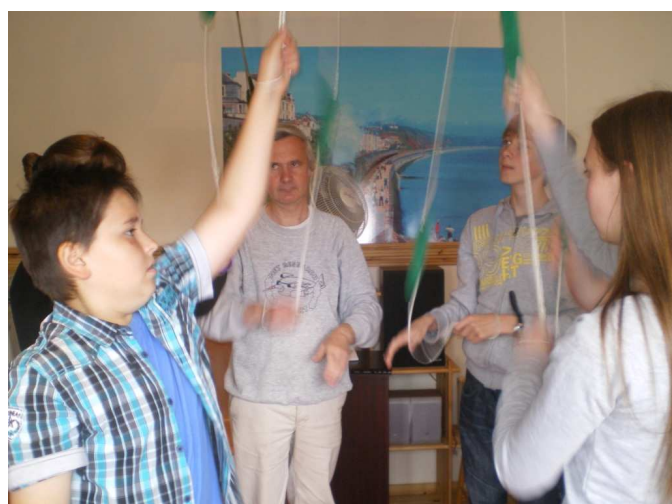
Bishops Ting Tong, where more adventurous methods were rung. Finally Dawlish to ring on 'normal' bells, before a pub lunch and game of skittles which the 'Gill & Hawkins' team won.

From 19th to 21st May the FMGR was out on its sturdy wooden legs at the Devon County Show for the third year running. A team of volunteers from the Guild and Association took turns to teach the public to ring on the bells, which usually took just a few minutes. If only tower bells were so easy! All three days were busy, but on the Saturday in particular the stream of visitors having a go was relentless. A combination of a strong wind and a lot of very small children on the last afternoon meant constant trips up the stepladder to unhook ropes from headstocks, but the bells survived!

In the end there wasn't time or opportunity to ring a quarter on the FMGR at the show this year, but a couple of quarters were rung on handbells. During one of these, as the show was closing for the day, we found ourselves being filmed by a cameraman; and a microphone from the 'Devon churches' tent was pushed into the circle, broadcasting our ringing to people as they passed to go home!

Note: The next Young Ringers' events are: ringing and barbecue at Pinhoe on 9th July from 2pm; and an autumn outing in Plymouth on 8th October. Contact Lynnephughes@hotmail.com

Lynne Hughes.



Young Ringers on FMGR at Ian Avery's



FMGR at Devon County Show.

DEVON REPRESENTED IN NATIONAL YOUTH CONTEST

26th March was a special day for eight young ringers from Devon, who took part in the first ever National Youth Contest at St Saviour's in Pimlico, and produced a very creditable performance.

It was six months ago that plans were first announced for the competition as part of the Ringing World centenary day in London. Soon after Christmas the young ringers met for the first of three practices at the Clock Tower in Newton Abbot. Laurie volunteered to conduct the call change option which had to include Whittingtons and Queens, and be at least 160 rows long.

On the day itself the young ringers and their families gathered at Pimlico, many having already taken a tour round the Whitechapel Bell Foundry or visited the 'Inspired by Bells' art exhibition in Pall Mall. Central London was virtually car free due to a traffic exclusion zone for the TUC rally the same day. A very short ring was achieved down the road at St

Gabriel's, before returning to St Saviour's for the competition. The Devon team were perhaps the youngest present, with an average age of just 13, and some as young as 10 or 11. They rang the following bells: Gareth Gill 1, Jasper Hughes 2, Sam Peck 3, Sophie Hughes 4, Joe Peck 5, Amy Gill 6, Roxy Hughes 7, Laurie Kirkcaldy (C) 8.

The next move was to Westminster where sightseeing in the Abbey was permitted before the special evensong. Just about every seat in the Abbey was taken for the service – a very impressive turn-out of ringers and some hearty singing.

The final gathering of the day was a reception in the Methodist Central Hall, opposite the Abbey. A little over 1,000 ringers gradually filled the huge room and side rooms, eating cake and drinking tea. People packed in front of the stage for an address by Jackie Roberts the Ringing World chairman, a hugely impressive world-premiere performance of change ringing on 24 handbells by a band including Tom Hinks from Exeter, and last of all the results of the competition. Comments on the Devon team were that the front bells were a little rushed at times, but there was a good basic structure; the handstrokes were very good in Queens; they finished rather well, and it passed the 'wedding test' – it was of a standard that people would be happy to pay for. No actual marks were given but teams were grouped C, B, A or A-star. The Devon team were in the C group with four other teams; a reflection of the good to excellent standard of all the twelve teams taking part. Specially produced medals for all participants were presented on stage by the Master of the Worshipful Company of Founders.

