



RINGING ROUND DEVON

GUILD OF DEVONSHIRE RINGERS

Newsletter 92 December 2013

Surprise Visitor at Christmas Branch Practice

We were delighted and surprised when a rather strange character turned up at the Exeter branch practice at Heavitree just before Christmas, and proceeded to take a rope and ring in a number of touches. I just had to take his photo!



Thanks go to John Langabeer, who some of you may recognise behind the disguise.
P.S. For those who don't know John, the beard is genuine!

A happy Christmas to you all

Ian Campbell

Denmisch Ring Donated to the Guild

Many of you will know Mischa Thompson and may have rung on her set of simulated bells (now 10) hung by her late husband Denis in their garage in Okehampton - and also received her splendid hospitality at ringing events. She has finally decided to move away from the district to be nearer her family and has generously offered to donate the bells to the Guild. These are not real bells but Saxilby Simulators designed by David Horrocks - the only sound they make comes from a computer linked to the bells - although they handle like a normal ring of fairly light bells.



Charlotte learning on the Denmisch ring at four years old

The officers of the Guild are having discussions as to the best way to use these bells, which will make a magnificent training aid for ringers of all ages. It would be good if at least one or two could be made portable for public events, but it is essential that at least eight (preferably all ten) are installed somewhere where they can be regularly and easily used - mainly for teaching purposes at any level from basic handling to advanced method ringing. If members of the Guild have any useful ideas they are urged to let one of the Guild officers know so that they can be included in the discussions.

For further details and pictures of the Saxilby Simulators see <http://www.saxsim.co.uk/> which also contains a link to the Denmisch ring.

The Guild is very grateful to Mischa for her generosity and will make every effort to ensure that the bells are put to good use.

Ian Campbell

Guild Master 2013/14 – an interview with Leslie Boyce



Our Guild Master is elected from the floor of the Annual General Meeting and the post is held for a period of one year only. On Saturday 15th June, the retiring Master, Ian Campbell, handed over the reins – and chain of office – to Leslie Boyce of Tiverton amidst much acclaim. Les has steadfastly declined to stand as Master for a number of years (I think he protested he had too many other commitments), but with his working life having recently drawn to a close, he agreed that NOW might be a good time to take on the role before the busy-ness of retirement overcame him.

Your scribe was therefore instructed once again by the Editor of RRD to search Les out and see, mid-term, how he is enjoying his year in office and to have his thoughts on ringing both in Devon and within the wider fraternity.

Q: First of all, Leslie –I cannot personally remember a time when you weren't in the thick of the ringing scene in Tiverton! Could you tell us a bit about your ringing career? When and where and why did you learn to ring?

A: Both my parents were ringers and I got involved with the family church, St John's Bournemouth, first as a choirboy and then I was "promoted upstairs" in my early teens. I don't have a record of exactly when I started ringing, but my 1966 diary records that on Sunday 9th January I rang a 120 of Bob Doubles; I was just a month short of my 14th birthday then. I think I was a bit of a reluctant ringer in my teens although I did allow myself to be taken to meetings of the local Wimborne Branch of the Salisbury Guild and to Ilchester Branch meetings of the Bath & Wells when staying with my grandparents in Martock. I didn't really get into ringing totally until I went up to Oxford. I remember ringing my first peal there with a certain Michael Mears. I wonder whatever happened to him?!! People tell me he's now quite a famous ringer!

Q: Tell us about the 'old' St Peter's band when you took over the captaincy and the changes that have been implemented since then.

A: I first arrived in Tiverton in 1981 after four years at Lyme Regis (still then the era of Cuthbert and Laura Powell, George Morris and Harry Keeley). When I started ringing in Tiverton, St Peter's was dominated by Grandsire and not much else. On a good day we attempted Triples, but Doubles with 4,6,8 behind was staple Sunday evening fare. I took over as Captain for seven years on the death of Frank Emmett in January

1987 and I have now been Captain for a second period since 2005. In the late eighties we had several keen youngsters in the band who helped take us forward into Stedman Triples, Bob Major, Kent Major and Cambridge Minor. We also persuaded some of the older ringers to tackle Oxford Bob Triples and work through the St Simon's group of Doubles. Latterly we have been working over much the same ground, but with the help of visitors we have also tackled Cambridge and Yorkshire on 8.

Q: The post of Guild Master was created in 1971, but the duties attached to it have never been clearly outlined or developed since then. Do you feel that more could be done to define the role?

A: Currently the role of Master appears to be whatever the current incumbent chooses to make of it. The view of the Guild as expressed by its Committee is that it is largely an honorific post granted in recognition of past contribution to the development of ringing in Devon. To me that is a valid view to take and I am very touched that the Guild should feel that I am worthy of such an honour. Such flexibility can have advantages.

One view that has been expressed to me during this year is that the Guild Master gains a very wide knowledge of the state of ringing across the county during the year and that it is a pity that this cannot then be put to some good purpose subsequently. Perhaps we might encourage past masters to undertake a project of some sort in the following years.

Q: You are only halfway through your year of office, but could you tell us what you have been doing so far?

A: Well I have been trying to get to at least a couple of events each month. As well as formal branch occasions I am also trying to catch up with some of the informal groups which meet. So far I have had an enjoyable day with the Taw, Torridge and Tamar Group and hope to join others later in the year. This time of year is also prime time for Branch AGMs and I have managed to get to Exeter and Mid Devon Branches so far. Where the diary has clashed I plan to catch with that Branch at a practice later on in the year.

I have also set myself the challenge of improving my own ringing during my mastership. By the end of next summer I hope to have tackled all the "Standard 8" and rung most, if not all, to quarter peals. As a tower captain, former branch chairman, ITTS Tutor and Secretary of the Association of Ringing Teachers (ART) I have had to be more concerned with teaching and developing other ringers for a number of years and I became conscious that I was neglecting my own ringing development. Consequently, I made myself sign up for the Guild surprise major training course this last summer and was very pleased to end up ringing a quarter of 5-spliced at Broadclyst in October. I am really grateful to Tim Bayton and Lynne Hughes for organising the six fortnightly sessions and to all the Guild members who helped us students. To me the whole enterprise demonstrated what the Guild can do at its best – giving ringers opportunities they cannot get in their home towers and branches.

Q: One of the perceived duties of the Master is to support the other principal officers of the Guild, particularly with visiting and supporting the various branches as their AGMs arise. Do you feel that the Guild is in good heart at the moment, or is there room for improvement?

A: The fortunes of towers and branches wax and wane inevitably. But what I have seen so far gives my considerable encouragement. Towers do seem to be attracting ready-made ringers to join them after moving into Devon and this infusion of new ringing talent has to be of benefit. I see plenty of enthusiasm around the county and it is encouraging to see branches working together with joint practices and events like the barbecue and barn dance in Exminster.

The area that gives me some concern is work with young people. Good stuff is going on in Plymouth and it's great that Amy Gill has taken on the role of organising young ringer events in the coming year. I hope everyone in the Guild will support her efforts to make young ringer events successful. But Amy can't recruit and train the youngsters on her own. That needs towers to be innovative and outgoing to reach young people and I know from our attempts in Tiverton that it is not easy. This is something to which the Guild and Branches must give thought as to how to help.

Q: You are passionate about education, education, education within ringing and have been working very hard to promote the ITTS (Integrated Teacher Training Scheme) in Devon, with several training sessions already under your belt. Could you tell us briefly how successful this has been, and also whether there are any exciting new developments in the pipeline?

A: ITTS is not a quick fix. It aims to get good teachers in place first of all, so that when new ringers are recruited they are well taught and in such a way that they are encouraged to stay with ringing and make measurable progress. Retention of new ringers is a key issue for ringing teaching; we lose so many at that stage when we try to integrate them into an existing band.

