



Founded 1925

President—Mr Harry Bardens

# DEVON CALLS

April 2004

Volume 1, Issue 13

## Special points of interest:

- Ringing Register requested
- New Year at Sampford C
- Offwell
- Half a century fundraising
- Crediton

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## Police checks

I would like to thank all those who wrote, phoned and spoke to me about the articles in the national press about police checks for all bellringers. The Central Council for Church Bellringers has issued guidance and this appears later in this edition. Safety of children is paramount and I am sure that all bellringers exercise caution for their benefit as well as the protection of people under 18.

## Dinner and Dance

Congratulations to Chairman, Brian Drake for organising the Annual Dinner and Dance on behalf of the Association. The Waie Inn at Zeal Monochorum on 20 March certainly excelled themselves and there was good value for money at £15 a head which included after dinner speeches along with some risqué jokes from our President.

## Sid Cooper

It is with regret that we have to announce the death of a Life Vice President, Sid Cooper of South Tawton. The honour was bestowed upon him at the last AGM.

## New competitions

### Down St Mary

Mrs Wright has donated a Dartington Crystal Bowl for a new competition to be held on Saturday 15th May 2004 at Down St Mary in memory of her husband Tom Wright. Bob Robinson stated that the competition has been organised as a way of remembering Tom, the late tower captain and recognising the time and dedication he gave especially to bellringing.

### East Portlemouth

This tower is keen to run a novice competition later in the year. This is likely to be before the season changes so as to make the most of that beautiful spot. The lighter evenings will give more incentive for teams to travel. There are novice competitions later in the year and may be there can have a novice season in the Autumn building up to the Association final in March.

## Colebrooke reinstate competition

Diane Shepherd and her team are planning to reinstate the Colebrooke competition on 20 November. They have found the shields, the Courtney Thorne Shield and the St Andrews Shield. It was originally planned to hold the event on the Saturday nearest to St Andrew's Day, 30 November, but that date is already used by the competitions at Stratton and Kilkhampton. This will be an open competition. There will be tea in the village hall from 2.00 onwards. There will be a draw and other local towers will be open. Colebrooke have had some work completed on the bells recently and are in a reasonable condition now.

There is not much information on the previous Colebrooke competition, other than it was started in 1991, when Colebrooke were the first winners, and the competition ran until 1995. There are two shields, the St Andrew's Memorial Shield for the 'A' Competition, and the Courtney Thorne Memorial Shield for the 'B' Competition. Courtney was a ringer and captain at Colebrooke for many years. The competition will be on Saturday 20 November 2004, and it is rumoured that Eggbuckland intend to be there in force and entering at least two teams. Diane is ensuring that all who enter have an enjoyable time.

## Secretary's report

Spring 2004.

Dear Ringers

Whether you are an experienced or learner ringer, into competitions or not, or belong to an affiliated tower or not; I hope that the Devon Association of Ringers has got something to offer you. If it hasn't – we want to know!

The Association was founded nearly 80 years ago. Its prime object is to encourage the vernacular tradition of Devon style call-change ringing. We have a constitution, well almost – due to be ratified at the AGM in November this year. Copies are available on request.

We produce a quarterly newsletter which we call 'Devon Calls'. This publication is compiled and edited by our Publicity Officer – Mike Webster. You can obtain copies from him for a small annual fee of £5.

We have a web site. You can learn more about the Association from this site – have a look – the address is [www.devonbells.co.uk](http://www.devonbells.co.uk).

We have elected committee members who represent most areas of the county. We have put together a 'Year Card' detailing contact information for committee members and the officers.

If you have any comments or new ideas – please let one of us know. It is unlikely that you are the only church bell ringer in Devon who wants to know more. We will endeavor to address your queries or concerns.

The festivals will soon be upon us. How's the practicing going? We have a number of competitions – hopefully one will suit your ability and interest.