And so the proceedings came to an end and everyone dispersed to travel home or stay in London for the night, reflecting on the events of a long and busy day.

Lynne Hughes.



Young ringers and their families:

L to R: Sophie, Jasper, Roxy, Lynne, Gareth, Phil, Amy, Wendy, Sam, Sarah, Joe, Trish, Laurie, James.



Proudly wearing their medals:

L to R: Amy, Joe, Sam, Roxy, Sophie, Gareth, Jasper, (not in photo:Laurie).

A NATION OF ANIMAL LOVERS?

I saw this on the way to a ringing engagement and was pleased not to be a feline – I wonder what foreign visitors would make of it, and whether our reputation as a nation of animal lovers suffered?

Roger King



ROYAL WEDDING CELEBRATION AT SHIRWELL

Many people will know North Devon is renowned for quality Call Change Ringing and the highly competitive Striking Competitions organised by the Devon Association of Ringers during the spring and summer. Alongside this, and with consistent help from members of the St.Brannocks Association, we have been teaching a small group the basics of method ringing for about 3 years and during this time several quarter peals have been rung by 2 of these pupils. However, it seemed opportune to target the wedding of HRH prince William of Wales to Miss Catherine Middleton on 29th April 2011 as a momentous historical event we too could celebrate by ringing a peal. The intended band was one of many years' experience, with exception of Hedley McLaurin, the Treble ringer, who up until 1 month before was having problems with leading in Minor. However, Wednesday practices and a quarter peal resolved this *small?* problem and a very good Peal of 5040 Plain Bob Minor was rung in 2 hours 45 minutes, with amazingly few trips from first pealer, Hedley (even more amazing because of his mature years). For the record, it was the only method peal rung by a local team, on the day, in the whole of North Devon. Interestingly, this was just the fourth on the bells, the first one being Shirwell Surprise Minor in 1987, conducted by Robert Brown when he was working and living up here.

However, Sunday ringing remains our priority and our team is completed by a number of people who are not interested in method ringing but support the band faithfully and we do achieve a good standard of striking.

Ken Edwards.

The Peal Band was as follows:

***Treble:** Hedley McLaurin

2nd: Louise James

3rd: Ken Edwards

***First Peal at 1st attempt**

4th: Mike Rose

5th: Steve Taylor

Tenor: David Willis (Conductor)



The plain bob minor Royal Wedding band

STOODLEIGH BELLS RE-DEDICATED

The “Big Society” is promoted as a new initiative but, in fact, there is nothing new about it at all; such has existed in various guises since man first evolved into a social animal. Similarly, bells have played a fundamental role in the culture of all societies succeeding the Bronze Age. Thus the good citizens of Stoodleigh were following a centuries-trod path when they demonstrated a practical manifestation of what man always has managed without the need for attendant political whimsy.

Having had the bells at St Margaret’s pronounced “unringable” in mid-2008, the small Stoodleigh community set about raising what for them was the enormous sum required to refurbish the ring of six and at the same time, restore some of the church’s medieval decorations. It is to the great credit of those involved in this undertaking and with gratitude to many who donated to this effort – individuals, Uffculme Environmental Ltd., Heathcote Trust, and particularly the Heritage Lottery Fund along with so many others – that in February of this year, the work was completed and the bells were again able to ring out. These adventures have been chronicled in earlier editions of RRD by Jennifer Rowlandson.



Mervyn Way and Jennifer Rowlandson’s photographic chronicle

Culmination of this stalwart enterprise was the Service of Thanksgiving and Rededication of the bells by the Bishop of Crediton, the Right Reverend Robert Evens, on Sunday, 26 June.