So far we have run three Module One (Teaching Bellhandling) and one Module Two (Elementary Change Ringing) courses since November 2012. The first new teachers are just starting to graduate and their new ringers are gaining recognition under the "Learning the Ropes" national training scheme. Feedback from those attending has been uniformly positive about the course and the scheme and the benefits of good teaching are being seen with groups of learners in Plymouth, Tiverton, Holcombe Rogus and Cadbury.

We will be running further courses in 2014 and anyone interested should contact me. I am happy to have people along to the day course as observers and we are grateful to those experienced ringers who support the scheme as mentors. Their knowledge and skills can contribute a lot to the day course as I and ITTS don't claim to have all the answers.

Q: And finally, how do you like to spend any spare time that comes your way . . . apart from ringing, of course?

A: Ha – dream on! Well hardly a day goes by without me doing something ringing-related. But I do try and grab time for walking with friends, relaxing at a beer festival, going to concerts or getting the house and garden back into shape after years of neglect. Also my slightly dodgy hips force me to take daily exercise around the town to ensure I don't seize up completely. I had also planned to get back into railway modelling (how many ringers are also railway enthusiasts, I wonder?), but I'm finding that it may have to wait until after I handover to Anne as Guild Master. Also my partner Sheila retires at the end of this year, so I may be persuaded to tackle more on that "things we would like to do" list and become a proper retiree!

Wendy Campbell

Guild Striking Competitions

On Saturday 19 October, Guild ringers flocked to the Aylesbeare Deanery Branch to take part in the annual striking competitions. Due to a wedding at Lympstone, the 6-Bell Inter-Tower competition started earlier than usual, but participants were not daunted, and we were pleased that seven teams competed for the J P Fidler Cup this year. Guild Master, Leslie Boyce, was a most able judge who benefitted from the comforts of a nearby conservatory.

NOVICE COMPETITION AT CLYST ST GEORGE

1 st	Plymouth Youths (1)	32.5 faults
2 nd	Withycombe Raleigh	34 faults
3 rd	Plymouth Youths (2)	35 faults
4 th	Plymouth Emmanuel	36 faults
5 th	Littleham	52 faults
6 th	Plymouth St Budeaux	62 faults

Judges: John Martin and Charlotte Boyce



The winning Plymouth Youths team (l-r): James Vockin, Josephine Maddick, Harry Andrews, Benjamin Smith, Mark Williams, Hellen Williams

6-BELL INTER-TOWER COMPETITION AT LYMPSTONE

1 st	Withycombe Raleigh	32 faults
2 nd	Exeter St Marks (Minor)	42 faults
3 rd	Tavistock	49 faults
4 th	Plymouth Emmanuel	50 faults
5 th =	Exeter St Marks (Doubles)	75 faults
5 th =	Plymouth Youths	75 faults
7 th	Exeter Colleges Guild	117 faults

Judge: Leslie Boyce



The Withycombe Raleigh team (anti-clockwise from front-left):
Janet Coles, David Wills, Roger King, John Foster, Neil Deem, Trevor Bradley

8-BELL INTER-BRANCH COMPETITION AT WITHYCOMBE RALEIGH

1 st	Exeter (Double Grandsire)	88 faults
2 nd	South West - Tavistock (Double Grandsire)	96 faults
3 rd	Aylesbeare	134 faults
4 th	Exeter (Grandsire Triples)	138 faults
5 th	East Devon	144 faults
6 th	North East	152 faults
7 th	South West - Plymouth	175 faults

Judges: Tom Hinks, Tim Payne and Steph Hills



Lester Yeo (left) receives the trophy from Tom Hinks

It was good to see so many teams taking part, and everyone enjoyed a sociable day of good ringing and good company!

Many thanks again to everyone who made the day so successful, and we look forward to next year's competitions.

Clare Griffiths

Guild Quarter Peal Week 2013

In view of the additional firsts achieved, I have turned a blind eye to the fact that the length of our quarter peal "week" seems to have become slightly extended this year! Thank you to everyone who took part and donated to Devon Church Bell Restoration Fund. 36 quarter peals were scored. Particular congratulations to those who achieved special firsts:

1st Quarter	Margot Le Vesconte, Wendy Skelcher, Jeanette Thompson, Les Tosdevin
1st inside	Trevor Hitchcock, John Robinson
1st of Major inside	Matthew Smith, Trevor Smith
1st of Treble Bob	Wendy Rennie
1st as Conductor	Samuel Peck
1st Surprise as Conductor	Joseph Peck
1st S Major as Conductor	Charlotte Boyce
1st Royal as Conductor	Sue Sawyer

St Marychurch, 26 Oct, 1296 Cambridge S Minor
Tiverton (St Peter), 26 Oct, 1260 Grandsire Triples
Hemyock, 28 Oct, 1260 Doubles (2m)
Uplozman, 28 Oct, 1260 Plain B Doubles
Clayhidon, 29 Oct, 1260 Plain B Doubles
Feniton, 29 Oct, 1260 Plain B Doubles
Huntsham, 29 Oct, 1260 Doubles (3m)
Thorverton, 29 Oct, 1280 Yorkshire S Royal
Dalwood, 30 Oct, 1260 Grandsire Doubles
East Budleigh, 30 Oct, 1260 Doubles (5m)
Kilminster, 30 Oct, 1260 Plain B Doubles
Shirwell, 30 Oct, 1260 Plain B Doubles
Combe Martin, 31 Oct, 1260 Plain B Doubles
Exeter (64 Mount Pleasant Road), 31 Oct, 1250 Ashtead S Major
Kentisbeare, 31 Oct, 1260 Doubles (2m)
Newton St Cyres, 31 Oct, 1272 Plain B Minimus
Plymouth (Emmanuel), 31 Oct, 1260 St Simon's B Doubles
Torquay (Upton), 31 Oct, 1260 Plain B Doubles
Holcombe Burnell, 1 Nov, 1272 Cream Cheese S Minor
Bratton Fleming, 2 Nov, 1272 Whitley S Minor
Braunton, 2 Nov, 1260 Plain B Triples
Kentisbury, 2 Nov, 1272 Wooler S Minor
Loxhore, 2 Nov, 1272 Spliced S Minor (4m)
Cruwys Morchard, 3 Nov, 1260 Doubles (3m)
Exeter (Cathedral), 3 Nov, 1280 Cambridge S Royal
Exeter (St David), 3 Nov, 1344 Yorkshire S Major
Tiverton (St Peter), 3 Nov, 1250 Yorkshire S Major
Plymouth (Emmanuel), 3 Nov, 1296 Plain B Major
St Marychurch, 3 Nov, 1260 Plain B Minor
Georgeham, 4 Nov, 1264 Plain B Major
Marwood, 7 Nov, 1320 Cambridge S Minor
Sydenham Damerel, 9 Nov, 1260 Doubles (2m/1p)
Kelly, 9 Nov, 1320 Cambridge S Minor
Plymouth (Emmanuel), 10 Nov, 1260 Plain B Doubles
Ilfracombe (Holy Trinity), 11 Nov, 1260 Plain B Doubles
Barnstaple, 11 Nov, 1260 Grandsire Triples

Tim Bayton

South West Branch

The Harry Myers Commemorative Bell



This is a photograph of the Harry Myers Commemorative Bell which was very kindly donated to the South West Branch by his grandson, Graham, following the death of his father Bill. The Branch decided to give it to the tower of the Minster Church of St Andrew to keep because of the strong historic connection with the Myers family. Harry became captain there in 1912, followed by his son Tom and then Tom's brother Bill.