We started with the Novice Competi-

tion on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> March being held at Holcombe Burnell this year (small parish on the outskirts of Exeter near Longdown). This festival had two sections. The first was a round ringing section, where teams ring rounds for a set time. The second section was the call change ringing – where teams are expected to ring half a peal of '60 on thirds'. There is NO rising and lowering. All ringing was off the stay. Each team was judged and certificates were awarded to all competing teams. This event has proved very popular and been deemed a success for the last six years. Teams taking part have gained a lot out of coming to this event in the past – listening to other teams – appreciating that their striking is not as terrible as they thought – and having some fun. Contact me for further details or to enter your tower for next year.

## Association Competitions

### Winkleigh

We are fortunate to be able to go to Winkleigh this year for the 8 bell Competition. This fine set of bells go well and have good tone. Last year at Buckland Monachorum we had a maximum entry of 12 teams – an excellent turnout. Let's hope entries are good again this year. Remember that a practice is allowed before the day, with the tower closing on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> April.

### Qualifiers

For those who prefer 6 bell ringing, we have our 6 bell qualifying competitions on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> May. The county is split into north and south, with the old A30 being the dividing line. The north festival will be at St Giles in the Wood, near Torrington. The south festival will be at Loddiswell, near Kingsbridge. Practicing is allowed before the day, with towers closing on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> April. Teams are expected to ring the same set piece – to rise the bells in peal, ring 60 on thirds call changes and lower the bells in peal.

The teams placed 6<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> inclusive at the qualifiers then go forward to the Minor Final.

### Major and Minor Final

This is going to be held at Offwell on May 22<sup>nd</sup>. This is a pretty location just east of Honiton in East Devon. Our hosts are very much looking forward to seeing and hearing us!

The Major Final will be on Saturday June 12<sup>th</sup> 2004 at Langtree, near Torrington. This will be a 6 bell competition for teams placed 1 to 5 inclusive in the qualifiers and the first two teams placed in the Minor Final. There should be some good ringing on this day.

Let's hope that the sun shines for us during these six festivals. Let's hope that entries are high and, that all competitors and spectators enjoy themselves!

### Dates for your diary

There are some other dates for your diaries – the Association is not just about competitions. We held an Annual Dinner and Dance on Saturday 20 March at the Waie Inn, Zeal Monachorum, near Crediton. The food was plentiful and of very good quality. The tickets were only £15 and all the arrangements were through Mr B Darke our Chairman. information.

### Annual Draw

We hold an annual prize draw – all prizes being cash. The main aim is to raise money for the Devon Church Bell Restoration Fund. Sell as many as you can. Our draw master, Julia Endicott at Chagford is always grateful for any assistance you can offer.

Wishing all Association members and friends a successful and enjoyable summer.

I am certainly looking forward to an interesting festival program.

Sincerely

JJ Darke

### Editorial

Thank you to all the contributors. This is your newsletter, please make use of it and support it. Any member is welcome to send any articles, news or reports from your Deanery, or from your competition or tower.

Please forward to the Editor,

Michael Webster  
5 Kings Rydon Close  
Stoke Gabriel  
Totnes



## Mid Week Ringers - "Ringklies" Rounds By Odd Struck

March found the "Ringklies" once again starting their road show for 2004. It started at the Broadhempston set in the middle of a triangle made up of Ashburton, Totnes and Newton Abbot. It is known as the "Landscope Triangle" locally, Landscape being one of the villages situated in it. It is said that people have been known to enter into the mass of country lanes never to be seen again. It is rumoured that there are visitors still wandering around in there from the 1960's. Luckily about forty of us found our way safely to Broadhempston on what turned out to be a beautiful spring day.

Broadhempston has a typical medieval country church set in the heart of a farming village and standing at the west end of the church grounds it has marvellous views over rolling Devon countryside. Being the first on site I was greeted by Bill Camption, the tower captain who had graciously allowed us to use his tower. Bill had arranged morning coffee at the nearby inn "The Monks Retreat". As most had to pass it to enter the churchyard we were late in starting as everyone was greeting friends, this being the first meeting since December as we normally have a break during January and February. For those that have rung at Broadhempston they are not tuneless bells and are "lopsided" but everyone enjoyed the experience. We retired for lunch at another local pub, "The Coppa Dolla" and were treated to a very well received roast lunch and sweet at a reasonable price. Discussions and speeches concerned the forthcoming June trip to the Chester area and the April trip to Coffinswell. Believe it or not also what to do for this Christmas.