During Evensong, augmented by a choir made up of local singers, Bishop Bob commanded the switching on of the new church interior lights. These are of a pleasant and entirely complementary style and for which he offered a thanksgiving. Following one of his characteristically humorous and always relevant addresses, the Bishop presented Jennifer Rowlandson with the two volumes of the “Towers and Bells of Devon”, that extraordinarily comprehensive work by Messrs Scott, Mack and Clarke. This gift was made in recognition of the pivotal part played by Jennifer – it has been around her that the success of the undertaking has hinged. Subsequently, the Bishop, Vicar, Churchwardens and Bell Ringers moved to the west end of the nave for the Rededication of the Bells. This was the cue for the resident band under Gerald Palfrey to catch hold and peal forth.



The service was led by Bishop Bob.



Deep tintinnabular concentration

Nearly all the ringers who attended the service then took a turn – in one touch, the Presidents of both the Guild and the Association together with the Chairman of the NE Branch could be seen in deep tintinnabular concentration. It was a joyous occasion and a fun evening celebrating the conclusion of such a worthwhile enterprise.

I had been invited to ring at Stoodleigh not long after the bells had been re-commissioned and thought at the time that they possessed a very distinctive brightness and clarity. Later, these qualities were confirmed from outside when the bells were rung for the service. It is an interesting ring with the combination of light weight (the tenor being a few ounces over 7cwt) and longish draft making for some lively ropes. Gerald Palfrey is the Tower Captain on 01398 351271.

Dermot Elworthy.

THE DUBLINERS

No, this is not an Irish Ceilidh band, but some Devon ringers on what seems to have become an annual event ringing on mini rings outside England. This year the Exeter based group together with some friends from Somerset made their way to Dublin where there is a mini ring and of course lots of Guinness. Three couples flew over on the Tuesday for some sightseeing and the opportunity to grab the bells at St. Patrick's Cathedral (and some Guinness). On the Thursday evening the rest of the group arrived for a practice ring on Leslie Taylor's as yet unpealed bells and we were joined by some other ringing visitors from Hereford, afterwards repairing to Maguire's micro-brewery (as an excellent alternative to Guinness) where eventually Margaret joined us following her later flight from Bristol. The next morning a peal of Dublin Surprise was rung without problem in spite of the venue (St. Michan's Church) being open to the public and hosting guided tours every half hour. After lunch a quarter was rung for those not involved in the peal and then whilst most of the band rested themselves to prepare for the evening practice at Christchurch Cathedral three of us rang a handbell quarter which created further interest for the visitors to the church. Fortunately there were enough ringers at Christchurch to ring call changes on all 16 bells though ringing on such a large numbers made the brain ache enough to need to go to the Lord Edward Pub afterwards for some fine Beamish Stout (another alternative to Guinness). The next day the Hilling family left us for their holiday near Limerick and the group went in different directions sightseeing before coming together for a an Italian Meal in the evening where the Valpolicella made a good antidote to all that Guinness. A final ring at the two Cathedrals on the Sunday morning for service completed an excellent weekend with some special memories of Irish Hospitality (and the Guinness of course).

Peter Bill

**Guild of Devonshire Ringers
Dublin, Ireland**

St. Michan's (Dublin Mini Ring)
Friday 3 June 2011
in 33minutes (10lb)

1280 Cambridge Surprise Major

- 1 Ian Campbell
- 2 Richard Newman
- 3 Lesley Tucker
- 4 Marion Newman
- 5 Graham Tucker
- 6 Lester Yeo
- 7 Wendy Campbell
- 8 Peter Bill (C)

**Guild of Devonshire Ringers
Dublin, Ireland**

St. Michan's Church
Friday 3 June 2011
in 40 minutes

1440 Plain Bob Minor

- 1-2 Peter Bill
- 3-4 Margaret Chapman (C)
- 5-6 Ian Campbell

**Guild of Devonshire Ringers
Dublin, Ireland**

St Michan's (Dublin Mini-Ring)
Friday 3 June 2011
in 2h03 (10lbs)

5088 Dublin S Major

Composed: D F Morrison (No.4000)

- 1 Margaret E L Chapman
- 2 Lester J Yeo
- 3 Peter L Bill
- 4 Lesley A Tucker
- 5 Graham P Tucker
- 6 Richard A M Newman
- 7 Ian L C Campbell
- 8 Matthew J Hilling (C)



