



RINGING ROUND DEVON

GUILD OF DEVONSHIRE RINGERS

Newsletter 86: July 2012

Guild Festival and AGM

A full report of the AGM and photographs will be in the next issue. Here are a few points that were circulated to members of the Exeter branch.

Election of Officers

Janet Coles (General Secretary) and Roger King (PRO and Editor of Ringing Round Devon) did not seek re-election, and were thanked for the sterling service they had both given to the Guild. Ian Campbell volunteered to take over as Editor of RRD and was duly elected. He was also elected as Guild Ringing Master for 2012/13

The post of General Secretary is traditionally not an easy one to fill, and this year was no exception. However, a volunteer was tentatively identified in Clare Griffiths of Chagford/Exeter Cathedral. Clare is currently serving a three year term of office as Secretary of the Winchester & Portsmouth Diocesan Guild and therefore felt unable to stand for election for another twelve months. Margot Le Vesconte from Teignmouth then volunteered to act as caretaker in the post during this time and was duly elected.

Accounts

The accounts were duly adopted and Sue Sawyer, Guild Treasurer, indicated that there were sufficient funds available to be able to donate £1,200 to the Devon Church Bell Restoration Fund. This was accepted by the meeting. The annual subscription for 2013 will remain at £6 per head.

Review of expenses for Central Council representatives

This topic was aired yet again and after lengthy discussion, it was agreed that all the reps' expenses should be met, both for travel and accommodation, subject to these being reasonable and receipts being provided.

Ringing Foundation

Lynne Hughes (Education Officer and Central Council rep) spoke to a motion to give a one-off donation of £100 to the Ringing Foundation, which had been set up by the Central Council to support the ringing project. The motion was carried.

Leslie Boyce then spoke to the meeting: following on from the Guild's decision to support the RF financially, a key plank of its programme is to support and promote the Integrated Teacher Training Scheme (ITTS). The aim of the Scheme is to improve the standard of ringing teaching by training up new teachers of ringing and thereby aid the development and retention of new ringers through better teaching.

Key features of the Scheme are:

- Use of up to date research based methods in the areas of skills acquisition, teaching skills, coaching skills;
- A Moodle on line site with resources for teachers and learners;
- Training day one - Teaching Bell Handling;
- Use of mentors to support new teachers following the day courses;
- Collection of data regarding teaching activities;
- Training day two - Teaching Elementary Change Ringing;
- Teacher accreditation and membership of the newly-formed Association of Ringing Teachers.

It is planned to hold an ITTS Module One course in Devon in the autumn, a probably second Module One course in early spring and a Module Two course in the summer of 2013. The likely date for the first course is Saturday 10th November. Potential mentors, who are existing experienced teachers of ringing, will be contacted shortly and invited to join the Scheme.

Quarter Peal Week

This will be held from Friday 26th October to Sunday 4th November inclusive - so, rather more accurately, it's Quarter Peal 10 Days! The idea, for anyone not familiar with it, is to attempt as many quarter peals as reasonably possible, with a donation of £1 minimum per head per quarter being made. This is in addition to any donation left as a thank you to the host tower.

Guild striking competitions

To be held on Saturday 20th October in the East Devon Branch: the novice competition will be held at Farway, the 6-bell inter-tower competition at Feniton and the 8-bell inter-branch competition at Luppitt. Further details will be circulated later, but please let me know if you would like more information in the meantime.

AGM 2013

This also falls to the East Devon Branch to host! The branch officers are putting together a programme centred on Axminster on Saturday 15th June 2013, with workshops to be held in the morning, together with a talk from Steve Coleman from Gloucester

Any Other Business

. . . and just before we all expired from exhaustion as the meeting wound down, it was announced that another national Ringing Roadshow is being planned for September 2014, to be held at Newbury Racecourse. The proposed date is 6th September, although there is a chance that this will turn out to be 13th. For anyone who has never attended one of these shows, think of a ringing-flavoured Devon County Show! Talks, demonstrations, exhibitions, mini-rings, open towers, bell foundries, rope makers, books and publications, ringing software . . . everything you could think of to do with bells and bell ringing.

Wendy Campbell

GDR AT THE DEVON COUNTY SHOW

What a difference a year makes! Last year those helping with the Frank Mack Garage Ring were ladling on the sun-cream to avoid getting burned in the searing heat. This year, as the photo of Peter Bill shows, cold, wind and showers were the dominant elements. In spite of the weather, a good and productive time was had, with no shortage of attendees willing to try their hands at ringing. In general, we found that ringers not familiar with miniature bells can take longer to learn than non-ringers.

In the second photo, Ian Avery and Maurice Sharland (Dunsford) show two non-ringers how to handle the ropes and compensate for the cross-wind, explaining that these conditions would not normally be encountered in Devon belfries!

Several times during each day an opportunity is taken to have some better ringing as a demonstration of what it should be like. The position of the tower allows passers-by to lean on a fence and be on eye level with the bells – thus getting a good view of what happens.

So – is it all worth it? I think everyone involved would say a resounding – YES!!! We can never be sure how many people are encouraged to take things further due to our efforts but the general feeling this year was very positive. Added to this we are seen by a large number of participating church members from every denomination as a dynamic group working hard to show off our part of church work. For once we are Heard AND Seen!

A great vote of thanks should go to all who gave their time to help keep the display manned throughout the three days but in particular a special word for Ian Avery who gives up the best part of 5 days to this project each year and manages to keep cheerful throughout. The Devon Ringers council thank you all.

Martin Mansley



Peter Bill, dressed for the occasion



Ian Avery & Maurice Sharland showing the ropes

12-BELL STRIKING COMPETITION, MELBOURNE (DERBYSHIRE) 2012

A Very High Standard of Ringing

After qualifying 3rd in the 'eliminator of death' at Aston, (where all but one of the 8 teams regularly qualify for the final) the Exeter band made the trip to Melbourne on Saturday 25th June for their 3rd consecutive final of the National 12 Bell Competition.

This year presented a new challenge for the band, as the chosen test piece was Stedman Cinques. Maximus is rung regularly to a high standard by all of the band, but cinques always has a slightly different rhythm and structure to it! Our focused practice this year again paid off when we were able to beat the London based ASCY in the hotly contested eliminator at Aston in March, but now it was time to ring on the tiny 15cwt ring at Melbourne - a brand new challenge.

We all set off on the Friday and met up at Lockington for our final practice, before heading to our hotel for an evening of entertainment. Some rather good food, and the fact that we had found some drinks vouchers 'online' meant that a good evening was had by all; even having time to wind up our leader via text - who had had to attend a family wedding in Essex that weekend!