The inscription on the bell reads "Presented to G H Myers, Captain of the Bellringers of St Andrew's Church, Plymouth, on his Jubilee 1887 – 1937".

We are all very grateful to Graham Myers for his kind thought.

South West Branch Annual Dinner

South West Branch members got together for a popular social occasion on the evening of Saturday November 9th: the Annual Dinner which was attended by 57 "varieties" aged between 10 and 75. Ringers came from all over the branch, helping each other with transport, and meeting up first in the beautiful, ancient church of St Andrew's Whitchurch on the western edge of Dartmoor National Park. This was an opportunity to ring on the 6 bells with their impressively long draught. Reverend Trevor Smith led the traditional ringer's service with its well-loved hymns and special prayers for the ringing community.

The group then headed for the Moorland Garden Hotel where after social catch-ups over drinks in the bar, a splendid dinner awaited us. Thanks to the careful preparations done by Clare Stagg and Alena Wardle, and the excellent menu and warm welcome provided by the hotel, we were well distributed in friendly groups on our tables, and served our dishes of choice: some had an early Christmas dinner. With a minimum of formality and a maximum of cheer, we were affirmed in the collective spirit of our branch which thrives on the participation of our many young ringers.

Susanna Rance

Mid-Devon Branch

Peal for a Future King



Back row from left: David Hird, Richard Johnston, Hilary Beresford, Pauline Champion, Peter Bill, Colin Turner. Front: Matthew Hilling, John Martin.

[Photo : Mid-Devon Advertiser]

It has been a matter of regret to some that it has long been the policy that peals should not be rung at St Michael's, Teignmouth. The local ringers enjoy a friendly relationship with the church's neighbours, some of whom live very close indeed to the tower, and are anxious that this supportive attitude should continue.

There are times, however, when an occasion of such special significance to Church and State calls for recognition in an emphatic way.

In our increasingly secular society it cannot be pointed out too often that Prince George of Cambridge is not only third in line of succession to the throne but also designated to become Supreme Governor of the Church of England. His baptism by the Archbishop of Canterbury on Wednesday, October 23rd, at the Chapel Royal, St James' Palace, marked the moment when Prince George became a member of the Church which he will one day lead.

In the afternoon of this day, in celebration of the event, a peal was rung. The details were as follows:

Guild of Devonshire Ringers

Teignmouth, Devon

East Teignmouth, St Michael

Wednesday, 23 October 2013 in 3h14m (22)

5024 Bristol Surprise Major

Composed by A J Cox

- 1 Hilary A Beresford
- 2 Colin M Turner
- 3 Peter L Bill
- 4 Richard H Johnston
- 5 Matthew J Hilling
- 6 Pauline Champion
- 7 John R Martin (C)
- 8 David Hird

The neighbours of the church had explanatory leaflets delivered to them beforehand and during the afternoon the church was open for visitors. There was a video link to the bells and the ringers and there was someone on hand to explain something of what was going on.

A peal at St Michael's is a rare event, reserved for very important occasions, and will remain so but one might have to travel a long way to hear ringing of this quality and it was appreciated by visitors and locals alike. A good report was published in *The Teignmouth Post*.

Alan Furse

Mid-Devon Branch AGM: 23rd November, Stokeinteignhead



The AGM in full swing

Ringling before the service included something for all from call changes to Surprise minor – plenty of Plain Bob – Spliced Plain and Little Bob, even Norwich Surprise. We finished with a well struck touch of Stedman Doubles as a service touch.

As Stoke has no vicar at present Tim King kindly took the service. This was the Service of Prayer and Praise which Lester Yeo and others designed a few years ago.

We welcomed several visitors including Robin Winkworth from Salisbury, Clare Griffiths our new Guild Secretary and Leslie Boyce, this year's Guild Ringing Master.

Two new members were elected and a quarter peal certificate was presented to Jeanette Thompson of St Marychurch.

The Eddon Clapper Trophy was awarded to St Marychurch as they had achieved quarter peals which stretched both newer and experienced ringers, and all members have always made visiting ringers welcome.

All officers were re-elected except Tim King (who did not stand) – Rodney Horder of Stokeinteignhead was elected as chair leaving a vacancy as “committee member without portfolio” which was filled by Julia Brett of Teignmouth. These two members were warmly welcomed to the committee.

Mid Devon News Update

Catherine Saunders has been presented with her certificate for her first quarter peal – impromptu Plain Bob and Grandsire Doubles. We are glad to say that she also rang a planned quarter of Plain Bob Triples, Many congratulations to her.



Catherine receiving her certificate from Martin Mansley

For the past couple of years the branch, but particularly St Marychurch, have enjoyed having Michael Barnicott-White ring with us – he was a member of the Jubilee Peal band at St Marychurch and has been a regular at Berry Pomeroy. We were sorry to hear that Michael and his family had decided to move to Gloucestershire and the August visit to Berry Pomeroy was his last ring with us. We send Michael and his family our best wishes and thanks for all his help over the last two years.

Congratulations to Jeanette Thompson who rang her first Quarter Peal in fine style - the treble to PB Minor at St Marychurch. Also to John Robinson who rang inside to PB Doubles and to Wendy Rennie who rang really well struck Cambridge Minor on the treble (she's learning it inside now!).

Martin Mansley

Mid Devon Ring and Ride outing



Members on the Ring and Ride Outing

Weren't we lucky with the weather! Friday the 13th was wet, Sunday the 15th was wet, but on Saturday we had a glorious day of early autumn sunshine. Sharon had the kettle on early at Wolborough as the intrepid adventurers gathered to plan tactics. Martin and Wena were to cycle, Ann and Wendy hoped to walk some of the sections. The rest formed a backup team armed with tools and first-aid kit and led by Sharon.

First stop for the cyclists (apart from the hills!) was East Ogwell for a photo-stop to prove we'd been past. Then it was on to the delightful little church at West Ogwell with its box pews and the support party hiding in them – will Wendy's head ever recover? We were soon having a go on the chime of three that sounded rather odd inside but not unpleasant outside. The relatively short distance to Denbury meant that there was plenty of time for Ann and Wendy to walk and all arrived early to be met by various refreshments just being laid out in the hope that other (non- ringing) cyclists would visit during the day. The bells here are not easy partly because there are no tucks in the ropes but we managed some quite respectable call-changes. On again to another rare tower – the 4 at Torbryan. These are a lovely ring of bells and it seems a shame that the two empty pits have never been filled – they would make a fine ring of 6. Reinforcements arrived here in the shape of Tim and Josh and a long break for lunch at the Church House Inn gave Ann and Wendy the chance to walk on to Ipplepen. The local ringers were ringing for a wedding as we arrived, so John and Bryan stayed on to help us out. Richard had cut short his sleep following a night-shift and came to join us for the afternoon. We managed some Plain Bob Triples along with call changes before it was time to head onwards to Abbotskerswell where we had a warm welcome including artistic pictures on the blackboard! These are not easy bells but some work is being done and they are certainly not as hard as they were. A good course of Bob Minor was the highlight here. Wena had been offered a lift to the final tower but she was determined to stick it out and despite the very long hill out of Abbotskerswell was still in good spirits when we completed the circle and arrived back at Wolborough where Sharon already had the kettle on again. Russell and Caroline met us here and these fine bells were soon sounding well to call changes, Plain Bob and a course of Grandsire Triples.

All in all it was a very successful day. Sponsorship has now to be collected and next time we hope to report the total sum raised. Many thanks to the support team of Sharon, Catherine, Tim, Josh, Richard and Alison. Thanks also go to all who met us and allowed us the use of their bells, and finally the intrepid cyclists and walkers - Ann, Wendy, Wena and Martin.