Some of the ringers at Christchurch Cathedral



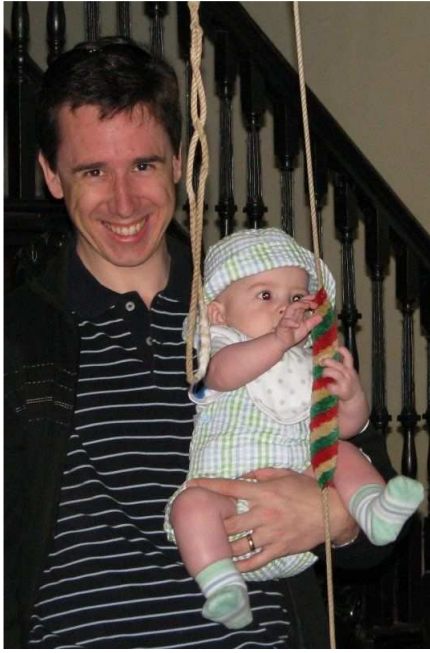
Practice on the mini-ring



Carol: one Guinness at a time....



Rosie taking a balanced approach



Handling practice for Toby & Matt Hilling.



The Dublin S Major peal band

MORE TRAVELS WITH LILLIE

Lillie (the model bell) and I had another outing together on May 4th when we went to the unusual location of the Dart Rowing club at the end of Steamer Quay at Totnes. This was for the usual chat about bells and ringing, this time for members of the local Probus club. We covered casting and tuning bells, playing tunes on them (carillon) and ringing changes (both call changes and methods). These were demonstrated by Lillie and with sound clips and ringing simulation on a computer. Following that the attendees had a chance to try their skill at method ringing on handbells, ringing a course of plain hunt major by "lapping" them. This involves picking up a pair of bells, ringing them, and then putting them down in a different position appropriate for the next row. Judging from the questions asked at the end of the presentation they seemed to enjoy all aspects of the talk although I doubt that many are young enough to even consider becoming ringers!

Ian Campbell

NE BRANCH STRIKING COMPETITION

There are occasions when bellringers' enthusiasms for the Exercise exceed the bounds of what many might consider sound judgment. As an example, I cite the evening of Saturday, 14 May when six teams drawn from the Guild's NE Branch assembled at Burlescombe to compete for the six-bell St. Peter's Shield. Nothing particularly remarkable about that, you might think, but taking place elsewhere and contemporaneously with this annual trial was a musical (?) contest of Titanic proportions, threatening to divert the attentions of the nation from Burlescombe. Thus the campanologists had to ascend the rather wonky steps up to the ringing chamber, face the threat of annihilation by opposing bands and steel themselves for the judges' opprobrium, all the while keenly aware that in this pursuit they were being deprived of the heady excitement of witnessing the 2011 Eurovision Song Contest.

The draw took place at 6pm and after five minutes of practice, each team provided not less than ten minutes of the best striking they could manage. As was the case last year, all the teams, with one exception, chose to ring call changes; the exception this year being St Peter's who provided 720 changes of Plain Bob Doubles. The character of the Burlescombe ring immediately became evident and proved to be a factor in the overall standard of striking; a point acknowledged by Ian Campbell who, with Wendy as a co-judge of the competition, later addressed the assembled company and when describing the bells, felt moved to employ the oriental adjective "interesting." However, they are not at all unpleasant to ring and given greater familiarity with them, the performance of the entrants undoubtedly would have improved but at the time, we felt confronted with hurdles enough without needing to contend with additional odd-struck challenges.

Participating bands are listed together with the judges' markings:

Bampton	12 faults
Cullompton	21 faults
Silverton	33 faults
St Peter's, Tiverton	72 faults
St Paul's, Tiverton	73 faults
Cruwys Morchard	79 faults



Sheila of the Bampton band accepting the St Peter's shield from Les

NE BRANCH STRIKING COMPETITION: THE JOHN HUTCHINGS CUP

The eleventh John Hutchings Memorial Competition, held in association with the North East Branch of the Guild of Devonshire Ringers, this year took place at St Mary's, Silverton. A healthy entry of six bands was received and when not ringing, competitors were able to mingle outside in the evening balm of a glorious early June day. Unquestionably Pimms weather - pity there was none about!