*"The increased number caused some concern.."*

New members were greeted and it was a surprise that more than forty had turned up as usually the first meeting is about thirty members. The increased number caused some concern as lunch had been ordered for thirty. A quick trip to the pub for a few pints were needed to inform the staff that number had increased by 25%. They coped adequately-quite

a mean feat for a small village pub. The afternoon found us at Littlehempston and surprisingly everyone found their way across the countryside to be greeted by Bert Blackler, the captain. The church is a quaint, little unspoilt village church. Inside there are some interesting stone carved medieval knights and their ladies laying on the windows. Very few of our members had ever rung the five bells of Littlehempston. It was a completely new experience, as they are a handful to ring. After settling in to the fact that we were not going to get a perfect peal everybody relaxed and enjoyed the experience.

It was a shock for some to see Pat and Bernard who should have been enjoying their world cruise. Bernard's health had prevented them from continuing the cruise. Despite this, it was a pleasure to see them both, and in recovering health and good spirits.

If you would like to join us on our excursions usually into the southern portion of Devon's countryside and you enjoy a good lunch out, you will be assured of a good welcome. If you are available on the second Wednesday of any month, (March to December) telephone Ken Rowe on 01803 521 489 for further information and to check the latest details. Remember, we are not an intimidating band of perfectionists but a jovial bunch that enjoys ringing, eating and good comradeship.

## Ringling Register

### Devon Calls for a Ringling Register - Devon Ringkly Ringers

John Staddon would like to establish a list of tower contacts, around the country, for use by other Devon Groups who organise Ringing trips.

It would also be advantageous to hold a list of suitable hotels etc. which have been used with an idea of their capacity.

This list would be available to any Devon Association Affiliated Tower. Free by e-mail but at a cost of £1 if posted. 50p would be donated to the Devon Association.

Please send any details to John, by e-mail at [john.staddon@nasuwt.net](mailto:john.staddon@nasuwt.net) or by post to "Little Anchor" 96 Rivermead Road, Exeter, EX2 4RL.

Watch out in the next Devon Calls for progress.

*John Staddon*

### Ringers' holiday in Chester

The ringers' holiday for the mid week ringers (Ringklies) was the idea of Pat and Bernard. This year's trip will be to North Wales and Chester. At the time of writing there were a small number of double rooms available. If you do wish to join the holiday, please contact John as a matter of urgency. If you wish to be considered for next year, please put your name forward.

### Proposed towers for 2004

April	Coffinswell	Kingsteignton
May	Down St Mary	Lapford
June	<b>Trip to Chester and North Wales</b>	
July	Hatherleigh	Inwardleigh
August	St David's	Clyst Hydon
September	South Pool	Chivelstone
October	Talaton	Payhembury
November	Bradford	Sheepwash
December	To be confirmed at April meeting	

Pat and Bernard, who first started this group, now wish to retire, any queries please contact Ken Rowe on 01803 521489

## Results

### Devon Association of Ringers 2004 Novice Competition Holcombe Burnell Saturday 13 March 2004

#### Section one-Round Ringing T H Priddle Shield

1	Petermarsland	16.5
2	Inwardleigh	31
3	South Pool B	35.75
4	Dartmouth St S B	56
5	Alphington B	57.5

#### Section two P Rice Shield

1	Dolton	21.75
2	Dartmouth St S	23.5
3	Chagford	27.5
4	Lydford	29.5
5	Upton Torquay	33.75
6	Holcombe Burnell	35.75
7	Alphington A	36.25
8	St Giles in the Wood	47.5
9	East Portlemouth	49.5
10	South Pool A	53.25
11	South Tawton	55
12	Sherford	64.5
13	Doddyscombesleigh	80
14	Ide	92.25

Judged by Messrs. C. Clayton, S Herniman, J Bint and M Langdon.