Martin Mansley

Mid Devon Branch Outing to Dorset



Relaxing on the station while waiting for the train

Again we managed a lovely day for our trip to “Hardy” country. There was a merry crowd on Newton Abbot station and we were soon away on the Paddington train - first stop Castle Cary. A quick change and we were soon on our way again to first tower Yetminster where we met the Wolborough contingent travelling by car. Yetminster are a fairly heavy six but we soon had them going well to a variety of methods. It was a short walk back to the station to proceed on to Dorchester, collecting Derek and Maureen on the way. First we had a longer walk to Fordington who were in the middle of a parish festival so welcomed the bells being rung. Many were able to sit out in the warm October sun for lunch before moving on to St Peter’s where John Martin took charge and ringing included our method of the day – Lincolnshire. After a fairly leisurely walk it was back to the station for a trip to Maiden Newton. Here, the tower captain also runs the local café and so we went there first to order food. Whilst that was being prepared we rang the lovely six, ably organised by Maddy. A very pleasant meal was then enjoyed – very many thanks to Sylvia who really pulled out the stops (at late notice, as well, due to a misunderstanding!). Back to the station and homewards via a rather long wait at Castle Cary due to a delayed train from Paddington. All in all a very enjoyable day out – many thanks to Philip Stevens who again negotiated the complexities of modern rail tickets to get us the cheapest deal and to our various ringing masters during the day. Lastly we say a big thank you to all the tower captains and ringers who came out to meet us and let us ring their bells.

Martin Mansley

Mid Devon Branch Library

TWO NEW ACQUISITIONS!

The branch library has just acquired two recent publications, both of which are available for borrowing. If you'd like to reserve either, please contact me (jritterman@blueyonder.co.uk)

The first is Steve Coleman's new book, *The Ringing in History Companion*, published in August this year. While similar in size, style and presentation to his earlier books, this Companion is not a guide to assist ringers in mastering their craft. It focuses instead on particular topics during certain historical periods in England and tells in colourful detail just how ringers and ringing were affected. Steve Coleman can weave a good story, and the two largest sections of the book, which focus respectively on ringing during World War II ('When the Ringing had to Stop (but sometimes didn't)') and on women ringers ('The Sight of Gentle Maiden Deftly Handling of a Rope'), are full of memorable anecdotes, told in characteristically entertaining style. Anyone who has ever wondered what *really* happened to ringing during the War could do no better than to delve into the first 160 pages of this book. There are, however, many other interesting stories from quite different historical periods, told rather more briefly. If you're curious to know about the 'very first tower grabber', about 'how ringing teas began' or how 'prize ringing' originated, you can find this here. Most of the material in the book relies on intensive archival research, so the stories presented – invariably from the point of view of the 'ordinary ringer', whatever the historical period – provide quite new insights into the history of ringing. As the promotional material for the book claims, it is 'ringing history as it's never been told before.'

The second item recently acquired by the Branch Library is a DVD, *Learning the Ropes: A Guide to Teaching Bell Handling*. This has been produced by the Association of Ringing Teachers (ART), the body which has developed and introduced the new Integrated Teacher Training Scheme (ITTS). The DVD, which follows the structure of the first module of the ITTS, is full of useful ideas on ringing style and on the stages of skill development. Those who have had the chance to view it already would, I think, warmly, recommend it as being useful for learners and teachers alike. Good bell handling is clearly illustrated but so are the typical handling problems experienced by learners, and ways to correct the latter are described and demonstrated in detail. There is also an extensive section showing a first training session with a learner with no previous experience which demonstrates how this approach can be put into practice. This DVD (which costs £15, plus £2 postage for those who are not ART members) is something that towers will probably want to acquire. The Branch Library copy will, however be available for short-term loan, so that members can assess it for themselves.

Details of the DVD and arrangements for ordering copies can be found on the ART website, at

<http://www.ringingteachers.co.uk/dvd/>

Janet Ritterman

East Devon Branch

Dovecotes or Bell Towers?

The bells of St Michael's Church in Honiton are said to be the heaviest ring of six in Devon. Sadly, they have not been rung at any time in the last twenty years, since they were declared to be unsafe. The tenor is cracked and has had an iron ring fitted around it to stop the crack getting worse. My understanding is that it was rung for some years after the ring was fitted. The fifth has at least one broken canon. A report from the time says that the ringer noticed the bell became a bit odd to ring part way through a quarter peal, but that they carried on to the end. It was only after an inspection to see why it was odd to ring that the cracked canon was discovered.

Honiton has another tower in town, at St Paul's Church, with a ring of eight bells. No doubt the ringers of the day were content to ring here and with no funds to repair or restore the bells of St Michael's these were effectively abandoned. Twenty years of neglect has not improved the situation.

Earlier this year I sought permission to go up the tower for a non-bell ringing purpose. After having every possible obstacle put in the way, I eventually succeeded in gaining permission, provided that I undertook not to enter the bell chamber or the ringing chamber. The most physical obstacle was in opening the door to the tower! There were so many sticks behind it that it was extremely difficult to open. The birds had taken possession! Sweeping aside sticks, old nests and general debris from the stairs we attained the summit. A peep into the bell chamber from the open door was enough to say, DO NOT ENTER.



David Hird is obviously made of sterner stuff, as some weeks later, when he obtained access, he conducted a close inspection of the bells, even swinging them to ascertain their current state. His report highlighted the need to do some basic maintenance fairly quickly. In truth this was no longer a bell tower, but a Dovecote!

One of the bells – covered in guano

Fresh from some rather late spring cleaning of the tower at St Paul's and while the mood was still upon them, the Honiton ringers attacked St Michael's. It was truly appalling; the attached photographs do not adequately show how bad it was. Clearing the stairs first, the next thing was to get rid of the mountains of sticks, nests

and guano. The birds clearly saw us as intruders and a few bolder ones stayed high up in the tower as we removed sack after sack of debris. One estimate says fifteen large sacks were removed; we did almost fill a skip. With the worst cleared up, but not all the guano, which has set rock hard, we measured up for new netting on the windows.

A week later we were back, this time with a mission to make it bird proof. Getting rid of the birds was not easy, so initially we ignored them and proceeded to fit weld mesh on all the window openings. Once this was completed we still had pigeons eyeing us from on high. Clearly they couldn't be left to starve and so we set about trying to catch them. It is a fact that pigeons can fly around a bell chamber much more quickly than a human can climb around a bell frame. Tactics were needed. After a few wild experiments a successful technique was devised and one by one, they were cornered, caught and removed to the great outdoors.

A massive effort will be required to clean the tower properly, if anyone is so inclined. For the moment the bells are reasonably accessible and we hope we have prevented things getting any worse. Can we ring the bells? In short – NO! One rotten rope, two cracked bells, plain bearings un-lubricated for twenty years and vast amounts of rock-hard pigeon poo adorning the bells hardly make them ringable. However, we now have something a little more like a bell tower and a little less like a dovecote.

*Trevor Hitchcock
Lisa Clarke (Photo)*

Grace Carter (1938-2013)

It is with great sadness that we have to report the death of Grace Carter, in hospital, on the 16th November. Grace will be sadly missed by all who knew her; she had been a member of the Honiton St Paul's band for longer than most of us can remember.

If you want something done, then ask a busy person. Grace was the proof of this old adage. If something needed doing then Grace was there to do it.