The judges who kindly gave their time for this event were Richard Johnston and Robert Franklin. After two hours of Plain Hunt, Bob Doubles and, I believe, six courses of Grandsire, the trophy was awarded to a deserving Broadhembury band comprising:

Lucy Tame 1, Pauline Champion 2, Martin Turner 3, Ken Manley 4, Reg Mckenzie 5, David Farrant 6

The results were as follows:

1. Broadhembury	21 faults
2. Tiverton St Paul	36 faults
3. Cullompton	45 faults
4. Tiverton St Peter	58 faults
5. Troyte Ringing Centre	64 faults
6. Silverton	72 faults



Lucy Tame receiving the John Hutchings Cup from Richard Johnston

Afterwards, a buffet supper was laid on at the Lamb Inn where Lucy Tame is pictured receiving the trophy from Richard Johnston. Robert Franklin can be seen nursing a beer at the back left of the photo. Special mention should be made of the Cullompton crew who in the judgment of your ace reporter, produced the best sustained quality of striking during the competition and were it not for the unfortunate fire-out somewhere near the end of their test piece, might have contended for the top spot. Demonstrating a general point made by Richard Johnston in his summary of the competition, highly experienced ringers made up half the Cullompton band; the others, one heavily pregnant, had been ringing for less than two years, making their performance of a method singularly meritorious.

As well as to the judges, thanks must go to Martin Clough of Silverton for so efficiently masterminding an enjoyable competition.

Dermot Elworthy.

DOES STYLE MATTER? -1

In the beginning we are taught how to handle a bell:- hold here, stand there, catch like this, pull like that! After a while ringing becomes comfortable and we start to relax and can ring without thinking leaving us to concentrate on learning methods or call changes. Indeed, we start to develop our own style. Experts! Look around your own tower and you will see that the ringers who have been ringing for decades have all got their own style, indeed, some have developed very peculiar habits. Some clutch the sally as if their lives depended on it. Some slide their hands lovingly up and down the sally. Some bend their knees or mimic a nodding donkey. Some, heaven forbid, can ring one handed so that they can gesticulate at the lesser order of ringers. Nobody would dream of commenting on these oddities so why is the novice frowned upon for finding a style that is comfortable for them?

Many learners have little desire to become Bellringer Of The Year, but do get pleasure in lesser things such as camaraderie with other ringers and in being a useful member of the tower band. Does it matter, therefore, if we stand pigeon toed or let the sally go a nanosecond too early? The experts do it, so why can't we? Are we all to be robotic bell ringers until after a certain number of years we can relax and develop our own style? Correcting "style habits" is actually quite difficult and creates tension which in turn affects our ability or desire to learn. So please can the less clever among us be allowed to keep our strange styles so that we too can still be ringing in decades to come?

Margaret Cadogan. St Peters. Tiverton

DOES STYLE MATTER? - 2

This article appeared in Ringing World in 2007 under the Tail Ends series by Walter Knight of Turramurra, Australia. It is reprinted by kind permission of the RW editor.

One of the most difficult things in life is to learn a new task or skill that becomes something we could do without actually thinking about it. Researchers tell us that once we have achieved this ability to do something on self-auto-pilot, to actually think about it causes us to make errors - running down stairs is an often quoted example.

...I was reminded of thiswhen I offered to help with some youngsters learning to handle a bell at the tower I had recently joined. At the conclusion of the first session the tower captain took me aside and quietly told me that my bell-handling was diabolical and, while she appreciated my offer of help, it would not, could not, be accepted until I had corrected my abysmal style. Now, at that time I had been ringing for thirteen years, so this appraisal came as something of a shock.

While I was coming to terms with this shattering news, this kind lady offered to teach me to handle a bell properly. I was to return to kindergarten.

The problem with bell-handling is that once you can do it, it no longer requires concentration: it is a complex set of actions that has become automatic. And that is the hardest thing to change. However, I knew it was for my own good, so I accepted the offer. The next few weeks were a time of trial indeed. I found I was doing awful things like missing the sally, bumping the stay and almost losing control of the bell completely because I was concentrating so hard on what I was doing, and ringing in my ears all the time were commands such as "Hands together on the tail end, as soon as you let go of the sally!" "Longer pull at hand stroke, please - and at backstroke!", "Bring the rope straight down at backstroke, if you please!" and "I don't want to see your hands around the rope, thank you!"

