



Founded 1925

President - Maurice Sharland

www.devonbells.co.uk

Devon Calls

**February
2014**

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

My involvement with Church Bell Ringing began in 1954 when, at the age of sixteen, I was taught to ring at St Mary's Dunsford. It was fortunate that, with the help of our mentor 'Alf Sercombe', we were able to form a 'young' team. We had great fun in trying to improve on the 'old' team's effort and it wasn't long before we were venturing to other towers for practice and then to invitation competitions around and about. We used the services of our local taxi (a very sedate Austin 16). The driver was also one of our old team of ringers so he was able to give us an objective opinion on the standard of ringing.

I joined the RAF in 1960, and after basic training I was posted to RAF Yatesbury in Wiltshire, a Radio & Radar Engineering training establishment (no longer in existence). I was able to get home on quite a number of weekends so I could take part in the Saturday ringing competitions and the Sunday service ringing. Sadly our mentor died suddenly and I was instantly 'promoted' to treble man. (Neither I, nor any of the team, had ever had the opportunity to ring the treble before so it was a new experience). I recall coming home on the train on a Friday evening muttering the 60 on thirds changes to myself in preparation for the Kenn Deanery Festival at Ide.

I left the RAF in 1963 and Daphne & I were married in 1964. Towards the end of the 60's we became aware that the bells of St Mary's were getting to the point where work was required to restore them to good fettle. The Dunsford ringers formed a fundraising campaign and we kept this



going for six or seven years. It then became clear that contributions to the bell fund were not even keeping pace with inflation. In 1977 the PCC was persuaded to hold a public meeting to put our proposals to the people of the village and with the unanimous support of the one hundred or so who attended the meeting we put the fund raising into top gear and placed an order with Whitechapel for a complete recasting and re-hanging of the six bells at a cost of circa £12,000.

The job was completed in 1978 by which time the money had been raised.

The spin-off from the work to the bells was the huge interest in learning to ring. We taught as many as fast as we could among them were Daphne and Martin, our younger son (Graham, elder son, had been learning since he was about two years old!).

Teaching new bell ringers has been on-going ever since. *(continued overleaf)*

A copy of the "Year Card 2014" and the "Competition Schedule 2014" are circulated with this copy of *Devon Calls*

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

(continued from page 1)

I have discovered that asking for volunteers is not in general very productive in the long term. My experience is that 'head hunting' is by far the better way of recruiting would-be bell ringers. I am keen that anyone who shows the slightest interest should be invited to have a go with no obligation whatsoever. Just occasionally, like seeking for treasure, you come across a real gem!

Of course, teaching bell ringing is one thing, but teaching dependability is not easy but it is absolutely vital. I have found, almost without exception, that once a ringer realises he/she is a very necessary part of a team they will respond by either being there at the appointed time or give good notice that they cannot make it. That is very reassuring for a captain, especially where wedding ringing is involved.

Some years ago David Trist, as Training Officer, organised a listening/judging session which was very well received by those who came. Is there any merit in holding something similar where experienced and prospective trainers could get together to discuss the way they approach it and the various tactics they use to get the best out of learners? It could include the use of the Abel simulator and its merits (and drawbacks). When I am around and about for the various functions that will take place during 2014 come and have a chat to me about it.

Don't be hesitant in giving me your candid opinion – will it do any good or not? What do you really think?

I look forward to meeting as many members as I possibly can during my tenure as President. May 2014 be a good year for you and your team.

Maurice Sharland

CONGRATULATIONS to Norfolk ringer Betty Baines

on being awarded the MBE in the 2014 New Year's Honours.

"For services to Bell Ringing in Norfolk and North Suffolk. (Diss, Norfolk) "

Betty, 67, from Diss has been ringing bells for more than 50 years. She is currently master of the Ladies Guild of Change Ringers' Eastern District which covers her home county of Norfolk and encompasses neighbouring Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Essex. Betty has taught hundreds of people to ring over the years. She said 'I encourage people to take it up and get as much enjoyment out of it as I have' adding 'I like to encourage ladies to do it as it's generally thought of as a man's occupation'. 'We're very short of ringers as it's something very few youngsters are taking up these days - you have to have a sense of rhythm, feel the bell on its balance and have a good ear'.

*** BREAKING NEWS ***

EXTENSION OF THE LISTED PLACES OF WORSHIP GRANT SCHEME

The Government recently announced changes to the scope and operation of the Listed Places of Worship grant scheme, these changes came into effect on 1 October 2013. From this date, works to pipe organs, turret clocks, bells and bell ropes are eligible for claims under the scheme. Professional services directly related to eligible building work such as architect fees are also eligible. Also from 1 October 2013, applications to make use of the scheme are accepted from religious or charitable groups whose principal or primary purpose is to conserve, repair and maintain redundant listed places of worship that are not in private ownership.

The changes to scope will be accompanied by administrative changes to simplify claiming through the scheme:

- In any twelve month period, each place of worship may submit one claim using eligible invoices with a value of less than £1000, but more than £500 (excluding the VAT paid). This is in addition to an unlimited number of claims where the value of eligible work carried out (excluding VAT) is £1000 or greater
- Scanned or photocopied invoices are now accepted to support claims
The scheme will process payment runs each week to deliver a smoother flow of payments to applicants. This will result in most applicants receiving their grant more quickly.

Full details of all changes and how they will apply are detailed throughout this website. New application forms and guidance documents can also be downloaded using the left hand menu options.

Note:

The Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme makes grants towards the VAT incurred in making repairs and carrying out alterations to listed buildings mainly used for public worship. The scheme has an annual budget of £42m, and presently receives around 4000 claims each year.

The expansion to include professional fees and works to pipe organs, turret clocks, bells and bell ropes applies to works supplied on or after 1 October 2013.