She first met husband Desmond when she was just 13 and they married 10 years later. Both were keen dancers, gardeners and members of the local wine circle. In addition, Grace was a Honiton Lace-maker and member of the WI. In due course sons Nigel and John came along and as teenagers they learnt to ring. Naturally, Grace was on hand to help with ringing teas and all the background activities that go along with a successful ringing band. Persuaded by Bill Webb, she too learnt to ring and for over 30 years Grace became a regular and reliable Sunday Service ringer. Son Nigel eventually became Tower Captain at St Paul's, Honiton until he left the area and one wonders how the conversations went over the dinner table if the ringing had ever been less than perfect. She took it upon herself to regularly clean and tidy the ringing chamber and for several years she was the tower secretary. Her ringing teas, when she organised everything and everyone to perfection, were greatly appreciated and the barbecues at her house were legendary. For the last year she had been fighting cancer with great spirit and appeared to be winning. Just a few days before her sudden and untimely death, she was looking forward to returning to the tower and had targeted next February for her return. She will be sadly missed by all who knew her and we send sincere condolences to all her family.

Trevor Hitchcock

North East Branch

NE Branch AGM & Dinner

The afternoon of the Branch AGM began with ringing at St Mary's Uffculme. Call Changes and various methods from Plain Bob Triples to Yorkshire Surprise Major



were rung before the service. The meeting was well attended by 28 members from 10 different branch towers. Charlotte Boyce, chairman, welcomed the Guild president, Guild secretary and Guild master and thanked branch officers and members for their continuing support.

There were some changes on the committee. Matt Webb was elected as programme secretary and Sheila Scofield as

The North East Branch Annual General Meeting

education officer. Tony Trigg stepped down as programme and membership secretaries. All other officers remained the same. Four new members attended and were elected. During the Ringers' Forum there was discussion about various topics including ITTS, quarter peal week, preparations for 2014 Guild festival being held in the branch and further programme dates for the coming year.



A last-minute problem with evening accommodation in Uffculme lead us to decide to bring forward the branch annual dinner from November to fill the gap in the AGM programme. In the event 23 members & friends attended an excellent meal at the Poacher's Pocket near Burlescombe later that evening.

Sheila Scofield

South Korea comes to Silverton

Minhee Lee, South Korea's leading lady of cheese, attended St Mary's, Silverton tower practice on 12th October. She was researching a book on English cheese and staying with local cheesemaker Mary Quicke, who rings at Silverton.

Minhee watched the band practise call changes and Bob Doubles under the guidance of tower captain Albert Campbell and Guild president Lester Yeo. She was fascinated to see such an ancient English art in the flesh.



Minhee with Albert Campbell

Albert Campbell then called on her to ring. Language difficulties did not stand in the way, and soon she was ringing with Albert's assistance. Albert demonstrated his teaching skills of calm encouragement, clear practical instruction, openness, leadership and reassurance that helps the Silverton band thrive.

For Minhee, this was an experience she will treasure for the rest of her life, and the Silverton band will show up in a Korean book on English cheese!

Mary Quicke

Open Day at Cruwys Morchard

In August we staged the last in the long series of events connected with the Cruwys Morchard bell rehanging project. Our final fling was an open day and we chose what was probably the only wet Saturday of the summer. Last year we held a similar open day on the weekend in August, probably the only dry Saturday of the summer! Last year we were still at the stage of arousing interest in the project.

This year, with the work completed, we wanted people to come along and see what we'd done to the bells and to try ringing them. And they did come, despite the rain, and lots of people, both adults and children, had a go at ringing backstrokes.

We also had the Frank Mack mini-ring and handbells for people to try, and a video camera in the belfry, linked to a T.V. downstairs next to the ringing area. This proved

extremely fascinating to the general public and ringers alike. Many photos and various other displays about the project were on show in the church. Outside the church there were sausages sizzling together with a huge array of other food all sheltered from the rain by gazebos.

But apart from the delight of seeing so many people (first timers and competent ringers) enjoying the bells, I think the highlight of the day was the secondary attraction which we had arranged as a crowd-puller.....a birds of prey display. As it was too wet to fly the birds outside, our two excellent falconers brought them into the church and everyone listened attentively to a very entertaining and educational talk and watched in awe as the beautiful Harris hawk flew up and down the nave, skimming the tops of our heads or landing on his chosen perches around the church and all the children had a turn having him land on their gloved arm!



Harris hawk perching on organ pipes in Cruwys Morchard Church

So, all in all, we had a successful and wonderful day and everyone agreed that having the birds inside the church was a terrific idea so perhaps the rain helped to make it even more special.

*Nellie Croft
Photo by Guy Cruwys*

First Quarter Peal for Devon Cheese-maker

Congratulations to Mary Quicke from Newton St Cyres who rang her first quarter peal on 17th November. Mary has been back ringing since March 2012 after taking a break – for 40 years! She learnt to ring at Newton St Cyres alongside Sheila Scofield and Mike Mears, in the band taught by Revd John Scott. Mary and Sheila hadn't seen each other since 1970, so it was extra special to ring a quarter together, and there was a lot of news to catch up on.

Mary is a regular ringer at Newton St Cyres and Silverton, and has progressed to learning Bob Doubles. When she isn't ringing she runs her local dairy farm and makes prize-winning cheeses.



Newton St Cyres, Devon, St Cyr and St Julitta,
 Sunday, 17 November 2013 in 43 mins (12-3-22)
 1260 Plain Bob Doubles

1 Christine M Clarke, 2 Lynette Costello (C), 3 Sheila
 Scofield, 4 John M Clarke, 5 Andrew Digby, 6 Mary Quicke

Specially arranged for Mary and Sheila to ring together for the first time in 43 years,
 and remembering Revd John Scott, who taught them both to ring at Newton St Cyres.

Lynette Costello

Exeter Branch

New officers following AGM

At the Exeter Branch AGM last Saturday, elections were held to appoint officers for the year 2013/14 and one or two changes of personnel are now in force. Here is the full list, together with email addresses:

Chair: Wendy Gill - wendy.gill@blueyonder.co.uk

Secretary: Wendy Campbell - wendy.campbell@lineone.net

Treasurer: Lesley Tucker - lesley.tucker@hotmail.com

Ringing Master: David Hird - davidhird_uk@yahoo.co.uk

Assistant Ringing Master: Ian Campbell - I.L.C.Campbell@exeter.ac.uk

Branch Representative on the Guild Committee: Michael Cannon -
mjccannon@yahoo.co.uk

Branch PRO: Amy Gill - amyturtle.gill@hotmail.com

Branch Education Advisor: Lynne Hughes - lynnephughes@hotmail.com

Branch Bell Advisor: Geoff Sparling - geoffreysparling@btinternet.com

Wendy Campbell

Lucky Escape at Exeter St David's

At a recent practice at St David's, Exeter (no, not the railway station – the church!) a rope caught on the rope guide and a section of it fell to the floor of the ringing room. Fortunately no one was hurt and a rescue mission was instigated. Investigation showed that the bolts at both ends had sheared, and one end was badly bent when the other end had come down.