It took a while to lose my bad habits. Gradually, however, I found that my instructor, who was very strict, was making fewer adverse comments and I began to receive a little encouraging praise: "That's better!" And I noticed something else: I was finding it easier to ring heavier bells because I was learning to use balance rather than brute strength; and bells that were renowned as being difficult to handle did not present such a problem to me.

At last I was considered to be an asset to the tower rather than a liability and, having learned to handle a bell the correct way, I made sure that I would not become a recidivist. Correct handling had become automatic....

THEFT OF METAL FROM CHURCHES

Dr David Knight, Conservation and Grants Officer, Church House, says that the recent rise in metal prices on the international market has caused a dramatic increase in the number of thefts of metal from churches. In the period 2002-2007, Ecclesiastical Insurance have seen metal theft-related claims rise from 14 claims with a total value of around £11,000 to 2,300 claims with a total value around £8.5 million. The theft of lead, copper and stainless steel roof coverings, copper lightning conductors, lead and copper rainwater pipes, bronze statues, iron gates and church bells causes irreplaceable loss of heritage and huge financial costs. Not only does the metal have to be replaced, damage is often caused to surrounding timber and stonework as metal is torn or cut from its setting. Water ingress through a damaged roof can also cause further damage to the interior.

Ecclesiastical Insurance has published guidance on security measures, as well as external signage. Manchester Diocese has set up a useful website devoted to beating metal theft - <http://www.beatmetaltheft.org/>. In addition to advice on metal theft, these cover general anti-theft advice and the national Churchwatch scheme.

The Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme will no longer cover professional fees and repair works to organs, bells, clocks, and pews. Listed churches are eligible to reclaim VAT on the repair of damage caused to the fabric (including replacement of stolen metals) See <http://www.churchcare.co.uk/news.php> for more details.

If you have any concerns about the installation of security measures please contact your DAC; the theft of metal fixtures or roofs from your church, should be reported immediately to the police and your insurance company. David Knight can be contacted on 020 7898 1874 Mobile: 07984 911543 or by email david.knight@c-of-e.org.uk.

In October last year, a 400 year-old cast iron bell was stolen from Shotwick church, Cheshire. Weighing 400lbs, the bell was on the floor of the tower at the time. Police worked with scrapyards owners to discover if anyone tried to sell it. Nearer to home, last September, 9 conventional bells worth £100,000 and weighing several tons were stolen from the Nicholson Engineering works, Bridport. They were never recovered, and it is feared that the bells have been melted down for their scrap metal value.

RRD 72 (Dec 2008) carried a report of theft of lead from the roof of a church in S Yorkshire, and the inability of the police to prosecute because it was claimed that "lead is not the kind of material you could get fingerprints off". Now, although it won't directly prevent theft, a new technology in the form of a liquid (SmartWater) can be used to assign valuables (including bells) with a unique forensic code, enabling them to be traced back to you. In addition to tracing, the manufacturers claim that displaying SmartWater deterrent stickers on windows and doors sends out a powerful warning to any would-be thieves. Further details can be obtained from:

SmartWater Technology Limited
PO Box 136 Telford, Shropshire TF3 3WY.
Tel: 0 870 242 8899; Fax: 0870 242 4561
Helpline Telephone: 0800 521 669



OBITUARY: BILL RIDGMAN 1922 – 2011



Bill was born in 1922 at Downhayes Cottage in Spreyton, Devon, where his father had moved from North Petherwin. He first learnt to handle a bell when he was asked to make a noise for the weekly children's service at the age of 11. Spreyton was a call change tower and he caused some controversy by standing in for the ringer of the third at a competition and performing so well he became a regular team member at the age of thirteen. He won a scholarship to Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School in Crediton and from there he went up to Cambridge University where he arrived at Queens' College to read Natural Sciences in 1940. Upon graduating he was directed into the Agricultural Advisory Service and in 1946 he transferred back to the University first as a demonstrator and then a lecturer in the Department of Agriculture where he remained for the rest of his career. He did not return to ringing until 1948 when the Master of the Cambridge Youths, Harry Martin, having somehow heard of a possible recruit cycled round to persuade him to go to Great St Mary's ; where he made his first excursion into change ringing under the watchful eye of Jim Quinney.