We were given a favorable draw, and with the rain holding off and the beer tent open, we were set for an enjoyable day. The rather unusual test piece for the final shifts the bells into what is called 'Mega-Tittums' (675849302E1T) so there was plenty of concentration required but the reward of music throughout. We achieved a very good piece of ringing for the judges and were congratulated by many on our way out of the tower and came away very pleased with our efforts.

Unfortunately for us, it was a day where all the bands had pulled their socks up and the ringing throughout the day was of an excellent standard! Whilst the top 5 teams could have been said to have had that additional 'sparkle' in their ringing, the general opinion was that 'you couldn't put a fag paper between anyone'.

At the results, the Chief judge congratulated everyone on the very high standard of ringing throughout the day, but it certainly didn't make their job an easy one. Exeter this year were placed 8th out of the 10 teams in the final, but this was out of the 23 teams that entered this year. Once again we beat St Paul's in the final and the ASCY in the eliminator - so another great achievement this year from the Exeter band.

For more details, including recordings of all of the bands please visit the 12 Bell website <http://12Bell.org.uk/>

Exeter Band

1 Paul Pascoe (C), 2 Sue Sawyer, 3 Susan Sparling, 4 Alison Waterson, 5 Tim Payne, 6 Pauline Champion, 7 Tom Waterson, 8 Ian Smith, 9 David Hird, 10 Andrew Palk, 11 Mike Mears, 12 Ian Avery.

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

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----------|-----|-----|---------|------------|-----------|-----|------|---------|-----------|
| 1 | 93% | (1) | (3h 17) | Birmingham | 6 | 71% | (2) | (3h 13) | Leeds |
| 2 | 86% | (8) | (3h 12) | Melbourne | 7 | 69% | (7) | (3h 24) | Cambridge |
| 3 | 79% | (5) | (3h 12) | SRCY | 8 | 66% | (4) | (3h 24) | Exeter |
| 4 | 77% | (6) | (3h 28) | Bristol | 9 | 60% | (10) | (3h 29) | Oxford |
| 5 | 76% | (3) | (3h 19) | York | 10 | 59% | (9) | (3h 29) | St Paul's |

Paul Pascoe

GUILD STRIKING COMPETITION, SATURDAY 20TH OCTOBER

Morning:

Please book your slots by email to Janet Coles

6 Bell - 240 Doubles or Minor

Inter-tower competition for the J P Fidler Cup
FENITON

6 Bell Novice - 120 changes of Plain Hunt Doubles or Minor

Inter-tower novice competition for the John Longridge Plate
FARWAY

Afternoon:

Please inform Janet Coles if your branch is entering a team.

8 Bell - 224 Plain B Major or Double Norwich CB Major

Inter-branch competition for the Andrews trophy
LUPPITT

The methods for the Guild Inter-Branch 8-Bell Competition at Luppitt will be Plain Bob Major and Double Norwich Court Bob Major. The touches are as follows (set out in full to avoid confusion!).

224 Plain Bob Major

2345678
3527486
5738264
5786342 Bob
5764823 Bob
7452638
4273586
2348765
3826457
8635274
8657342 Bob
8674523 Bob
6482735
4263857
2345678

Call the 2nd: Home, Wrong,
Home, Wrong.

224 Double Norwich CB Major

2345678
8674523
3527486
6482735
5738264
4263578 Bob
8576342
2347856 Bob
6854723
3725468
8462537
7536284
4283756 Bob
6758342
2345678 Bob

Call the 2nd: Out, In, Out, In.

Ian Smith

TIVERTON ST PETER UNDER SEAGE!

An interesting postscript to Roger King's articles on Epaphras Seage, inventor of the silent practice apparatus, [RRD 69 – Mar08 & RRD 75 – Sep09] occurred in Tiverton over Easter. Following up some internet family history research, our Rector received an email from Lynda Dalton, Epaphras' Great Great Granddaughter. Lynda had stumbled on Roger's 2008 article about the Seage Practice Apparatus in *RRD* and got in touch asking if it was possible to visit the tower to see what remains of the apparatus at St Peter's.

So it came about that on Good Friday morning four generations of the Seage family stood in St Peter's ringing room with the bells from the Seage system above their heads. None of the family is a ringer, but they were fascinated to visit the bells and the ringing room and to get an insight into how their ancestor, Epaphras, had contributed to the history of bellringing.

Our picture shows (left to right) Cynthia Moseley (Great Granddaughter), Lynda, her daughter Sarah (who has recently moved to Tiverton) and baby Mya.



Les Boyce, Tower Captain

FROM BAR TOKENS TO BELLS – THE SEAGE FAMILY OF EXETER

Graham Seage, Great-Great-Grandson of Epaphras Seage the younger, kindly provided this article, to expand the information given in previous RRD articles. He writes:

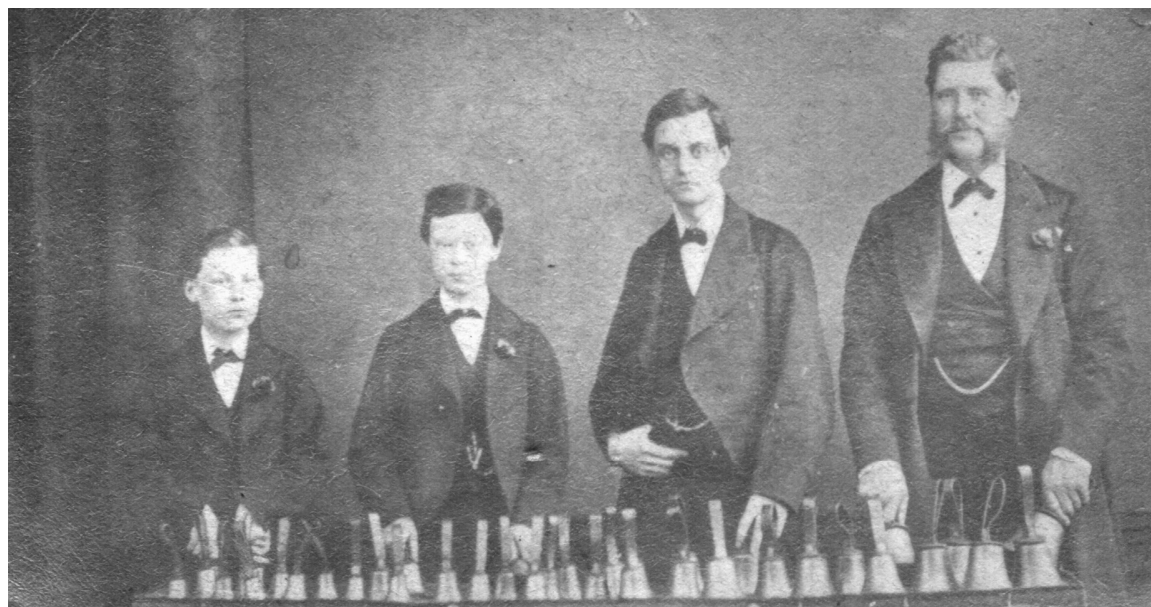
Whilst researching my family tree, I stumbled across the two fascinating articles written by Roger King – ‘Seage Tavern Tokens’ (RRD 75, Sept 2009) and ‘The Seage Silent Practice Apparatus’ (RRD 69, March 2008). I had a rough knowledge of these two areas of the family business but none of the details - these articles led me to a number of discoveries.