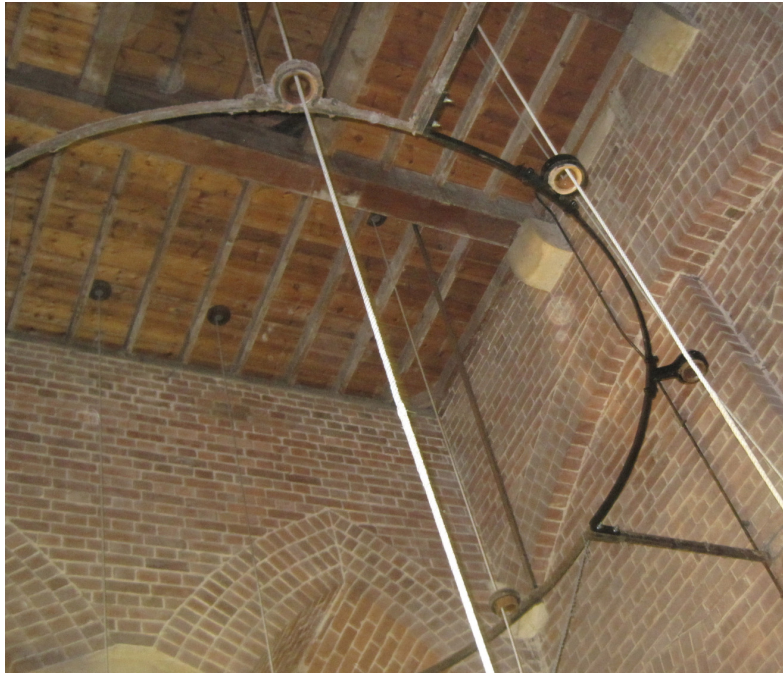
Michael Cannon came to the rescue with a blow torch and welding equipment to heat the wrought iron before bending it gently back to shape, and applying weld to the bend to strengthen it. Rob Franklin then assisted me with his car and trailer to get a long ladder up the outside of the tower and re-install the guide – which was about 16 feet above the floor! Many options were considered but the best was to attach it to the two bell ropes that normally pass through it, hoist it to the correct height, and then bolt each end into place. While the ladder was up the tower all of the bolts holding the guide were checked for tightness.



Michael Cannon with Welding Equipment



The Repaired Rope Guide ready for refitting



Guide back in position

If you go to St David's do admire the paintwork on this one segment of the guide!

Ian Campbell

George Tribe Model Bell



If you have rung at St Petrock's in Exeter you can't have missed the magnificent model of six bells, hung in a frame for ringing, which was made by George Tribe. George, who rings in North Devon, has made a new model of a single bell hung for ringing which he has very kindly donated to the Exeter Cathedral ringers. The bell takes pride of place on the table in the middle of the ringing room and will be used to demonstrate how bells are rung, both to visitors to the Cathedral and also when talks are given further afield. The detail of the construction is amazing, down to a counter-balanced clapper which always strikes "right", which is not easy to ensure on a scaled down model. The ringers are very grateful for his kind gift.

Ian Campbell

Heart Radio

Back in June I received an unusual email:

My name is Josh and I am the Producer of Heart Breakfast with Matt & Caroline at Heart Radio. We cover the South West across Devon and Cornwall and have a weekly audience of over 250,000 people.

We run a feature called 'Matt & Caroline Try...' where they attempt lots of different activities. Everything from milking cows to open water swimming!

One thing we would LOVE to try is bell ringing with your club. I wonder if you would mind us coming down to have a go?

They were requesting a time on the following day!

So on 11th June I agreed to meet them at Heavitree church. The producer, Josh, had a tiny audio recorder and separate video recorder and seemed most interested in filming Caroline going up the stairs (she was wearing some rather fetching hot-pants!). In order to make it more interesting we went up to the clock room to see the clock, and then on to the roof of the tower to admire the view and the surprise of all of the mobile telephone equipment and aerials that are there but almost entirely invisible from the ground.

Having tied up the treble and started up the simulator – which is based on authentic “Heavitree” bell sounds, they each had a go at backstrokes, and then handstrokes, to see what ringing was all about. Matt tried hard to persuade me that he had done better than Caroline – I suppose he actually had as Caroline was rather scared of the whole episode, but I was reluctant to give into his chauvinistic sentiments!

I was told that the recording would be broadcast on 21st June but I gather from people who listen to this program in the morning that it actually appeared sometime later. Still, as they say, all publicity is good publicity – I hope that it has brought ringing a little to the public’s attention!

Ian Campbell

Exeter Branch Annual Firework Party

On the 9th of November members of the Exeter Branch met up at Graham and Lesley Tucker's house for a lovely evening. We all enjoyed the hot food and then went outside in the rain to see the fireworks and stand around the huge bonfire in order to keep warm. If you went too close you started to steam! Thanks go to Graham and Lesley for yet another great and entertaining evening.



The Branch Ringing Master complete with glowing Halo!

Amy Gill

Exeter Cathedral Society in London



Enjoying the ringing at St Paul's Cathedral

(l-r): Ian Smith, Tom Waterson, Rusty Hartley, Mike Mears, John Martin, Reg McKenzie, Sue Sawyer, Clare Griffiths

If you want to find the perfect combination for a great weekend, then look no further than the recent Exeter Cathedral Society of Ringers' trip to London. Over the last weekend in October, some thirty Cathedral ringers and friends spent three days touring the city, enjoying an ambitious and successful programme of peals, quarter peals and general ringing, in a host of challenging towers.

On Friday 25 October, ringing was focussed upon a range of quarter peals, with the band visiting Garlickhythe, Limehouse, St Magnus the Martyr and St Clement Danes. All attempts were successful, as was the peal rung simultaneously on the new ring of ten bells at St Dunstan in the West, in the heart of Fleet Street. Much needed victuals were then partaken at the atmospheric Ye Olde Cock Tavern, before everyone departed to accommodation scattered far and wide across London.

Saturday 26 October saw the band take on a demanding itinerary, starting with general ringing on the Jubilee Bells at Garlickhythe. This lovely light ring of eight were particularly enjoyed, as were the six bells at our next tower, St Katherine Cree. The final tower before lunch was Cornhill, where all were eager to try out the new ring of twelve, and we had plenty of time to ring everything in our repertoire, up to Bristol Surprise Maximus. After a much needed and sociably long lunch at the nearby Crosse Keys, we moved onto the highlight of the day, St Paul's Cathedral. Access to the ringing chamber involved meeting at the crypt, before being escorted up in a lift, all of which rendered the final entry there even more impressive. The band rose to the challenge though, and everyone appreciated the opportunity to ring at St Paul's; the service touch of Stedman Cinques rang out gloriously across the city below. To round off the day, some lighter ringing at nearby St Vedast proved relaxing, and even more so was the highly sociable group meal at the Albion in Ludgate Circus.



The full group

Back (l-r): Ian Campbell, Wendy Campbell, Ian Avery, Phill Ridley, Alison Waterson, Richard Harrison, Phil Stevens, Nick Waterson, Sue Sparling, James Kirkcaldy, Ian Smith, Peter Brown. Front (l-r): Roxy Hughes, Lynne Hughes, Sue Sawyer, Phil Hughes, Clare Griffiths, John Martin, Andrew Digby, Tom Waterson, Matt Hilling, Mike Mears, Richard Johnston, Lester Yeo, Jo Brown, Rusty Hartley, Geoff Sparling, Reg McKenzie, Pauline Champion

Sunday 27 October was another early start as we headed off to Sunday Service ringing at not just the challenging ten bells of St Luke's, Chelsea, but also the more amenable eight bells of St Saviour's, Pimlico. The morning concluded with two more simultaneous quarter peals, one on the rare ten bells of St Barnabas, Pimlico, another at St Giles in the Fields, Holborn. During the afternoon, whilst many appreciated lunch, a peal band travelled to Hampstead, rounding off the weekend with a successful attempt there. Those left behind then savoured some good twelve bell ringing at the iconic St Martin in the Fields, before heading home to Devon, just beating the storm that threatened from the west! All had enjoyed a weekend of good ringing and good company, in the heart of London, and our thanks went to Matthew Hilling for organising such a superb outing. Here's to the next one!

Clare Griffiths

Training

Year's End with Kaleidoscope

On 9th November, the Guild of Devonshire Ringers held a Kaleidoscope training day, for the third year running. We enjoyed the bells of Berry Pomeroy in the morning, and Ipplepen in the afternoon, with some handbell Kaleidoscope at lunch time in the pub!