The Cambridge Youths contained some of the best ringers in the district and his progress was rapid, he rang his first peal, which was Plain Bob Major, in 1950 and conducted his first peal, again Plain Bob Major, in 1951. As well as the Cambridge Youths he joined the Ely Diocesan Association (EDA) and the Cambridge University Guild (CUGCR) of which he was the master in 1951-2. He became General Secretary of the EDA from 1953 to 1959 and during this period was energetic in building up both the Guild and the EDA while leading attempts on new methods for both societies. Notable firsts being in 1959 ringing in the Guild's first peal on 12 bells and in 1964 its first peal of silent and non-conducted Stedman Cinques; This being part of an ambition to ring peals of Stedman Cinques, Caters, Triples and Doubles all silent and non-conducted – unfortunately he never managed the Doubles.

Unfortunately a serious illness in 1959 meant for a number of years he had to rest his eyes in the evening and he had to give up his prolific peal ringing. He didn't keep a peal book but of the 228 peals he rang for the EDA 203 were rung between 1950 and 1959. He became President of the University Guild for 1961 to 1989 and Vice President of the EDA in 1965. In these roles he worked tirelessly to improve ringing in local towers by raising and teaching bands and encouraging promising local talent such a local vicar's son Derek Sibson. He also supported successive Masters of the Guild in a tradition of advancing the Exercise which continues today. In its Centenary year, shortly before his retirement from the Presidency, the Guild celebrated by ringing 13 peals with 12 separate bands on the same day.

In his 70's and early eighties he continued enjoying ringing outings with his family, visits to the annual Guild Week and would still willingly turn out as a helper at an EDA beginners training day, until finally his difficulty in standing forced him to give up. In 1988 he had founded a ten bell striking competition for the Societies within and bounding the EDA districts and this became one of his favourite outings. Weather permitting he would sit in the church yard, puffing on his pipe while following the composition but much more importantly telling stories and keeping up to date with the news from his many ringing friends. It is

therefore perhaps very fitting that his last 'public' ringing performance was in June 2010 when he presented the Ridgman Trophy to the winning band after an excellent competition on the new bells at Great St Mary's where his change ringing career began.

Tom Ridgman

Bill Ridgman in the Guild

Bill joined the Guild in March 1950, and became Master in 1951-52. He was active immediately both in maintaining the bells at St Andrew the Great, and in steadily improving the standard of ringing. The bells were getting more and more difficult to ring, despite weekly oiling. This was done by the Master and Secretary (there was no Guild Steeplekeeper until about 1957) and who also put back sections of the wheels which fell off from time to time. On a couple of occasions bells jumped out of their bearings, when Bill had to invoke the aid of a member of the Great St Mary's band to help him put them back.

In the end, this led to the recasting and rehangings of the bells in early 1957. The cost was reduced by preliminary works by Guild members, under the leadership of Bill, particularly in preparing holes for the steel girders and timber floor supports in the tower walls, and mixing and laying concrete pads to support the steelwork.

Meanwhile, during his period as Master, Bill organised peal attempts on practically every Saturday in Full Term, gradually adding methods and taking care to give undergraduates experience in conducting. This complemented the practices and gradually improved the standard of the service ringing. Bill's membership and contacts with the Cambridge Youths and the EDA helped the building of bridges between Societies, leading for example to EDA peals including up to six CUG members in vacations, sometimes conducted by Peter Border in methods new to the EDA.

During Bill's 28 years as President of the Guild he never missed the Guild Week in August, indeed that record applied throughout his membership of the Guild until very few years ago, usually for the whole of the week and invariably quietly generous in pubs and cafes. During his Presidency he invariably chaired the small groups deciding on the peal bands, a task which became more difficult as the numbers attending increased, but Bill's diplomacy never failed. He was nearly always at the weekly practices, usually at St Andrew's generally quietly melting away just before the end, and of course he chaired the formal meetings and the annual dinners. Very often he would drive round to join the towers being visited on undergraduate cycle outings. In all of these varied Guild activities his presence was appreciated, perhaps more than he and the Guild members realised.