As reported, the production of tavern tokens was started by Epaphras Seage the elder in the 1850s though there is evidence of earlier involvement, dating from a court case in 1829 outlining a near-fatal assault on Seage during a quarrel about the alleged use of ‘base coin’.

The product and service areas covered by the business expanded from bar tokens to gas engines, engineering services for printers and, of course, the ‘Silent Practice Apparatus’ for bell ringing, though this is not listed in any of their advertisements from the time, and sadly remained un-patented.

I have not found concrete evidence for a connection between the family and church bell ringing. Though, to invent such a widely used practice apparatus is a considerable engineering feat which couldn’t possibly have been attempted without a good working knowledge of church bell ringing. One newspaper article gives an account of a presentation made to the Devonshire Guild of Ringers (1875) on the apparatus. Another article describes a meeting of the St Sidwells Ringer’s Institute (1880) where Seage was present, presumably as a member.

One thing that I do know though, is that the family were accomplished hand bell ringers. Newspapers from the time contain numerous articles and reviews of their appearances. They were known in their early days as ‘E Seage and his little men’, then later, as the ‘Exeter Campanologist Band’:



The Exeter Campanologist Band

From L to R: George Seage (1862 – 1943), Son Frederick James Seage (1859 – 1899);
Son William James Seage (1853 – 1918) Nephew Epaphras Seage the Younger (1829 – 1895)

Some of the concerts they gave were grand occasions; for one such performance given in the Victoria Hall, Exeter in 1875, there were some distinguished audience members who included the Mayor and Mayoress of Exeter.

Another flyer advertising their abilities reads:

"E. Seage and Sons, Have pleasure in announcing that, during the forthcoming season, they are prepared to accept engagements to assist at musical entertainments, or to give complete concerts of a miscellaneous character.

Attention is drawn to the enclosed selection from their repertoire and to its varied nature.

To those who are unacquainted with the character of their performance, they would draw especial attention to its novelty and to the fact that the manipulation of forty bells has never been equalled by so small a number of performers. The success of their entertainments is fully and pleasingly evidenced by the accompanying critiques selected from the numerous press notices given of them during the ten years of their public appearance."

Graham Seage (Great-Great-Grandson of Epaphras Seage the younger)



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SCOTT CENTENARY PEAL AT STOKE DAMEREL

Man and boy, my experience of being at schools in Plymouth was of a House system designed to inspire competition. These Houses were given the names of our intended role models. Drake, Raleigh, Nelson and Scott were favourites. They were famous for their sea-going exploits and all had at least some connection with the Port of Plymouth. (All this sounds rather old-fashioned now, with the unconscious sexism typical of the decades between the Second World War and the rise of feminism, but it reflects the spirit of the times.) Hero worship has gone out of fashion, and we no longer turn a blind eye to the failings of these maritime icons.

Of the four we are considering here, Scott is by far the closest to us in more ways than one. His family lived at Outland, the house which gives its name to Outland Road, Milehouse, in Plymouth. It was bombed in the 1940s blitz, St Bartholemew's Church was built on the site, and a new parish was carved out of the original Parish of Stoke Damerel. The names of the surrounding roads give clues to the rest of the story. Scott Road, Bowers Road, Wilson Crescent, Evans Place and Oates Road all commemorate members of the team on Scott's last expedition, and Terra Nova Green takes its name from the ship on which they sailed to the Antarctic. During Scott's boyhood, St Mark's Church, Ford, was built as a chapel of ease, and it was here that he became a choirboy. A certain Fr Lester Yeo was Vicar there in the 1980s, so St Mark's has two claims to fame!

The Terra Nova expedition proved to be Scott's last because, on their return from the South Pole, the whole team died just eleven miles from their base camp, weakened by lack of food and exhaustion due to inadequate equipment, and cut off by appalling unseasonable weather. They did, however, achieve their goal of reaching the South Pole, albeit 32 days after their Norwegian rival Roald Amundsen, on 17th January 1912.

With the benefit of hindsight, we can see that the expedition was amateurish and that its members lacked experience of polar exploration. But the courage, altruism and endurance of Scott and his team have been an inspiration to succeeding generations. It was these qualities that we wished to celebrate by ringing a peal on the bells of Scott's parish church to mark the centenary of his achievement. Half the band were Stoke Damerel ringers, helped by friends from St Andrew's, Emmanuel and Callington.

John Steere

Stoke Damerel Parish Church
On Saturday 14th January 2012 in 2 hours 47 minutes
A peal of 5,088 changes of Plain Bob Major

| | | | |
|--------|---------------------|-------|------------------------|
| Treble | John C Mitchelmore | 5 | Mark F Williams |
| 2 | John F Steere | 6 | Phillip P Ridley |
| 3 | Hellen V Richardson | 7 | Christopher H Wardle |
| 4 | John M Body | Tenor | Fergus M S Stracey (C) |

Rung for the centenary of Robert Falcon Scott reaching the South Pole on 17th January 1912

IN MEMORY OF ROBERT FALCON SCOTT
6th JUNE 1868 - 29th MARCH 1912
Baptised at Stoke Damerel Church 30th June 1868

EXETER BRANCH SKITTLES AND SUPPER

Saturday 3rd of March was the night of the Exeter Branch Skittles and Supper. 23 people attended and we all enjoyed an excellent night of competitions and delicious food.

We had 3 rounds of skittles, Wendy Campbell scored the most points closely followed by Derek from Pinhoe and Sue Sturdy. We then had a lovely buffet, and finally we played Killer, where Ian Campbell lost his Killer King crown to Wendy Gill! During the evening we raised £83 for the Devon Church Bell Restoration Fund.

I'm sure all who went will join me in thanking everybody who helped organise the night and the Pinhoe Jubilee club for the great hospitality.