Source <http://www.lpwscheme.org.uk/>

A WELCOME MESSAGE FROM JEREME DARKE

Dear Fellow Ringers

December 28th 2013

First I must say how appreciative I am of the messages and updates received from ringers in Devon. Congratulations to Mr Chris Clayton, Mr Mike Webster, Mr James Kerslake for their efforts and support of The Devon Association of Ringers. Well done to the achievers of Certificates and prizes at the 2013 Festivals.

I am still ringing and look forward to the 2014 season.

ALL THE BEST AND LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ALL SOON.

Kind regards

Jereme Darke

St. George's Day 2013

The St. George's Day ring for 2013 was terrific and mentioned with great enthusiasm on most of the BBC Regional Radio breakfast shows. The local newspapers also gave it greater coverage and we even got mentioned nationally on BBC Radio 1. This is all thanks to your wonderful and continuing support for which I am most grateful.

The feedback from all the media contacts was very positive with requests to keep them informed for next year. It is with this in mind that social media has been added which will help spread the word and make the day an even bigger event.

I have been in contact with the CCCBR and put before them a possible extension of activity on the day. Would it be at all possible for major cities to set aside an individual tower that would welcome and accommodate curious members of the public to come in off the street to have a go

There have been several towers in the past that have done just this and it was a great success, especially amongst the young. I thought it would be an excellent opportunity to bring in new ringers and whet their appetites to becoming a fully fledged ringer by being part of a national event. It would also encourage children to come into your magnificent churches that might not otherwise have a reason for doing so.

With Christmas soon to be upon us and with most of your towers gathering together for the festival ringing I hope you will pass this idea amongst the bands and let me know what their thoughts on the matter might be. Also confirm with them that they will be able to take part in 2014. The campaign is now on facebook and twitter which can be accessed via the web site and it would be hugely helpful and fun to receive messages, comments, and 'likes' and so help the campaign evolve with a powerful input from your ringers. There is no doubt a growing awareness of your hard work which is received with delight by everyone.

I look forward to hearing from you regarding next year.

Libby Alexander

Ringling for England Campaign

www.ringingforengland.co.uk

Contact : 07799 23 04 23



Ringling For England

St. George's Day
April 23rd 2014 - 6pm

GET RINGING FOR ENGLAND ON ST. GEORGE'S DAY April 23rd at 6pm

What is the Campaign?

We want to get the 44,000 bell ringers to ring the 28,000 bells in the 15,000 churches ringing in England, all at exactly the same time, at 6pm on St. George's Day, England's Day, April 23rd ... imagine what the 50,000,000 people in England would think of such an incredible sound.

Who will be ringing?

There will be people from all walks of life and all ages who will be ringing out of every corner of the country. They will ring from towers that might have only one bell or some that have a stupendous 13. In small parish churches, from Priors, Abbeys, Universities, Minsters, Cathedrals and even a Castle. They will be ringing 'methods' from the genre Change Ringing. There will even be some exceptional bands who will try and ring a *peal* which is an astonishing feat of ringing non-stop for three whole hours.

And the date?

It is April 23rd. Why? Because that was when St. George was martyred, his death decreed by Diocletian for refusing to give up Christianity. He was a brave young man and very worthy of being hailed a Patron Saint. He shares this date with that of another well known Englishman – William Shakespeare. So the aim of the Campaign is to get all 44,000 ringers across the Nation to ring out and make the country proud of her Patron Saint and to make it a national celebration every year. Every community in the country has a bell tower near them and anyone can learn to ring no matter what age so if you want to get involved we would love to hear from you - so please **contact** us at: www.ringingforengland.co.uk

Even if you are not a ringer it's a day for celebration, to have fun, to fly the flag, and enjoy yourselves. We wish you a Happy St. George's Day!



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2013

NORTH TAWTON - 9 NOVEMBER 2013

HON. GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT 2012 – 2013

The first event after the Annual General Meeting was, on the same evening – a social/skittle evening at the Waie Inn, Zeal Monachorum. This was organized by Graham Sharland and James Steer to which sincere thanks must go. It was raising money for Sally Darke's charity for the intensive care unit at Frenchay Hospital Bristol, where Jereme had been so well looked after. Everyone that had been able to attend this event said how much they had enjoyed themselves, and that it was a good way to end our AGM day. (We were hoping to round off this year's meeting in similar style but unfortunately the Waie Inn was not available)

The carol service was held this year in Dawlish. This was well attended as usual. Once again I was unable to go along as it always falls the same weekend as our family come down from the North for their "Christmas Weekend"

Competitions 2013 – The two competition Secretaries have covered these in their reports. I would just like to add my congratulations to all the winning teams; Dave Trout and his team from Egg Buckland, and Ian Avery and his team from Kingsteignton. Egg Buckland have now won the Ross Shield 22 times since 1980 and Kingsteignton have won the Eight Bell for the last 12 years. (I cannot go back further than this!). At this stage I should like to pass on my most sincere and grateful thanks to the north and south representatives / competition secretaries. There is such a lot of work to make competitions run smoothly, and for all their hard work throughout the year which again I do thank them both. James does not wish to seek re-election for the post of Competition Secretary (South) so if there is any one of you out there reading this please get in touch with me preferably before the AGM.

Sadly this year, again, we have lost several great characters and friends from the ringing world, and our thoughts are with their families as we approach the festive season. I think the biggest tribute that we can pay to them is to keep the Devon Association thriving.

90 years of the Devon Association of Ringers is just around the corner in 2015. This is quite a large milestone to reach, and it would be great to make 2015 a special year for the Association. Please let me know if you can think of any ideas that the committee can put together to celebrate this event. I remember my grandfather, Charlie Stevens telling me that he cycled from Langtree, via Bishops Tawton, where he met up with fellow ringer Bill Howard, and they both cycled up to Zeal Monachorum for the first Devon Competition! I am sure we will not see the likes of them again!

We have held the normal three committee meetings

throughout the year which have been very well attended.

To conclude my report, I would just like to round off by saying a big thank you to our outgoing president Mr Chris Clayton, and our retiring Chairman Mr Claude Nicholls. Thank you to all fellow officers and committee members for all their help and support over the past twelve months.