The number of students was limited to six, so that three at a time could ring, paired up with experienced ringers. With the addition of solid treble and tenor ringers in 1st and 8ths place, pairs of bells worked in 2-3, 4-5 and 6-7, to practise long or short places, continuous dodges starting at hand or backstroke, and eventually combinations as simple or complicated as desired! At first all pairs were doing the same thing, for example all doing continuous dodging, but we soon mixed them up a bit so they wouldn't always know which bell they would be following, and students got a say in which they would like to practise. Later we moved the pairs to involve the treble too.



Students: Glenis, Susanna, Graham, Julia, Jessie and Maddy, with helpers, at Ipplepen

The emphasis was thinking about which place you were in, not necessarily knowing which of the two bells below you, you would be following; this involved rudimentary rope-sight, listening, and developing the confidence to keep to a rhythm and commit your bell. Understanding and acquiring the skill of holding a bell up or pulling it in – especially round the back end – improved several students' striking.

Any why 'Year's End'?... The Kaleidoscope day rounded off a successful calendar of training events held by the Guild in 2013. Thanks to the many, many helpers who gave their time this year, without whom we couldn't manage anything.

Lynne Hughes

Devon Young Ringers and South West Branch join for Summer outing.

The autumn South West Branch outing on the 21st September was well attended and supported. This year we joined up with the Devon Young ringers for lunch and afternoon ringing.

The day had started earlier at Bovey Tracey where we rang plenty of call changes, rounds and some method. Our band was a real mixture; for one learner it was his first time ringing at another tower and he handled the ropes well. It's always rewarding when new learners attend outings. It demonstrates the skills you learn at bell practice can be used in any tower and when you return to your own familiar tower, ringing feels easier!

The next tower was St Martin's, Exminster, where we were all rather impressed by the very pristine and immaculate ringing room - not a wonky peal board or dusty book shelf in sight! The bells were lovely and again the less experienced ringers excelled and gained lots of experience.

Meanwhile the Devon Young Ringers started at Woodbury for a morning of ringing. For a few, especially the littler ones, the bells were bit heavy but we managed some good rounds and call changes and even rang a course of Cambridge minor.

Both groups then met up for lunch at the St George and Dragon pub in Clyst St George where the food was great, with generous portions of fish and chips. It was also a chance for the Plymouth based ringers to catch up with friends from other branches.



The group at Clyst Honiton

Following lunch at the pub the whole group rang at Clyst St George, superbly organised by Amy Gill. We rang a mixture of minor, doubles and some handling

sessions. It was great to see young people from all over the Guild come together and ring.

The next tower was Clyst Honiton; you can see by the picture there was quite a crowd of us! We were well supported and able to ring all sorts.

Thanks go to those who let us ring at their towers and to all those who helped me organise the outing as it was the first time I have done this. Thanks especially go to all those experienced ringers who came and helped by providing a strong band for the learners to ring with. If it were not for them, we would not have been able to ring anything at all, so thank you very much. I very much look forward to young ringers' outings in the future.

Amy Gill and Josephine Maddick

ITTS Module 1 – Silverton, Devon 2nd November 2013

TUTOR: LES BOYCE

Having attended the ITTS Module One course, I think I have found an answer to the question that has been simmering in my mind ever since I became aware of the scheme. Namely, how is it different to become a bell ringing teacher through this route, than through the traditional route?

Talking to the experienced teachers in my own band, they gained their skills by informal apprenticeship to older teachers, starting pretty much with their own memories of learning to handle a bell. They picked up the various exercises they use by observation, and the manner of talking to pupils pretty much by osmosis. They are teaching well and their learners are making good progress. As I attend all our tower's learners' practices (currently twice weekly) I was already experiencing the osmosis and knew that the skill of ringing a bell is broken down into handstroke and backstroke, before putting the two together. This, I would imagine, is universal.

Had I the luxury of another twenty years in which to absorb the good practice around me, I could aspire to being as good as them one day. Unfortunately, I have come to ringing late and find myself embarking on the road towards teaching at the age of 50.

The Module One course takes a far more intensive, more structured approach to teaching bellringing. After the first theory session, we climbed up the tower and were put into groups of teacher/mentor/guinea pig (ie trainee teacher, the mentor they have brought with them and who will guide them through the scheme, and a ringer pretending that they had never touched a rope before).

The tutor explained that we were going to ring the bell WITH the guinea pig, sharing the work of controlling the bell. I had a moment of absolute blankness - despite having watched other teachers do this in our tower, I had no idea how to get the ball rolling. Here the strength of the course shines through - first, the tutor explained and demonstrated what he meant with a guinea-pig, and then we did the explain/demonstrate/do it cycle with our guinea pigs. Meanwhile the mentors observed and gave us constructive feedback on things we had forgotten, or sneaky faults that the guinea pigs were trying to get away with unnoticed. (Entertainment throughout the day was provided by the guinea pigs' most excellent acting skills and ingenuity).

So the first, crucial difference for me in training via the ITTS was that this terrifying moment, when the new learner could potentially get a rope wrapped around me, was first played out in a completely safe, supported environment. It is quite difficult to share a rope, and work out a fluent co-ringing style and even where to stand, but so much easier when all parties can already handle a bell. My mentor tells me that the first pull off with a brand new learner is always somewhat frightening, but at least I have a rough feeling of what to do now!

The second difference has dawned on me after the day, back in the tower during our normal weekly practice night.

My mental picture of ringing before was "handstroke+backstroke = ringing". As I observed everyone ringing, I felt I had a totally new perspective - that there is just SO much more going on. Where is the ringer catching the sally? How high up is she reaching? How high is the bell going on this stroke? Is it dropping back too soon? Is it tipping over the balance so the ringer has to pull uncomfortably hard to get it back in time for the next stroke? Is she pulling right through on handstroke and backstroke? When does she let go? When does her free hand take hold of the tail again? How is she adjusting (when ringing a method) between ringing slow and quick?

I believe this detailed analysis of what makes up bell ringing is at the heart of the ITTS philosophy. I have certainly not been handed a magic wand that will enable me to teach someone to ring, super-fast, with a perfect style (that would have been nice, of course, but teaching and learning generally has no such magic solutions). However, faced with a learner who is striving for better bell control, I at least have a sense of where I might start, some exercise which might enable them to disentangle one dimension of their movements, focus on it, improve it, then incorporate it into what would hopefully be a more effective style.

Watching the band ringing last night, there were of course a number of ringers present who have a really enviably good style. No effort is wasted; they make it look really easy. Their movements are text-book perfect, fluent, and always result in the note sounding at the moment that they intended. I would not count myself among that number yet - I am well aware that I give my rope the odd heave to make up for a previous error of judgement - but I do feel equipped to support some of our learners, step by step, along the road.

The third difference in philosophy between my pre- and post-Module One day, is a change in my view of the importance of ringing style.

I have been a helper at a number of our Guild's training courses and have seen teachers intervene with a faulty style (very tactfully and effectively, I might add). I then observed exactly the same "fault" in an excellent ringer, and I was confused - do these faults matter or not, if they can accompany some people throughout a distinguished ringing career?

My conclusion now is that yes, they do matter. If style is faulty then the striking may well suffer for a long time, even if, in the end, the ringer is able to work around it and ring with fluency plus a fault. In the meantime, they are ringing with faults both to the careful observer watching, and to the careful observer listening. There are some rare towers in the country where the "Sunday Band" is hand-picked and the striking is a joy to hear. For the rest of us, the Sunday band is a mixture of novices and, if we are lucky, confident experienced ringers. (For some of us, in reality, it's novices and other novices!). The novices may be limited to rounds and call changes, but it is surely

preferable for them to be handling their bell as accurately and confidently as they can, to produce the best sound.