Amy Gill

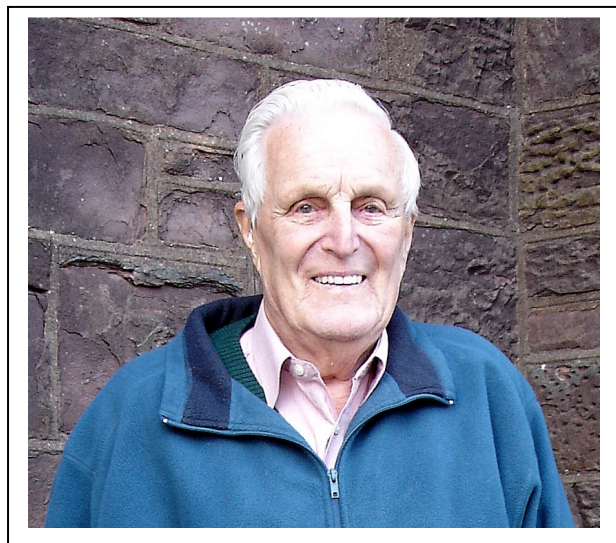


Rob shows how it's done



Resting between goes

MANY HAPPY RETURNS WILF!



At his home tower of St Paul's, Tiverton and two days after his 87th birthday on 17 April, Wilfrid Dunn scored his 2,611th quarter peal. After wartime service with the RAF, Wilf started ringing in 1951, beginning at Nutfield, Surrey before moving on to Reigate. Apart from about a year off somewhere in between, he has been ringing ever since, during which time he has logged a total of 1,091 towers, conducted Quarters on 883 occasions and in 611 towers. Quite an achievement, which does not include whole peals.

1987 saw Wilf's move to Tiverton and his joining the St Peter's band, there to become a promoter of the St Peter's Shield

and maker of the trophy for which local bands annually compete. Subsequently, like more than a few before him, Wilf became victim of the St Peter's tower steps and so transferred to the ground floor ring at St Paul's where he has been resident since 2004.

The celebrations comprised 1260 changes of Stedman (60), Reverse Canterbury (240) and Plain Bob (960) in 43 minutes after which Wilf declared himself ready to do it all again! Members of the backing group were;

| | | | |
|---|------------------|---|----------------------|
| 1 | Terry Hargreaves | 4 | John Kape |
| 2 | Glen Morgan | 5 | Matthew Weighell (C) |
| 3 | Wilf Dunn | 6 | Dermot Elworthy |

Here's to another quarter next year, Wilf!

Dermot Elworthy.

FROM THE FOOTNOTES

14th April-Thorverton Pauline Champion's 2000th peal (also Mike Mears' 3900th)

17th April-Ting-Tong Paul Pascoe's 2000th peal (also Ian Avery's 1200th)

13th April-Ting Tong David Hird's 2700th peal.

27th April – Staverton, a peal on Paul Pascoe's 40th birthday.

May 31st – Withycombe Raleigh, Peter Bill's 1000th peal.

There were numerous peals and quarters rung for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee including 5th June - St Marychurch, peal of Plain Bob Minor with the Sunday Service band and two first pealers.

1st June - Bishops-Ting-Tong, peal of Plain Bob Minor with Amy Gill of St Mark's Exeter ringing her first peal inside.

2nd June – Exeter Cathedral, by ringing in a peal for the Queen's Coronation John Hill has now rung in peals for the Silver, Golden and Diamond Jubilees of Queen Elizabeth II.

Peals on June 7th and June 9th at Thorverton to celebrate the Golden Wedding of Howard and Margaret Egglestone

Mike Mears

MINI RING PEAL WITH A DIFFERENCE

This peal was attempted to celebrate two birthdays in February but (as reported in RRD85) failed a few changes from the end. The repeat performance was, however, successful but with a small change in personnel. Can you spot the replacement ringer????



The band in order, clockwise, starting front right

Guild of Devonshire Ringers

Bishopsteignton, Devon

Bishops Ting Tong

Friday 1 June 2012 in 1hr 59m (0-0-10)

5040 Plain Bob Minor

- 1 James Grant
- 2 Amy L M Gill
- 3 Stephanie E Hills
- 4 Lester J Yeo
- 5 P Wendy Campbell
- 6 Ian L C Campbell (C)

400th peal: 6. First peal inside and on six bells: 2.

Rung to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of HM The Queen; also remembering Frank Mack, the 'father of mini-bell ringing', who died on 1st June 2000.

Ian Campbell

SIMULATOR AND SCOUTS AT DAWLISH

Over the Easter holidays steeple keeper Phil Hughes installed a simulator system on one of the existing Dawlish bells (the 4th). By using donated computer equipment, and soldering his own circuit board from diagrams found on line, the cost came to a little over £30, and most of that (£22) was for the Abel software. It is hoped it will be used by local ringers at all levels of attainment.

In another venture, 1st Dawlish Scouts visited the tower to find out about ringing. This was split over two evenings to keep the numbers manageable. They saw the bells and fittings close up, did some chiming and had a demonstration of method and call changes. One patrol at a time had a go at backstrokes, while the other investigated plain hunt on handbells downstairs; then vice versa. A few are now interested in learning to ring!

Lynne Hughes



Getting down to Plain Hunt



Trying out chiming

“DO WE REALLY WANT A SIMULATOR?” Mid-Devon Branch’s Deliberations

When hosting the Guild AGM in June last year, the Mid-Devon Branch decided to set up a Saxilby simulator for the day. Mid Devon’s Ringing Master, Martin Mansley drove many miles to borrow and return the dumbbell and frame. Derek Ballard, Tower Captain at St Paul’s Honiton, and designer of *Beltower* (software which uses figures of ringers for the interactive animation), organised the projection of the screen image on a wall. Those brave enough to try their hand at ringing, experienced a simulation model which provided not only an aural but also a visual environment. This demonstrated one way in which one of the oft-repeated reservations about the use of simulators - that they do not help to develop ropesight – could be answered.

As a result of this experience, and the October visit to the Teaching Centre at Worcester Cathedral, the Branch Committee agreed to investigate the possibility of providing something more permanent within the Branch and to report on this to the Half-Yearly meeting in May. What was the decision? To do nothing for the moment, but the Branch did confirm that it would like to return to the subject in due course. Why was it felt that this was not the time to proceed? A mixture of reasons, cost being among them, but not the fundamental cause. The Committee had concluded (and the Branch meeting agreed) that anything it now provides should meet a whole clutch of requirements – it should be readily accessible (and therefore probably not in a church tower), easily bookable, ready for use (i.e. not requiring a bell to be tied, and untied), realistic in terms of weight and ‘feel’ and if possible transportable for training purposes.



Sharon Lawrence silencing one of the bells at St Mary’s Wolborough, so that the simulator can be used.