Margaret White

WEBMASTER'S REPORT

The year started busily as the entire website had to be moved from one host to another. My predecessor, John Enderson, had continued to host the site through his company, but this unfortunately had to close, and so the site migration was enforced. Our site is now hosted by 1&1, which is a large company, which I also use personally and so is a) well known to me, and b) unlikely to close in the short to medium term. The site migration took around a fortnight or so, although it was only offline for a few days. There were some initial bugs that needed fixing as I got the settings for the new servers correct. Since then the site has functioned well and there have been none of the outages that occasionally happened on the old host.

As with last year I have let the site run itself, only intervening to add Association dates and amend contact details when necessary. Many thanks go to all the contributors who keep the results and news up to date, including our outgoing Publicity Officer Mike Webster who has been invaluable as a first line bug spotter!

As I am stepping down from the role of Assistant Secretary I hope to devote more time to the website should I be re-elected as Webmaster, and in the next 18 months or so would like to redesign it with a 'bespoke back end' that I hope will be easier to manage and for users to find the information they want or post new items of interest.

Some statistics: since the site migration on 7th January there have been 134,829 visits to the site at an average of around 500 per day peaking at 943 visitors on 7th September 2013. Users, on average, visit 4 pages at each visit, with the overwhelming majority (some 72.5%) going to the old-style blog page. 96% of visitors come directly to the site without using a search engine or a link from another site; those who do come from a search engine are most likely to have used Google (92%).

Dr James Kerslake

Maurice Sharland, President of the Devon Association of Ringers for 2013/14.

Maurice Sharland, President of the Devon Association of Ringers for 2013/14 addressed the AGM and said that he thanked all those for electing him as President. He intends to get around to all of the events, commencing with the Carol Service, which he commends to all. Close to his heart is the novice competition, training and new ringers. Maurice said that help was available and if needed people should contact the committee (via the Secretary).

As for the other competitions Maurice hoped to see as many ringers as possible. His tower of Dunsford would not be entering this year although he does have some promising ringers.

Maurice asked people to introduce themselves to him and he thanked the outgoing President, Christopher Clayton, who made his role of President, a hard act to follow. Maurice also thanked Claude Nicholls, the outgoing Chairman, for doing more than his fair share. Maurice promised to keep the new Chairman (his son, Graham Sharland) under control.

THE DEVON ASSOCIATION COMPETITIONS 2013

NORTH

Stoodleigh 11th May – North Qualifier.

Despite it being very cold the day was a success. 10 teams entered. A special welcome was given to a new team, Jacobstowe, a young band who have just started taking part in competitions and brought along lots of supporters. This reminded me of 'the old days' when we all had the same enthusiasm. The organisation was 'spot on' thanks to Jennifer Rowlandson. For such a small village car parking was made easy and the pub made us very welcome.

Weare Gifford - 6 Bell Minor Final

I am sorry I was not able to attend and again I must thank Claude Nicholls for stepping into my shoes on the day. All went well despite only eight teams taking part. The Village did us proud. The disappointment, however, was that there was no Novice competition to compete for the Hooper cup.

Hooper Cup

We seem to have a problem encouraging The Novice team winners to take part. I am not sure what we can do about this.

It appears to me that this trophy has never been won by either of the two top teams that qualify in the Novice competition that is held earlier in the year. James and I spend our time trying to drum up interested novice teams lower down the order, which really defeats the object. This year we could only find one team who finished in 6th place and there was a strong possibility they would have to pull out on the day as well.

Joan Clarke Hon Competition Secretary (North)

SOUTH

The 2013 competition year began with the **Novice Competition** held at North Bovey, on March 9th. This happened to be the same day as the Moretonhampstead Food Festival and so getting there proved tricky. Jim Crout and his ringers made everyone very welcome, for which I am indebted.

A very sharp shower just before the first team rang meant that the judges, who were housed in a conservatory, had to move so that the bells could be heard. The round ringing section was won by Berrynarbor who just pipped last year's winners, Exeter St. David, by one fault. The call change section was won by Salcombe and featured many teams that would go on to make the step up from the Novice to the Qualifier. The **Hooper Cup** for novice ringers at the **Minor Final** went uncontested this year as I was unable to get two teams to come forward. My thanks go to David Trist, Education Officer, for running the day on my behalf as I had been elected as a judge.

The **Devon Eight Bell** was held in Exeter proper for the first time at St David's Parish Church (Alphington having previously hosted the event in 1928 and 1956). Again the competition clashed with another event nearby, the annual Exeter Food Festival, which made both getting

into Exeter and parking near the church difficult. Despite this we were made welcome by the local team, who are predominantly Exeter University students, and the weather was kind. However, as with the Novice competition, unforeseen weather conditions required the judges to be moved during peal one – this time the wind was blowing in such a way as to take the sound of the bells away from the where the judges had been positioned, unlike a few days earlier when the bells could be clearly heard. Kingsteignton won the shield and cup for the twelfth time in a row, beating High Bickington by eight faults.

Moving on to the **Six Bell Competitions**; the **South Devon Qualifier**, held at Yealmpton, featured two new teams, Salcombe and Dean Prior, and one who hadn't entered for a number of years, Broadhempston. All three have come up from the Novice competition in recent years, a trend that I hope will continue, and were given a very warm welcome and plenty of encouragement from the established teams. Dean Prior caused the shock of the day by coming fifth to out-qualify the defending champions, Stoke Gabriel, by a quarter of a fault. John Cole, scrutineer for the event, and I had to pour over the judges' scores very carefully as second and third were also separated by a similar margin. After 25 minutes of careful checking and rechecking the results were announced as Egg Buckland winning and qualifying for the Major Final along with South Brent, Shaugh Prior, Exeter St. Petrock and Dean Prior.