Chris Johnson

CALENDAR

JULY 2011

Fri	1	Branch Listening practice: Honiton St Pauls (19:30)	East
Sat	2	Steam and Barbecue: Exminster (18:30)	Exeter
Sat	2	Branch Outing	Mid
Sat	2	Branch meeting: Cruwys Morchard (15:00)	NE
Sat	2	Branch Outing (Contact bandvhicks@hotmail.com for details)	NNW
Sun	3	Training - Handbells for All: Okehampton	Guild
Wed	6	Advanced 10 bell practice: Exeter St Mark (19:30)	Exeter
Fri	8	Branch practice: Clyst St George (19:30)	Aylesbeare
Fri	8	Branch Surprise Minor practice: Buckerell (19:30) *	East
Sat	9	Branch striking competition: Feniton (15:30)	East
Sat	9	Young Ringers' Ringing & BBQ: Pinhoe	Guild
Thur	14	Branch Plain Hunt practice: Sidbury (19:30)	East
Fri/Sat	15/16	Branch training - Moving on from Plain Bob Doubles: Huntsham (19:00)	NE
Sat	16	Branch practice	SW
Mon	18	Branch Plain Hunt practice: Axminster (19:30)	East
Mon	18	Branch practice: Wolborough (19:30)	Mid
Fri	22	Branch novice 12 bell practice: Withycombe Raleigh (19:30)	Aylesbeare
Sat	23	Ringing stand at Mid-Devon Show	NE
Mon	25	Branch Doubles for all: Offwell (19:30)	East
Mon	25	Branch practice: Exeter St David (19:30)	Exeter
Tue	26	Branch practice: Sidmouth (19:30)	East
Wed	27	Branch practice: Huntsham (19:30)	NE

AUGUST 2011

Wed	3	Advanced 10 bell practice: Exeter St Mark (19:30)	Exeter
Fri	5	Branch Listening practice: Honiton St Pauls (19:30)	East
Sat	6	Joint practice: St Marychurch (19:00)	Mid/SW
Sat	6	Branch practice: (19:00)	NNW
Thur	11	Branch Plain Hunt practice: Sidbury (19:30)	East
Fri	12	Branch practice: Clyst St George (19:30)	Aylesbeare
Fri	12	Branch Surprise Minor practice: Buckerell (19:30) *	East
Sat	13	Training: St Simon's Bob Triples: Huntsham	NE
Mon	15	Branch Plain Hunt practice: Axminster (19:30)	East
Thur	18	Branch practice: Upton (19:30)	Mid
Sat	20	Joint meeting with Dunster branch: Huntsham (17:00)	NE
Mon	22	Branch Doubles for all: Offwell (19:30)	East
Wed	24	Branch practice: Huntsham (19:30)	NE
Fri	26	Branch novice 12 bell practice: Withycombe Raleigh (19:30)	Aylesbeare
Tue	30	Branch practice: Sidmouth (19:30)	East

SEPTEMBER 2011

Thur	1	Branch practice: Farway (19:30)	East
Fri	2	Branch Listening practice: Honiton St Pauls (19:30)	East
Fri/Sat	2/3	Branch training: St Marychurch	Mid
Sat	3	Summer Outing	Exeter
Sat	3	Branch practice: (19:00)	NNW
Wed	7	Advanced 10 bell practice: Exeter St Mark (19:30)	Exeter
Wed	7	Branch mid-week outing (11:00 - 16:00)	NE
Thur	8	Branch Plain Hunt practice: Sidbury (19:30)	East
Fri	9	Branch practice: Clyst St George (19:30)	Aylesbeare
Fri	9	Branch Surprise Minor practice: Buckerell (19:30) *	East
Sat	10	Branch training - Plain B Minor: Huntsham (10:00)	NE
Sat	17	Training: Stedman Triples: Laira and Plympton St Maurice	Guild
Mon	19	Branch Plain Hunt practice: Axminster (19:30)	East
Mon	19	Branch practice: Wolborough (19:30)	Mid
Fri	23	Branch novice 12 bell practice: Withycombe Raleigh (19:30)	Aylesbeare
Sat	24	Branch outing	SW
Sat	24	Branch mini-seminar - Tower Captain's Forum (11:00)	NE
Mon	26	Branch Doubles for all: Offwell (19:30)	East
Mon	26	Branch practice: Pinhoe (19:30)	Exeter
Tue	27	Branch practice: Sidmouth (19:30)	East
Wed	28	Branch practice: Huntsham (19:30)	NE

DEVON COUNTY SHOW – SOME PHOTOGRAPHIC HIGHLIGHTS



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 £6.00 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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