The Committee was aware that there are already a number of simulators within the County at the moment which are available for occasional use – mainly installations in towers, some of which involve one or more dumbbells, some of which rely on the goodwill of members of the tower to tie (and later to untie) one or more of the tower bells. While these facilities are welcome, what the Mid-Devon Branch would like to be able to do, is to provide an ‘open access’ set-up and one which incorporates a visual element, so enabling ear, eye and hand to be trained together. Used to

its full capacity, a simulator can provide the learner with the opportunity of repeated practice to develop and to consolidate that precise co-ordination of muscular and aural responses that is at the heart of good striking, and to work at this until the necessary anticipation become instinctive. While use of ringing software alone undoubtedly offers benefits, what it does not offer is the chance to develop the degree of anticipation required and the muscular responses needed to achieve the same result when ringing with others in a tower – the very skills that learners find so challenging to develop and to sustain.

When the Mid-Devon Branch can work out how to do this well, we will probably be talking about simulators again.

Janet Ritterman

STEDMAN DOUBLES TRAINING DAY

The Stedman Doubles training day became fully booked soon after appearing on the Guild's education programme for the year, and took place on 12th May at Ide and Clyst St George. The six students arrived having already done a great deal of 'homework', and were taken through their paces by Tim Bayton. The morning was for plain courses whilst during the afternoon the emphasis moved on to practising singles. It was heartening to see progress all round.

Lynne Hughes



The students: L to R: Jeanne, Sue, Gwryie, Lisa, Janet, Maureen.



Lester explains 'it's just like that...'

DEVON YOUNG RINGERS VISIT DARTMOOR

The Young Ringers' spring outing on 24th March was based around North Dartmoor, and we were very lucky with the weather, having a glorious spring day.

The eight young ringers with parents and supporters started with an hour's ringing on the light six at Belstone and fun in the sunny churchyard. Enquiries as to whether the Ten Tors Inn was open led to an impromptu coffee time there, one father declaring it was too early for a pint.

Walking boots and wellies were donned for a short walk from Belstone church on to the moor, as far as the 'Nine Maidens' stone circle, then it was off to lunch at Mischa's in Okehampton.

After lunch the Denmisch simulated campanile of 10 'bells' was put to good use for about two and a half hours, with everything from handling lessons to Grandsire Caters. Amy and Laurie also got us ringing tunes full circle: 'Jupiter' (I vow to thee my country) and the base line from Pachelbel's canon!

Many thanks to Mischa for her hospitality and super ringing resource.

Lynne Hughes.



10 'bell' ringing on the Denmisch simulator



Learning to handle



The group at Nine Maidens stone circle

EXETER BRANCH TRAIN OUTING

A cold rainy morning dawned on what was the day of the Exeter Branch annual train outing. At 8:30 30 ringers and 5 friends made their way to St David's station for the early train to Bath.

Once we arrived, our first tower was St Matthew, Widcombe, an odd sounding six, which once you got used to them, were nice bells.

Next we rang at St Mary, Bathwick with challenging trebles but otherwise nice to ring and some good ringing took place.

After a lovely lunch we rang at St Michael which had eight lovely bells that once you got up the very steep ladder there were really nice to ring.

Then most people except for a few stupid boys (Andrew and Gareth!) took the bus up a massive hill to ring at St Stephen. It has to be said that some 'nice' singing took place on the bus! St Stephen's are 6 bells with the tenor only weighing 2 cwt!!! Whilst some people had difficulty at the start most people got the hang of them and we had very good ringing.

Most of us then got the bus back down the hill and we went to the Bath Bun Tea Shoppe for tea and cake where we all enjoyed cups of tea, sandwiches and cream teas.

The final tower of the day was Bath Abbey a ring of ten weighing 33 cwt, some people found it confusing because the bells are hung anti-clockwise!! After mastering looking in the other direction we had some excellent ringing which finished off a brilliant day.

We finally all got back on the train and headed home to Exeter. I hope that everyone that went will join me in thanking Michael Cannon and Wendy Campbell for their brilliant organisational skills and others who helped make the day such a success.

Amy Gill



Waiting for the train



'Maybe we should have done this before the Tea Shoppe?'



Trying out the Bath Bun Tea Shoppe

MID DEVON BRANCH TRAINING DAY

On Saturday 3rd March, four students and eight helpers met at St Andrew's Church, Stokeinteignhead for the first session of the Plain Bob Minor training day – no 'lie in' that day - we met at 9.30am. Martin Mansley, the branch ringing master organised the day and we started with a chat about good striking and handstroke leads and how judges mark faults in competition ringing and what is considered a fault.

All the students were then paired with one of the helpers who mentored their pupil; when they were ringing, directed them if they strayed and then after their turn, had a quick debrief and tried to sort out any problems. The parish church at Stokeinteignhead proved a very good venue for teaching, with kitchen facilities, a long table and chairs and the all important loo. For many, it also brought back happy memories of a past incumbent of the parish, Revd. Bob Southwood, much loved and often remembered and one time chair of the Mid Devon Branch of Ringers and a past Guild Officer.



During a tea break the work continues

After coffee/tea mid-morning it was then time for the students to mark a touch of Grandsire Doubles rung by six of the helpers. Martin had asked Russell Chamberlain to act as judge for the ringing too and the winner of the judging competition would be the student who scored the closest to the 'judge'. The winner was Ann Sawers who was only one point adrift from Russell's score.



Russell Chamberlain and the winner,
Anne Sawers of Wolborough

At 12.30 we all went down to The Church House Inn for lunch which was much needed after everyone's efforts. We had pre-ordered our meal which was just as well as it was the chef's day off and the landlord was in charge of the cooking that day. After a 2 hour lunch/ travel break we arrived at St Mary the Virgin Church, Ideford for the afternoon session. By now the students were starting to ring touches. After an hour and a half it was clear that we had **all** reached our peak and so we finished a very good day, out in the sunshine as we made our way home.

Thank you to Martin for organising the event, to the helpers who gave up their time to help and to the students for their enthusiasm and progress that made the whole day very worthwhile.

Caroline Chamberlain

NORTH EAST BRANCH QUARTERLY MEETING.

On Saturday, 14 April, the Committee of the North East Branch of the GDR met for the second time this year, on this occasion at the Lamb Inn, Silverton.

The collective consciousness of the committee has been much exercised of late in seeking a use and repository for "the bell". Thanks to the offer extended by the ringers at Hemyock and subject to obtaining the necessary insurances, a home, at least for the next twelve months, has been found for the demonstration bell for which the NE Branch has responsibility. The next committee meeting should see this protracted matter finally put to bed.