The teams to go forward to the **Minor Final** were Stoke Gabriel, Lamerton, Holbeton, Broadhempston and Salcombe. My thanks go to Donald Chaffe and the ringers of Yealmpton for all their work on ensuring that the competition went off without any trouble. I must mention that the daughter of Archie Fuzland (in whose memory the trophy had been given) presented all the trophies and certificates in place of the President, remarking that it was the first time that she had seen the shield since the family had presented it to the Association.

The **Major Final** was held at Cornwood in glorious weather and began with a rousing service. As the weather was so good, aided by the recent closure of the local hostelry, everyone sunned themselves in the churchyard whilst the ringing was taking place, one team even brought a 'Pimms Picnic'! Egg Buckland won the Ross Shield for the 22nd time since 1980 with a very good peal scoring 12 with South Brent and Exeter St. Petrock rounding out the top three. Many thanks and congratulations must go to Dave Farnham and his team for a wonderful day including a top notch salad tea in the village hall.

As this year marks the end of the triennium it is here that I am announcing my resignation from the post of Assistant Secretary for South Devon as I can no longer commit the time I feel is necessary to the role. I would like to thank all members for their help and forbearance over the past few years and wish my successor much good will, and I will offer as much help as I can give.

James Kerlake Hon Competition Secretary (South)

Report to the AGM from the Publicity Officer for 2012/13

Sadly this is my last year as publicity officer. I do apologise for only producing one edition of *Devon Calls* this past year. I no longer have the time required to produce the newsletter quarterly, as originally expected. I have been kept very busy lately with getting the latest edition of *Devon Calls* out in addition to the AGM papers, kindly rounded up and prepared by Margaret White.

I have been keeping the competition results up to date on the Website. This does not have to be left to one person and people are encouraged to enter the results from their own competitions and entering any newsworthy items. I thank those who already contribute to the website.

The committee had asked me for a list of the duties and responsibilities that I had taken on and this was circulated. I did state 2 years ago that in the absence of any other person coming forward I would serve out my term of office and would not be seeking re-election as publicity officer at the 2013 AGM.

It has been a privilege for me to serve the Association for 12 years as publicity officer. The time is right for the Committee to review the role involved with publicity. It is probably too much for one person to take on and it is an important role. Different roles can be found and be split between a number of people. There are manageable jobs, such as being the editor for *Devon Calls*, although help from the membership with news would make that job so much easier.

I do thank the many members who have sent me information and news by emails, letters, articles, cuttings, by telephone calls and by talking to me. I relied upon this invaluable source of information for *Devon Calls*. Please do not stop giving this information as the new editor will be very grateful.

Devon Calls is now being distributed to 196 towers and 25 individuals.

I thank James Kerslake, who is the Association's webmaster, for his time and effort in continually maintaining and improving the website. We are very lucky that he has the skills and enthusiasm required.

Despite not seeking re-election to the Committee, I will continue to serve the Association. I hope to be able to support any new editor and trust that this will prove helpful. I do believe that the role of publicity officer can be further developed and hope that you, the membership, will have suggestions so that this role may be developed. Please do not hesitate to write in to the Secretary to express your views.

Thank you.

Michael Webster
Publicity Officer

CHRISTMAS RINGING AT SAMPFORD COURTENAY



Christmas is always a very busy time for ringers. Extra services, some late at night and New Year all make it a time for extra ringing and some fun as well.

Here at Sampford it normally starts with a pub bar meal after the second practice of December. An 8.30 finish and we all descend on the pub where a table is laid for us. This year we numbered 15. Bar snacks and beer always go down well and nobody was in any hurry to go home.

The Carol Service was on the evening of the 22nd December and, encouraged by the sound of bells, over one hundred and sixty people in the congregation sang carols by candlelight. A lovely evening.

There was no midnight communion here this year, but some ringers helped out in N. Tawton for their service.

Christmas Morning, 9am - nine ringers left their presents to wish each other Happy Christmas and welcome the Congregation. It was also a chance to make sure we had enough ringers for the service on Sunday 29th.

New Year is always a big event. The bells are half muffled and rung from 11.20 to 11.50p. The young and fit scramble up the tower to take the muffles off before midnight. Then 15 min of open ringing, a quick lower and out to the square where 100 people are stood around the big brazier waiting to sing Old Lang sine. A lovely way to finish the old year and see the new one in.

One last Christmas event, which hadn't happened at time of writing is the Annual Dinner always on the first Friday in February. We are going to the New Inn here in the village. It is always a fun evening, lots of laughter and conversation. I wasn't well enough to go last year but all being well this year should be OK.

So another Christmas is over, I wish you all a Very Happy New Year and good ringing.

Chris Clayton.

EAST OGWELL BELLS

Plans to refurbish the bells at East Ogwell Parish Church have received a boost thanks to a generous grant from Viridor, the landfill company.

It was decided that work was needed to the bells about 3 years ago. The ring had been augmented to a 6 in 2000 with the addition of a treble from the Keltek bell trust but the work in adding this bell was poorly carried out and proved very unsatisfactory.

The scheme, which is to be carried out by Whites of Appleton, will rearrange the bells by re-hanging the front four and improving the rope circle together with the construction of a new ringing room higher in the tower which will halve the rope draught. With the Viridor grant the tenor bell, which has a "thin tone", will now be replaced by a new bell to be cast at the Whitechapel Bellfoundry. The old tenor bell has to be retained for historical reasons and will be hung dead in the tower as a service bell.

Our hope is to complete the project in the middle of 2014.

Watch this space!

Russell Chamberlain (Rector)

RINGKLY RINGERS

At the meeting in November at Braunton & Shirwell those present agreed that we should send flowers to Pat Johnstone for her 90th birthday. A card started earlier had more names added and has been posted to Pat paid from the Ringkly Tours Bank account.

It was agreed that as no Ringkly tower seemed to be needing funds that the £83 surplus from the monthly tower collections should be sent to the Philippines Red Cross collection. £17 was added from the Ringkly Ringers tour bank account. Since that Wednesday some of our friends gave us some more money and Linda & I made it up to £150. I paid this to the Red Cross and gift aided it so that a further £30 could be claimed back from the Government.