I am now embarking on the hard work of accreditation, which may take up to two years. But that too is broken down into digestible pieces. As an apprentice, I might have worked alongside our two experienced teachers for a couple of years, gradually joined in, and then eventually have taken the step of running a course unaided. But using this scheme, I am now clear what small skills I need to teach, and see how these will build up together, into a jigsaw puzzle that makes a confident, fluent bell ringer. One day, hopefully, I will be a fluent teacher, but meanwhile at least I can be confident that I will be positively useful, in small ways, in our large band, which currently has six learners at the bell handling stage.

Rosalind Martin (Ringer at Christchurch Priory)

Tiverton St Peter's has adopted the national LTR scheme in the teaching of all its new ringers. Mark Heritage started learning at the end of July with an intensive two-day "introduction to ringing" course and has made rapid progress. He is well on the way to achieving Level 2 in the next couple of months.



Mark Heritage receiving his "Learning the Ropes" Level 1 Certificate from
Les Boyce, Tower Captain at Tiverton St. Peter's

Les Boyce

Association of Ringing Teachers – Newsletters

The following gives a flavour for the content of the latest Association of Ringing Teachers' newsletter – ART Works 6. The full newsletter can be seen at <http://www.ringingteachers.co.uk/aw/AW6-Nov13.pdf>



ART WORKS 6 - does method ringing damage retention?

METHOD OR MADNESS? BY RUTH EYLES

In cycling, traditional activities are not what the newcomers primarily want to do. Is it possible there is a new generation of ringers for whom method ringing is not the ambition and should not be the expectation?

TEACHING TIPS: MAKING THE JUMP FROM NOVICE TO IMPROVER

The transition from novice to improver is a high-risk time for losing ringers. By paying particular attention to a ringer during this period we may help more ringers progress to the point where they are really enjoying their ringing and are less likely to give up.

EATON BRAY LAUNCH NEW BAND WITH LEARNING THE ROPES

Teaching bell handling in two days is quite demanding – both for teachers and learners. Although we had planned to teach from 10am until 5pm on two consecutive days, it seemed clear that people were starting to get tired.

SUPPORT THE RINGING FOUNDATION

The Ringing Foundation has made a £26,000 commitment to the future of change ringing through supporting the Integrated Teacher Training Scheme (ITTS). This grant funds a paid administrator for ITTS and ART, which is essential in the deployment of the higher teaching and learning standards ART aims for.

The Ringing Foundation also funds various other projects around the country and is inviting applications for more. But in order to create a future for change ringing, we need your financial support. A personal donation or standing order helps to sustainably fund the investments in teaching and recruitment. Grants and financial commitments from Guilds, Associations, Branches and Districts are also key to meeting our long term funding gap.

Please help secure the future of change ringing. Further details of all of these are available at <http://www.ringingfoundation.com>.

Angela Roskelly

Other News

Devon Church Bell Restoration Fund

BELL RESTORATION FUND GETS A MASSIVE BOOST

Bill Smale, who lived in Petrockstowe, died on 27th March 1991. In his will, which was dated only a few days before his death, he set up a trust fund, such that when the two ladies who were living in a house belonging to him had both died, the value of the house would be left to the Devon Church Bell Restoration Fund (DCBRF). This has finally come to fruition and as a result the fund has just been boosted by over three hundred thousand pounds. This is currently being invested to bring in a significant annual return and the trustees are working to ensure that the money is safe and will continue to bring in income. Discussions are also going on as to how best to use the money. In the short term requests for bell restoration and maintenance will be met as before, although it is likely that larger grants can now be paid. However this money will not last for ever, so we will still welcome donations of any amount to the bell fund which will help to spread the benefit over the future years.

Ian Campbell

Calendar for 2014

Most branches are only just starting to arrange their calendars for 2014 so they cannot be included yet. Here are some provisional dates that you might like to keep clear:

EDUCATION AND YOUTH PROGRAM FOR 2014

February 22	Handbells: Beginners and Plain Hunt	Lynne Hughes
March 1	Young Ringers' Spring Event	Amy Gill
March 8	Minor Beyond Plain Bob	Charlotte Boyce
April 6 (Sun)	Advanced Surprise Major Afternoon	Tim Bayton
June 1 (Sun)	Handbells: Plain Bob	Tim Bayton
June 7	Young Ringers' Summer Event	Amy Gill
July 5	National Youth Contest	Amy Gill
July 19	'Have Your Say' seminar	CC/Guild event
August 16	Ringling skills: Kaleidoscope	Lynne Hughes
September 27	Young Ringers' Autumn Event	Amy Gill
October 11	Basic Bell Maintenance	Ian Campbell & James Clarke
November 8	Calling Grandsire Doubles	Lynne Hughes

Please note especially the chance to meet with members of the Central Council at the seminar in Exeter on 19th July. It is hoped to have a good turnout of members to this. Lunch will be provided.

For youth events contact Amy Gill: amyturtle.gill@hotmail.com

For others contact Lynne Hughes: mlynnephughes@hotmail.com

OTHER PROVISIONAL DATES FOR 2014

January 18	Guild Committee meeting
January 25	SW Devon branch AGM
February 8	East Devon AGM
February 15	Devon 10-bell call change competition
June 21	Guild AGM
September 6	National Ringing Roadshow in Newbury
October 18	Guild competitions

Editorial

This issue contains what, to me, are two outstanding items of news which you may have missed. Both involve significant work by members to make the best of them. Firstly, the amazing donation to the DCBRF will have repercussions for years to come, and secondly the donation of a mini-ring to the Guild will enormously enhance the teaching facilities within the Guild. Further details are in the full articles. We are so grateful for these donations.

Many thanks also go to all the contributors to this edition of *RRD* and the branch officers who help to deliver it. Without you there would be no newsletter.

If you have a personal subscription this is usually valid for four issues. In order to simplify the procedure and for me to keep tabs on who has or has not paid (I am easily confused!) the delivery labels now display the issue number of the last issue that has been paid for. I hope that this will help to keep us all straight! And you are welcome to pay for more than one year at a time if you wish, which helps to reduce the administration.

Ian Campbell

GDR Embroidered Clothing



My Rugby Shirt – with GDR Logo

Look no further for your polo shirts, sweatshirts and rugby shirts, all embroidered with the Guild logo plus optional tower name. From early 2014 we will be taking orders for the following items:

Classic Rugby Shirt –
Men's and Ladies' –
FR100/FR101

Available in bright pink,
black, navy, red, light
pink, surf blue, white

A range of sizes from S
through to 4XL

Men's - £24.50

Ladies' - £23.50

Raglan Sweatshirt –
7620M

Available in black,
classic red, purple,
French navy, bottle,
bright royal, bright red,
sky,

light oxford, burgundy,
emerald, grey

A range of sizes from
XS through to 4XL

£20.00

Drop Shoulder
Sweatshirt – Men's and
Ladies' – AV501M/F

Available in black,
white, charcoal, city
green, green apple,
navy, texas orange,
royal blue,
independence red,
sport grey

A range of sizes from S
through to 3XL

£19.00

Pique Polo Shirts – Men's and Ladies' – 539M/F

Available in black, sky, French navy, bright royal, bright red,
classic red, bottle, white

A range of sizes from XS through to 6XL

£17.50

Please note, these prices may be subject to change next year and are for guidance only. For more information visit the website at www.linelaembroidery.com

Order forms will be circulated in early 2014. Expressions of interest would be welcomed by the Guild Secretary. Look out for further details in the New Year!

Clare Griffiths



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