Other subjects of discussion proved routine but it is clear that Matt Webb is getting his teeth into the subject of training. Advancing the abilities of existing ringers and the *ab initio* instruction of new recruits are of paramount importance to the continued health of The Exercise and Matt and his "staff" have made an excellent start with three towers currently under instruction. Of course, the success of this scheme is very much a function of the level of enthusiasm and commitment of those participating; ringing is a team activity and the band as a whole must be involved. Nothing will progress if only one or two actively seek advancement but do not enjoy the support of the rest of the team. So many enthusiasms and good intentions have foundered on the rocks of conservatism and apathy; the "Go Plain Hunt on Five" to which they initially aspired sadly remains "Two to Three". However, Matt is to be commended for his commitment and the adoption of the Kaleidoscope system which is proving popular with the relevance of the exercises being easily understood by those raised in the call-change tradition.

General ringing was enjoyed on St Mary's excellent 8-bell ring. This was followed by the customary service and thanks are due to David Bromwich for accompanying us on the organ. A splendid Ringers' Tea followed in the village hall where three new members were welcomed to the Guild. They are pictured below.

It was an evening of DIY entertainment at Rewe where several of us repaired for more fun and games, this time on the drafty but well-behaved six. And so was concluded a pleasant day, always in pleasant company. Our Silverton hosts are to be thanked for providing great hospitality, a fine ring of bells and for so stoically suffering the ribbings about ASBOs, ankle monitors and other instruments of civil restraint!

Dermot Elworthy.



New members Mike Weight, Sheila Davies & Paul Webster



The Chairman distances herself from the John Kape/Les Boyce debate: does the banana dodge 3-4 up or down?

HEAVITREE OPEN DAY

May 19th was chosen for an open day at Heavitree church in Exeter. Despite the fact that it clashed with the Devon County Show and an event at the local school the church saw a steady flow of interested people. Two trips up the tower were organised. The treble bell was silenced with a clapper stay (see photos below by Susan Illing) so that it could still be rung and watched without deafening those going further up the tower (or scaring the children!). However it could still be heard in the tower via the computer sensor and a digitised sound of the real bell, as recorded in the ringing room. While smaller groups were being shown the clock and the top of the tower (now mainly the mobile phone equipment!) those left behind were given a brief explanation of ringing using a model bell and the real thing, invited to have a go at handling the treble (backstrokes only) and swing the back bells to see if they could make them strike. Unfortunately one or two determined and enthusiastic youngsters managed to sound the sixth and seventh and upset the children up the tower.

A number of visitors explained that one of their relatives ring or used to ring - one found his grandfather's name on a peal board - and those with ringing ancestors seemed to take to handling much more readily than the others. So perhaps ringing is in the genes. Since then one lady has come to a practice night and may be interested in taking up ringing.

Ian Campbell



The treble "up" with the clapper silenced



Ian Campbell in full swing with the model bell



A rapt audience watches the presentation

CONDUCTING DAY

For the third year running, Tim Bayton ran a 'starting to conduct' training day for the Guild, which took place on 10th March on the light sixes of Upplowman and Calverleigh.

Four eager students came on this intensive day: Wendy Gill, Amy Gill, Jenny Young and Matthew Webb; all starting by calling a touch of Plain Bob Minor. It wasn't long before the theory of coursing orders was being explained and the students attempted to follow this while ringing and calling bobs – not an easy feat at first as anyone will know who has tried! More theory followed over lunch in the Rose and Crown at Calverleigh, the emphasis now being understanding how touches are written out in the diary and the calling positions on higher numbers. Little Bob Minor was increasingly rung during the afternoon, and it was noticeable how the students grew in confidence, calling clear authoritative bobs and 'that's all'.

Thanks to Tim for running the day and bringing cake, and to David Hird, David Willis, Don Roberts and Lesley Tucker for helping.

Lynne Hughes.



Learning about coursing orders



working out dates for the next course?

NE BRANCH MID-WEEK OUTING

Again, Ken Wannell came up trumps with his organising of the North East Branch mid-week outing on Wednesday, 14 March. It was an “-ish” sort of day - all the towers visited were ground floor, lightish rings of six, the first being at Sandford where we re-acquainted ourselves with the behavioural characteristics of longish draft, skinnyish ropes. Nothing “ish” about lunch at The Lamb however; this was a fine pub meal.

Next on the itinerary was Down St Mary, a venue to which I was particularly looking forward to visiting. This is the heartland of Sixty on Thirds country (Zeal Monachorum is but a stone's throw away) and for many years Down St Mary has fielded one of the finest bands in the county so I felt a singular weight of responsibility in seeking to uphold the traditions of methodology in such a place. Hopes dashed, spirits raised – dashed when in the middle of St Simon's, a voice says “Dermot, do keep the tenor up!” but raised a little when afterwards, talking to a fellow mending his car outside the church and suggesting that the standard of ringing was, perhaps, not quite up to the standard usually heard here, he said “Oh, I enjoyed it very much indeed.” Ho hum. But lovely bells.

Last stop was Nymet Tracey where I discovered that the Tracey bit comes from Sir William de Tracy, one of those who did for the “turbulent” Thomas Becket and in remorse for his foul deed, built the church. The bells went well to end an enjoyable social occasion for which thanks go to Ken for his arranging things so well.

Dermot Elworthy

THE DEVON CHURCH BELL RESTORATION FUND

The DCBRF met during Holy Week when two new grant offers were made; £4,000 to Hawkchurch towards dismantling the installation, replacing the corroded sub-frame with new steel joists, servicing the bearings, replacing pulleys, rebushing and annealing clappers, and reinstalling; and £4,250 to Cruwys Morchard towards rehanging the bells in the existing frame with mainly new fittings. Hawkchurch is something of an anomaly in that, although being in Devon and hence within our remit, it comes under the jurisdiction of the Salisbury Diocese!

Work recently completed has included the replacement of worn pulleys and rebushing of clappers at Thorverton, and completion of the long-awaited restoration at Stoke Canon where the ring is a complete transformation of what was there before.

At the end of last year we made an offer, through the DAC, to all churches in the county to organise an inspection of the bells prior to their quinquennial inspection. This is with a view to identifying any maintenance issues before they become serious problems and so hopefully avoiding, or at least delaying, major and, no doubt, expensive work in the future. Three such inspections have so far been carried out – at Hatherleigh, Cornworthy and Plymouth (St Budeaux). Whilst we found each of the bell installations to be in relatively good order, in two cases we found the steel sub-frame to be suffering from severe corrosion.