The Christmas Ringing meeting was on 11th December at Pinhoe, Exeter from 10 - 11.30am and St Marks from 11 - 12.30pm with lunch afterwards at the Buckerell Lodge. Christmas Cards were exchanged and distributed by Roger & Jean.

Our first meeting of 2014 will be in March at Loddiswell and South Brent. An earlier meeting in February will be arranged for those who are eager to start the year earlier. Details will be posted on www.devonbells.co.uk.

John Staddon

PAIGNTON'S MINI OUTING

Thank you to John Kelly's son, John, for arranging Paignton's mini outing for Saturday 28 December 2013 which started at 2:30pm.

This proved to be very popular and ringers were able to join us at different towers. In the evening 16 of us sat down for an evening meal in Moretonhampstead where the Union Inn lived up to its excellent reputation.

We rang at Winkleigh, Broadwoodkelly, North Tawton and Okehampton.

Our ladies, and the younger ringers, had splendid opportunities for ringing up and down and in different towers to their usual ones.

There was plenty of enthusiasm and energy and we raised the bells twice or more in all the towers.

The weather could not have been better although some roads did have large puddles. The sun was shining, it was dry and the visibility was excellent.

A wonderful day to look over Dartmoor.

We looked forward to ringing at Paignton the following Sunday morning and a wonderful early start was planned so that when we finished we could go and ring at other towers.

Michael Webster.

SER'S PROGRAMME FOR 2014

Set out below is the timetable for the Sociable Evening Ringers (SERs) for 2014.

If you wish to join us, please contact me, or John Staddon or the organiser of the day for further information.

The dates are a Friday and we usually meet at 7pm and finish at 8:30pm followed by an optional evening meal

The towers we have listed below are a guide and they may change, so please do check before setting out.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Tower</u>	<u>Organiser</u>
February 7 th	Inwardleigh	Bob/Jeff/Ivor
March 7 th	Wolborough	Mike Webster
April 4 th	South Tawton	John M.
May 2 nd	Peter Tavy	Ivor/Jeff/Bob
June 6 th	Newton St Cyres	Andy
July 4 th	Marldon	Norman
August 1 st	Poltimore	Simon
September 5 th	Highweek	Roger
October 3 rd	Lamerton	Jeff/Bob/Ivor
November 7 th	Pinhoe	Herb
December 5 th	Coffinswell	John K.

Michael Webster.

**PLYMPTON ST. MARY'S
BELL PROJECT**

A determined commitment by all the ringers enables a start to be made on a substantial refurbishment programme.

Following an inspection, prior to a planned seven hour ringing event last Autumn, it was found that extensive work needed to be undertaken on the bells and their fittings, in order to ensure this deep toned peal of eight would remain operational for future generations. An initial estimate put the cost at a staggering £40,000. Eventually a figure amounting to £30,000 was arrived at.

The ringers then found that by undertaking much of the work themselves this figure could be further reduced. Painting the bell frame and carrying out associated work enabled savings of around £10,000 to be made and further savings were made possible by providing labour to assist the Whitechapel appointed bell hanger. Providing accommodation for the bell hanger, to cover the removal and refitting stages of the work, enabled additional savings to be made.

The Whitechapel Foundry has been contracted to refurbish the wheels and clappers and to remove the pinions on each of the bells. The ringers have undertaken to remove the old ceiling in the ringing chamber and replace this with a new structure incorporating sound deadening material. Existing rope channels are also to be removed.

Fund raising has gone well, with the PCC contributing £4,000 and £5,350 has been received through various grants. A sum of £1,000 was raised through holding bell ringing "open" days.

Arrangements are underway for the ringers and anyone interested to tour the Whitechapel Bell Foundry in East London and to view the work in progress.

Anyone wishing to make a donation can do so by making payment to "Saint Mary's Church Bell Fund" Saint Mary's Church, Market Road, Plympton, Plymouth. PL7 1QW

Brian Meek

Vice-Captain,
Plympton St. Mary's Ringers'

**BELLS OF SIR FRANCIS DRAKE'S
CHURCH TO RING OUT AGAIN.**

Silent since August 2012 the bells of St. Budeaux, Plymouth, will soon ring out once more. Since the "Launch Event" in March 2013, which was attended by Alison Seabrook (MP), the Lord Mayor of Plymouth and Commodore Graham Little (RN Commander of Devonport Naval) the funding required to complete the project has been forthcoming. Work is scheduled to begin on Monday 27th January with the bells being removed from the tower on Friday 31st January.

John Taylor and Co. of Loughborough are the officially appointed bell-hangers and engineers. The work involves replacing the bell-frame with a new steel design that will incorporate an improved access facility to the bells. At the workshop the bearings and clappers of the bells will be overhauled and the cast in crown staples removed. Work in the church to remove the existing ringing gallery and make the peal a ground floor ring will be undertaken. The aim of these alterations is to give better access for ringing purposes, particularly for children and anyone with mobility restrictions.

The project has been well supported with funding coming from:- North Yard Community Trust, Devon Church Bell Restoration Fund, Devon Historic Churches Trust, Pennon Environmental Trust, Garfield Weston Trust, Alan Evan's Memorial Trust and the Leonard Laity Trust. The ringers have also organised several bell ringing events.

As an aid to fund-raising a recycling facility has also been arranged. Items of clothing, soft toys, mobile phones and printer cartridges are all included. This scheme is still in operation and for anyone living within the Plymouth area a collection of items can be arranged. For further details about this please contact Mr. Peter Sparkes, e-mail: stbudeauxbells@btinternet.com

To coincide with the re-dedication of the bells the ringers would like to obtain a collection of old photographs and to receive any old stories connected with the church and the surrounding area. Material should be sent to Mr. Peter Sparkes at the address given below. All items will be returned after the dedication ceremony.

Anyone wishing to make a donation to the restoration project can do so either by: cheque payable to " St. Budeaux Bell Fund" sent to Mr. Peter Sparkes, 10, Wanstead Grove, West Park, Plymouth PL5 2LX



or through Lloyds Bank;
Account No. 19612360.
Sort Code 77-09-06.

Donations can also be made by using BT's "My Donate" web page –click on "donations to charity" and on the donate page search for stbudeauxbells.

N.B. Gift aiding donation/s enables tax to be reclaimed.

Peter Sparkes.

Tower Captain.

**ST ANDREW'S, PLYMOUTH
OPEN DAY RAISING FUNDS FOR
ST. BUDEAUX**

On Saturday 23rd November 2013 many people turned up at St Andrew's church bell tower for a look around – and some even had a go at bell ringing themselves.

The event was organised as part of an ongoing campaign to raise £40,000 for the restoration of the bells at St Budeaux parish church.

Organised by Roger Compton, the event on Saturday was a huge success and netted £240.

Jo Maddick, who helped plan the event, said: "It was really successful. We had around 50 people come on the tour and some of the feedback was awe-inspiring.

"Half the money raised will go to the St Budeaux bell fund with the rest going to the Friends of St Andrew's church.

"This was the first tower open day we've had but it was well planned and everyone was really supportive."

Fundraisers are reaching the half way point of the cash needed to bring the St Budeaux bells back to their former glory. Jo continued: "They have been out of action for around a year now so we are keen to get the bells ringing again.

"It's an English tradition and people are fascinated by it – bell ringing is steeped in history.

"It's free hobby and anyone who is interested in learning can go along to any practice night across the country and they'll be welcomed."

THE WEDNESDAY NIGHT RINGERS - A TOUR TO REMEMBER

The 2013 Christmas Tour for the Wednesday Night Ringers got off to an early start for some. Scott Adams, Paul Wright, Mervyn Langdon and myself, Chris Clayton, met at about 2.30pm on Thursday the 28th November. The venue was the Imperial, Exeter, for a pre tour drink. We were waiting for Stuart Bennie to finish college and take us to Taunton.

After booking in to the Travel Lodge we went on to the Nags Head where we were to meet the N. Devon contingent - Steve Herniman, Andrew Phillips, Tony Jeffery and Chris Ley.

An evening meal was enjoyed by all and leaving one car in the large car park, bed called as it was to be an early start.

Friday brought an early meet at 6.45am back in the car park, where the S Devon contingent of Graham Sharland, Suzanne Driscoll, Sue Ashton, Steve Came and Colin Adams arrived. Sam Massey was to join us later.

The first tower was to be **Melbourne** in Derbyshire. Quite a long way so the breakfast stop at Strensham was very welcome. Melbourne is one of only two, twelve bell towers in Derbyshire and is rung from the Chancel. It also has one of the longest rope drafts in the country. A very good peal but the ropes seem to go up for ever through three sets of guides.

A good standard was set on eight, ten and the twelve. It always takes a peal or two for top class striking at the start of a tour especially on the higher number.

All this exertion meant lunch at Southwell was eagerly anticipated. The "Hearty Goodfellow" lived up to its name, feeding and watering us well.

Southwell Minster, a truly marvellous building, well away from Nottingham but nevertheless the Cathedral for Nottingham, has a very good anti-clockwise peal of twelve, Tenor 25cwt. I must admit, both rising and ringing presented no problems at all and here we had an hour and a quarter of some excellent striking, especially on the back ten.

So Friday ended with the drive to **Boston** in Lincolnshire. The accommodation was in the White Hart Hotel a Best Western with some good local ale and a welcome Dinner. Then to bed at various times, from 10.30 to not sure.

Next morning the views from the windows was of one of the most remarkable towers in Britain, The Boston Stump, 272 feet (83m) tall. Built on a marsh it can be seen from 32 miles away. There are no intermediate floors to the ringing chamber, 209 steps up, how's that for every Sunday morning. There is another 165 steps to the top of the tower.

The bells are superb, a peal of 10, 21cwt, with a little tower movement but not as much as might be expected. These were, as usual, put up in peal several times with the usual standard despite some jaded looks at breakfast.

After ringing you have to walk around a narrow parapet to get to the downward steps, two flights of stairs, one for up and one for down with non-return doors at the bottom. Only one of the party took the wrong steps and had to be rescued.

I considered the next tower, **Grantham**, to be the best of the weekend - a 32cwt 12. Every bell could be heard clearly. After a couple of peals on the back eight the trebles were risen and peals of 10 and 12 were rung. I especially liked the sound of the 12, a most glorious sound. The local tower captains are always very impressed and very often want to ring with us as they get very little good quality striking.

After lunch at the Blue Pig pub opposite the Church, with an impressive display of real ales, we headed to the last peal of the day at **Oakham**, 8 bells for a change, which is the Capital of Rutland or properly called the County Town. Weight 25cwt they

are a Gillett and Johnstone peal and sound just like Holsworthy. Several rises later all the ringers, well some sooner than others, descended on the pub opposite the church to celebrate a very successful day. The mulled wine went down very well with the girls.

The Saturday accommodation was at the "Markfield" hotel Leicester. Here we had Bed, Breakfast and Evening meal. Some of us had the accommodation we expected, Some others had their rooms taken by wedding guests. But we eventually all slept well and had a big discount to say sorry. Won't be going there again!

Up and ready for an 8.45am leave to ring for service at **Leicester Cathedral**. This 12 bell 25cwt peal was very good. For a change there are not many steps as the ringing chamber is just above the Chancel. The car park is still dug up following the discovery of Richard III's remains. Here the two locals who let us in also joined us for the last ring.

Next stop **Pershore**. To any ringers not happy with heights, my advice is, don't go. You ring from a cage suspended high above the Chancel crossing. Also not easy for the larger ringer to get to. Can be a bit off putting when everything moves with the swaying tower.

They are not easy bells and took some getting right. However the last team of ringers who had, shall I say, stronger stomachs got some good music from them.