Prior to the 1980s it was unusual for the steels to be galvanized, and even after that time it is quite possible that the galvanizing may have been damaged during installation. We cannot emphasise too heavily the importance of regularly inspecting your steel sub-frames and keeping them well painted, especially where they are built into the tower walls. This is of course doubly important in a marine environment.

With about £3,000 having been received as income since the year end, we currently have approximately £11,000 uncommitted and available for future grants.

Ian Smith

SHIRWELL ST PETER'S PARISH CHURCH BELL REPAIR FUND

Ken Edwards, Tower Captain and Church Warden of St Peter's writes:

Bells have been pealing across the fields of Shirwell since 1553, although the current 6 were hung in 1733. The replacement oak frame on which they are now fitted was installed in 1898 but unfortunately 114 years of enduring the south westerly wind and rain driving in through the louvres have taken their toll. The lower part of the frame has rotted in one corner and as the bells are rung there is a vertical movement, which if left unrepaired will render the bells unringable in the fairly near future. We are now faced with an estimated cost of £17800 to correct matters by inserting two steel joists below the main frame, to be built into the tower wall and 2 steel sections fitted to replace the rotten wood. Work is due to start at the end of the summer and currently we have accumulated £8000 by generous donation towards the £17800, leaving £9200 to find. Whilst we have a number of fund raising events planned for the summer, realistically there will still be a shortfall.

We are, therefore, writing directly to not only our local population, but to others elsewhere. If you feel you could give anything towards helping us complete this major repair, please write a CHEQUE made out to Shirwell PCC and return it to me at Higher Upcott Farm, Shirwell EX31 4LD, or to Hazel Kingdon, Sugwells, Shirwell, EX31 4JK.

In anticipation we thank you for your kind consideration.

Ken Edwards

DEVON'S 'HANDBELLS FOR ALL' 2012

31 handbell ringers – the largest of these events to date!

The fourth annual Guild of Devonshire Ringers handbell day took place once again at Mischa Thompson's in Okehampton, but this time a little earlier in the year, on 29th April, while torrential rain battered down outside. The dining room, lounge and conservatory were all in constant use for handbell sessions throughout a long afternoon, the 'experienced' ringers working tirelessly to give 23 people a go at Plain Hunt or Plain Bob. Yorkshire Major was also practiced, and there was a 10-bell session for the helpers to ring something together.

But these days are about so much more... Firstly there's the lunch of pasties and all the trimmings, with tea and cake to sustain later. Then there's tune ringing to join in with, and an impressive demonstration of four-in-hand tunes; miscellaneous sets of handbells to try, and dummy handbells with Abel on a laptop. Of course there's the Denmisch campanile of 10 Saxilby 'bells' which was used for several beginners' handling lessons, some double handling, rung as a traditional ring for call changes and methods; and by two individuals with the computer in a Surprise Royal face-off. But over it all and throughout the day there's the enjoyment of meeting people and sharing skills.

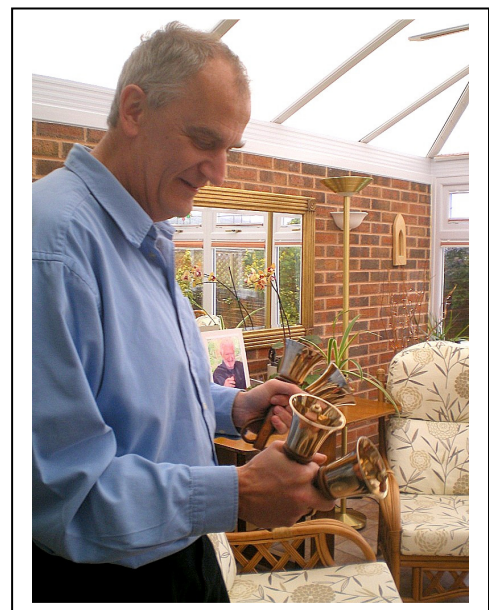
But back to the handbells, and the future: the increasing popularity of the day meant that the less experienced only got one 30 minute slot, and the more experienced had to work very hard. This raises the question of what to do next year: maintain an open-to-all fun and contact day, or achieve more training by limiting numbers and having more than one day. I await feedback from those who came.

A very big thank you to Mischa for accommodating us all and to everyone who gave their time to help others. It was a super day.

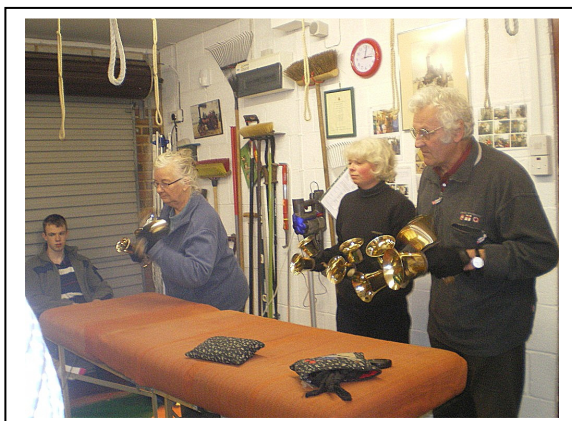
Lynne Hughes.



Demonstrating Plain Hunt



Minimus for one!



Demonstrating tunes with four in hand

DAWLISH OUTING TO EAST DEVON

Ten members of the Dawlish band, four ringing friends and a few supporters enjoyed a day out in East Devon on 19th May. Ringing took place at Honiton, Monkton, Upottery and Clyst Honiton, with a variety of methods to suit all members of the band. The day was also very social, with coffee in the Monkton Court Hotel, lunch at the Sidmouth Arms in Upottery, and flapjack out of the back of Fiona's car between the afternoon towers!

Many thanks to the towers who all welcomed us, and to Charlotte, John, Derek and Mo who facilitated a variety of methods being rung.

Lynne Hughes.



The group at Clyst Honiton (or is it Honiton Clyst?)

JOHN HUTCHINGS MEMORIAL TROPHY

On Friday, 8 June, Silverton were again hosts of the John Hutchings Memorial Trophy. Last year the weather for this annual event was delightful; this year it was unpleasant, keeping everyone inside the church and sheltering from the unseasonable cold of a very blustery evening. Five bands took part in the twelfth competition for the prize awarded for the best striking over 240 changes of any Doubles or Minor method.

Michael and Mary Mears were the judges, placing the contestants as follows:

| | | |
|---|---------------------|-------------|
| 1 | Cullompton | 25.5 faults |
| 2 | St Paul's Tiverton | 32.5 faults |
| 3 | Bampton | 35 faults |
| 4 | St Peter's Tiverton | 78 faults |
| 5 | Silverton | |

Sadly, Silverton lost the plot half-way through the test piece and fired out.