A beer and sandwich lunch awaited us at the "Brandy Cask" and very good it was too.

So on to the last tower of the weekend at **Evesham**. A very large detached tower which was once part of Evesham Abbey. With a 35cwt peal of 12 bells. Here the Tenor ringers showed off their skills as the back 8 bells were put up in perfect order. (The tower captain reckoned we were bound to back clapper the Tenor - no Chance!)

A couple of peals on 8 before the full 10 and 12 were put to good use. Lovely bells which we all enjoyed.

Somehow, even though we were still a long way from home, time was found to try out the local pub. A lot of fun and banter, but we had to leave eventually for the drive back to the Nags Head at Taunton. Here we all had an evening meal before thanks were said and we all headed for home.

A tour to remember, great company, good ringing and good bells. As the oldest ringer and not the fittest, it was a privilege to be in the company of such good ringers and I thank them for their encouragement and support.

Chris Clayton.



FROM WHERE IT ALL ONCE BEGAN

Enthusiasm at Chagford sees the continuation of Devon Calls

If you were at the AGM last November you will probably recall that having completed his triennial term of office, Michael Webster stood down as Public Relations Officer & Editor of *Devon Calls*. Michael was thanked by the chairman for all his hard work during his term and particularly for the conscientious way in which he had ensured the continual and regular publication of *Devon Calls*.

The good news is that a working group has since been formed and the publication of *Devon Calls* will continue. Colin Adams expressed the view that *Devon Calls* had evolved into becoming an important well recognised form of communication for ringers across the county and it would be a pity if it were to fold. It would, he said, be far better to think of team involvement where the workload could be evenly shared. He offered to become a team member with a small group of three or four people to do the work that was previously done by just one person!

The following day Julia Endacott, Tower Captain at Chagford, contacted Colin Adams to say that two people, both ringers at Chagford, with expertise in publishing, might be willing to help. Contact was made with Colin Barnes and Elinor d'Albiac. and a meeting was called on Thursday 19th December 2013. Present were: Colin Adams, Colin Barnes, Elinor d'Albiac and Michael Webster, who kindly came to advise and guide the group.

The group set itself up as a 'working party' accountable to the officers and membership of the Devon Association of Ringers, the agreed aims being:

- To continue to produce *Devon Calls*, at least until the AGM in 2014.
- To establish specific roles and responsibilities.
- To transfer arrangements from the outgoing Editor to the new group.

It was agreed that Colin Adams should be editor (*pro tem*), and Colin Barnes and Elinor d'Albiac technical editors (*pro tem*).

(N.B. These positions are 'acting' and not 'official'. established to maintain the momentum of *Devon Calls* until the next AGM.)

The immediate task is to produce an edition by early February 2014. Michael Webster kindly agreed to provide advice and guidance until the group becomes fully established.

Colin Adams will provide a progress report to the committee members of the Devon Association of Ringers at their meeting on Thursday 6th February 2014.

It is important to acknowledge the work of Janice GIST, Jonathan BINT and Michael WEBSTER. It was Janice who had the original idea of producing a newsletter for circulation amongst the ringers across the county and *Devon Calls* was born. The need for such communication was soon established and people began to be confident in contributing articles as electronic means of transfer gained momentum.

Jonathan then became Editor and developed the newsletter's heading adding the Association's round "badge" to the former heading since used for *Devon Calls*, the Year Card and Competition Schedules.

Under Jonathan's and then Michael's editorship, the latter for 11 years (2002 - November 2013) *Devon Calls* entered another phase with articles focusing on particular ringers, news from various ringing groups, obituaries being included and latterly, with the publication of competition results, additional pages were added.

The working group will build on all that has been established so far. We want to encourage ringers to share their experiences and express their views. We would like to feature recruitment, teaching and more technical aspects associated with bells and bell-ringing. In all this we need your help towards producing a resource that will be perceived as fresh, lively and dynamic and above all interesting.

If we are successful it could mean that when our duties, for whatever reason, come to an end at any subsequent AGM there will no shortage of hands raised by people willing to continue the production of *Devon Calls*.

Colin E. Adams (Acting Editor)
kentonian@eclipse.co.uk

23rd December 2013

Award winner will ring a bell for many people

By Herald Express

Posted: November 14, 2013

MISSING an evening of bellringing proved worthwhile for Torquay Boys' Grammar School coach **Don Roberts**, as he picked up the Editor's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Roberts was invited by the Herald Express under the guise of a special guest, only for Editor, Jim Parker, to present him with a special award for his lifetime of coaching.

Roberts had to be persuaded to miss an evening of bellringing – which he also coaches – in order to attend the Torbay Sports Awards.

But he said afterwards that he was glad to have made the sacrifice.

"I'm glad I came tonight – my bellringers will be pleased that I came instead of staying with them – though I did have to stop by and open the door for them!"

Roberts said he is hoping his beloved waterpolo team might be able to provide a final glory for his career by reaching the national finals in Walsall next March.

The team have already reached the southern finals, but he believes they could go all the way.

"If we can pull it off it would be a real swansong for me," he said.

"I keep fairly quiet but I'm there all the time for my swimmers," he added.

"I'm not one to shout but I'm just there for the job."



MISSING an evening of bellringing proved worthwhile for Torquay Boys' Grammar School coach Don Roberts, as he picked up the Editor's Lifetime Achievement Award

Source: <http://www.torquayheraldexpress.co.uk/Award-winner-ring-bell-people/story-20079048-detail/story.html>

Alan Titchmarsh: the bells of waiting advent rings

Bells come with a fair amount of emotional and fictional baggage, but they are a joyful part of life, especially at Christmas

Over the weeks leading up to Christmas, church choirs will be working overtime. But also doing their bit, by calling the flock to worship, will be the bell ringers – the campanologists. It's a lovely word, derived from the Latin word for bell, *campana*. From my own point of view there is a neat horticultural resonance here, since *campanula* is the botanical name for the bellflower and I've been a bell ringer since I was 10 or 11 years old – about the same time that I began to take more than a passing interest in gardening.