Congratulations go to the Cullompton band who, on the back six, rang 240 of Plain Hunt on Five:

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| 1 | Pauline Champion |
| 2 | Rachel Cozens |
| 3 | Sandie Reader |
| 4 | Richard Shere (C) |
| 5 | Reg MacKenzie |
| 6 | David Farrant |

Supper afterwards at the Lamb Inn was enjoyed by all and our thanks go to Martin Clough of Silverton for hosting the competition and to Michael and Mary Mears for judging.



Richard Shere (right) receives the trophy from Albert Campbell.

Personal commitments conflicting with the competition left the St Paul's band under strength, so Matthew Weighell and Sheila Scofield kindly took the empty ropes. They have the band's gratitude.

Dermot Elworthy

DIAMOND CELEBRATION PEAL AT CULLOMPTON

I arranged a few months ago for a full peal to be rung at Cullompton to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

Today (Saturday 26th May) the band on the photo below, from Devon and Somerset rang a full peal of 5040 London No3 Surprise Royal on the Cullompton bells in 3 hours 17 minutes to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the Diamond Wedding Anniversary of Cyril and Marion Shere (nee Ford) who were married in Cullompton Church on 2nd June 1952.

Cyril and Marion Shere are my uncle and auntie and have now retired from farming in Bradninch to Budleigh Salterton. Their wedding reception in 1952 was held in the Cullompton Church Hall.

Richard Shere



The Diamond Jubilee peal band

THE QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE RINGING

The Diamond Jubilee ringing had an extra significance for one local ringer; David Hurford of Northleigh first learnt to ring in 1952 the year the Queen came to the throne.

The weekend's Jubilee ringing started with Ottery on Friday evening. On Saturday morning Honiton, bolstered by ringers from other towers, attempted to ring a Quarter Peal of Plain Bob Triples, but sadly this failed a few minutes before the end was due.

On Sunday morning Northleigh Church bells were rung before and after the Jubilee service, after which everyone joined in the Celebratory Lunch at the Village Hall. Offwell rang at noon and Farway at 3 pm, to coincide with the start of the Thames River Pageant, Sidmouth rang at the same time, as a prelude to their Great Street Party and Cotleigh rang at 5-30pm.

On Tuesday morning Combe Raleigh rang '60 minutes for 60 years' and at noon a Quarter Peal of Plain Bob Doubles was rung on the Monkton bells before the Monkton Mini Street Party, at which the ringers were presented with souvenir mugs by the Parish Council.

Trevor Hitchcock



Farway Diamond Jubilee ringers:
Roger Tucker, Trevor Hitchcock, Stephanie
Kastner-Walmsley, Richard Hare, Sue Tucker,
Charlie Saunders.



Combe Raleigh '60 minutes for 60 years'
ringers:
Stan Thompson, Janet Reynolds, Mark Moran,
Lisa Clarke, Trevor Hitchcock, Ruth Hitchcock.



Monkton Quarter Peal ringers:
Megan Smith, Derek Ballard, Lisa Clarke,
Brenda Coley, David Robertson, Trevor
Hitchcock.

CALENDAR: JULY – OCTOBER

JULY 2012

| | | | |
|------|----|---|----------------|
| Wed | 4 | Advanced 10 Bell practice: Exeter St Mark (19:30) | Exeter |
| Sat | 7 | Branch social event: Exminster (evening) | Exeter |
| Sat | 7 | Mini outing | Mid-Devon |
| Thur | 12 | Plain Hunt: Sidbury (19:30) | East |
| Fri | 13 | Surprise Minor: Buckerell (19:30) | East |
| Sat | 14 | Branch Striking Competition: Stockland (15:00) | East |
| Sat | 14 | Young Ringers' BBQ: Pinhoe | Young Ringers' |
| Fri | 20 | Doubles for All: Offwell (19:30) | East |
| Mon | 23 | 8 bell practice: Wolborough (19:30) | Mid-Devon |
| Tue | 31 | Triples: Sidmouth (19:30) | East |

AUGUST 2012

| | | | |
|------|----|---|--------------|
| Wed | 1 | Advanced 10 Bell practice: Exeter St Mark (19:30) | Exeter |
| Sat | 4 | Joint practice | SW/Mid-Devon |
| Thur | 9 | Plain Hunt: Sidbury (19:30) | East |
| Fri | 10 | Surprise Minor: Buckerell (19:30) (check before coming) | East |
| Tue | 14 | Branch practice: Awliscombe (19:30) | East |
| Thu | 16 | 8 bell practice: Teignmouth, St James (19:00) | Mid-Devon |
| Fri | 17 | Doubles for All: Offwell (19:30) | East |
| Tues | 28 | Triples: Sidmouth (19:30) | East |

SEPTEMBER 2012

| | | | |
|---------|-----|---|-----------|
| Wed | 5 | Advanced 10 Bell practice: Exeter St Mark (19:30) | Exeter |
| Fri/Sat | 7/8 | Training Event | Mid-Devon |
| Sat | 8 | Guild Training - Listening skills/simulator: Exeter St Mark | Guild |
| Tues | 11 | Branch practice: Luppitt (19:30) | East |
| Thur | 13 | Plain Hunt: Sidbury (19:30) | East |
| Fri | 14 | Surprise Minor: Buckerell (19:30) (check before coming) | East |
| Sat | 15 | Branch walking tour in Exeter (pm) | Exeter |
| Fri | 21 | Doubles for All: Offwell (19:30) | East |
| Mon | 24 | Branch practice: Pinhoe (19:30) | Exeter |
| Mon | 24 | 8 bell practice: Wolborough (19:30) | Mid-Devon |
| Tues | 25 | Triples: Sidmouth (19:30) | East |

OCTOBER 2012

| | | | |
|------|----|---|----------------|
| Wed | 3 | Advanced 10 Bell practice: Exeter St Mark (19:30) | Exeter |
| Sat | 6 | Branch Outing | Mid-Devon |
| Thur | 11 | Plain Hunt: Sidbury (19:30) | East |
| Fri | 12 | Surprise Minor: Buckerell (19:30) (check before coming) | East |
| Sat | 13 | Branch meeting: Sidbury (15:00) | East |
| Sat | 13 | Young Ringers: Autumn outing | Young Ringers' |
| Thu | 18 | 8 bell practice: Upton (19:30) | Mid-Devon |
| Fri | 19 | Doubles for All: Offwell (19:30) | East |
| Sat | 20 | Guild Striking Competitions: East Devon | Guild |
| Mon | 22 | Branch practice: Heavitree (19:30) | Exeter |
| Tue | 30 | Triples: Sidmouth (19:30) | East |
| Fri | 26 | Guild Quarter peal week starts | Guild |

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