Never blessed with a towering physique, in those early days of ringing I had to stand on a precarious mountain of wooden boxes to reach the rope. There was an additional problem: my Yorkshire bell tower the fluffy bit halfway down the rope that acts as a hand grip – the "sally" – was matched by another fluffy bit at the end – the "tail-end". Tiny schoolboy hands have a job encompassing this wad of red, white and blue wool in addition to that of the sally at what is known as the "hand stroke".

As a result, I developed a rather individual grip which has never altered. Not to worry; it does the job.

People have varying attitudes to church bells. Once described by a long-suffering curate of my acquaintance as "a melodious din", to readers of Dorothy L Sayers's *The Nine Tailors* they may well have a sinister connotation. I won't give the game away, should that detective novel be your choice of Christmas reading, but suffice it to say that the bells of Fenchurch St Paul have a bearing on a mysterious death. Add to this an image of Charles Laughton swinging on a rope as *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and you'll see that bells come with a fair amount of emotional and fictional baggage, but to me they are a joyful part of life, especially at Christmas.

Even village churches can boast a decent "ring of bells" – smaller churches tend to have six, the regular complement is eight, and our largest cathedrals and abbeys can boast as many as 16.

"Change ringing" – the art of ringing bells in a constantly changing order or pattern – was developed in the 17th century and is avidly pursued today by dedicated teams of ringers up and down the country. The peals have wonderful names like "Grandsire Triples", "Yorkshire Surprise Major" and "Stedman Caters".

The patterns must be memorised (a tall order for someone as innumerate as I am) and a peal of more than 5,000 changes will take around three hours – it is a test of stamina as well as memory. But listen carefully and you will marvel at the even spacing that can be accomplished by a skilful team. Anyone with good co-ordination and a mathematical turn of mind will find bellringing an absorbing hobby.

That said, even if counting and memorising sequences of numbers is not your predilection, you can ring the tenor bell, the heaviest of the lot, which usually brings up the rear. Beginners (or small ones at any rate) will usually start on the treble, the lightest, and have the privilege of beginning the ringing by saying "Look-to; treble going – she's gone." The very words still make the hairs on the back of my neck stand on end.

But don't imagine that you will be swinging up and down on the rope à la Quasimodo – your feet will remain firmly on the ground. Neither will you need prodigious strength – bellringing is a question of balance, not brute force.

"Rounds" is the name given to the bells rung in ascending order of weight – 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. "Queens" describes that alternating sequence of 1, 3, 5, 7, 2, 4, 6, 8, a lovely sound. Call changes can be rung by the most innumerate, since the tower captain will call out each sequence as it is to be rung. All you need do is follow the number of the bell called ahead of yours.

Bells are rung in celebration. There were many peals for the Diamond Jubilee, and at weddings they add a clamorous frisson to the ceremony of marriage. But they also mark the passing of souls, not simply by being tolled, but also with muffled peals, where leather pads are strapped to the bell clappers to reduce their sound to a more muted and sombre tone.

At midnight on Christmas Eve, in my old parish church of All Saints in Ilkley, we would go up into the bell chamber itself, above the ringing chamber where the ropes hang, and position ourselves under each bell where, having memorised the pattern, we would play carols – everything from *Once in Royal David's City* to *Silent Night* which, when you are positioned directly under a bell weighing several hundredweight and your ears are quite literally ringing, has a certain sense of irony.

On Christmas Day I shall do my bit in the local village church as part of a team calling the villagers to their morning worship. I shall also be remembering the days of my childhood when my mother and father would ring alongside me. The larger peals may, as yet, be beyond my compass, but I did, a year or so ago, ring my first quarter peal, albeit on the tenor. In these days of high technology it is good to be part of a tradition that dates back 400 years.

So this Christmastide, when you hear a peal of bells, stop for a moment, listen to their unique kind of music and reflect on the fact that it has called people to church for more than four centuries. And if you fancy having a go yourself, you will find that teams of ringers all over the country will welcome you with open arms – especially on their midweek practice night.

If everyone needs an "ology", then campanology is as good a one to boast as any.

Heavenly voices

If you still feel that it's a touch too early to play carols on your iPod or music system, but you want to ease yourself into the season of goodwill, let me recommend the heavenly sound of two albums I purchased recently: the music of John Sheppard (c 1515-1558) *Gaude, gaude, gaude Maria*, sung by the Choir of St John's College, Cambridge, conducted by Andrew Nethsingha, and *Christmas with the Tallis Scholars* - everything from Medieval carols to German Chorales, Chants from Salisbury and Tudor Polyphony. They should put you in an elevated frame of mind. The singing is ethereal

(Daily Telegraph Monday 16 December 2013)



in

Obituary - Mr. Bob Drayton

The bells were rung by members of The Barnstaple Deanery before, and after the funeral service of Mr. Bob Drayton in St Peter's Parish Church Barnstaple last November. Mr. Drayton had been a past captain of Barnstaple Parish Church for many years. He leaves a daughter Mrs. Rachel Parker

DEVON ASSOCIATION OF RINGERS

Diary for 2014

Saturday March 8th

Saturday April 26th

Saturday May 10th

Saturday May 24th

Saturday June 14th

Committee Meetings*

October 1st

Saturday 8th November

December

Novice Competition at Zeal Monachorum - 13:00 start.

Devon Eight Bell at Holy Trinity, Ilfracombe. Service at 14:00.

Six Bell Qualifiers: North - Goodleigh at 14:00: **South** - Feniton at 16:00

Minor Final at Kenn - Service at 14:00

Major Final at Sampford Courtenay + Assn. Draw. Service at 14:00.

Thursday 6th February. (June date to be confirmed). Thursday 25th Sept.

*All held in the "Mortimore Room" at North Tawton Church.

Affiliation Fees due.

AGM. Town Hall, North Tawton, at 14:15

Devon Ringers Carol Service TBC

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