A very pleasing turnout. Petersmarsland ringers were aged between 7 and 14 with the youngest ringer on the tenor! The service was very well attended-taken by the Rev. Jesse Holland. Jon Bint played the organ and Harry Bardens, President, read the lesson. The order of service was very professionally put together and

printed. Holcombe Burnell ringers looked after us very well, with an excellent tea available in the Barton. The standard of ringing was very acceptable. There was an encouraging atmosphere through the afternoon. In summing up, our President hoped that all the youngsters present would be further encouraged to do their part in keeping the art of Call Change Ringing going. The Secretary was very grateful to all the ringers for their support which enabled the afternoon to be rounded off by 6pm.

#### Results

Results are usually available within 24 hours on the website [www.devonbells.co.uk](http://www.devonbells.co.uk). If you wish your results to appear, in this newsletter, or on the website, please contact the publicity officer, Michael Webster of 5 Kings Rydon Close, Stoke Gabriel, Totnes, TQ9 6QG. Tel: 01803 782591 or via the website under contacts.

#### Deanery and Group Secretaries

If you wish to have details of your group or deanery available to a wider audience you can send your reports from your deanery or group, whether this be competitions, election of officers or social events. I hope that this will not only assist ringers in your own deanery but other readers generally.

John Enderson has been improving the website and entries can now be made via the website. John is helping with this avenue of communication, let us make use of it.

## Annual Christmas Tour

This year as usual, about fifteen ringers who ring together or are friends from Mid, West and S. Devon got together for their 27th annual Christmas tour. The venue this year was the South Hams area. At the request of one of our Exeter friends who had a list of unrun towers in that area, the tour was chosen to suit his needs.

The first tower was Ermington where local villagers said how nice it was to hear the bells, not having heard them over Christmas. About three quarters of the party managed the first tower at 9am, which we thought was not bad for being two days after Christmas. The families with children joined us at Ugborough, an unusual peal but with good go and well maintained. Several towers followed, Holbeton, Yealmpton and Brixton before an excellent lunch at the Morley Arms, Plymouth.

The afternoon ringing was firstly Laura, where Julia House and her helpers gave us a warm welcome and a lovely cup of tea. We then went into Plymouth to St Andrews, where we were met by Fergus Stracey who guided us into the tower with dire warnings if we stepped off the strait and narrow. (Church intruder alarms.) This was a lovely peal of 10 bells, which would be so much more rewarding when they are a little easier to hear.

Thank you ringers for your support, the tower captains for letting us ring and to Paul Treeby for finding us the lunch spot.

Chris Clayton

## New Year at Sampford Courtnay

Traditionally our church bells have been rung half muffled before midnight and loud and clear afterwards. A few villagers might turn out to listen but for many years the ringers have come down from the tower to find an empty square and nobody to wish them a Happy New Year. Something had to be done. The question came up about what could the ringers do to make a proper celebration, we certainly didn't want to come down to an empty square on the night of the Millennium. "How about a bonfire in the square?" This did not seem practical. However one of the ringers, "Chips" Revett offered to make a large brazier. It was certainly worthy of the occasion, nearly four feet tall and some two foot

diameter, made out of wagon wheel irons. Word was sent out and on the night of the Millennium, well over a hundred people started to gather when the brazier was lit at 10pm. By midnight the square was packed for an excellent Millennium peal. Since then every year the brazier is lit and villagers start to gather from 10pm onwards, although not in the same numbers. Even this year with the rain pouring down we had over fifty to see in the New Year. Thanks to the ringers for helping to set it up and supply the fuel. Let's hope this is the start of one of those traditions which stands the test of time and who knows how many years it will continue.

Chris Clayton.

## Raffle

The annual draw tickets should have been distributed to all towers. Have you been allocated your books or do you know a tower that have not received theirs? Please contact Julia Endacott, Chagford. This is the biggest single event by the Association and the proceeds do go towards the Devon Church Bell Restoration Fund. The draw will be on Saturday 12 June at the Major Final, Langtree. All counterfoils, cash and unsold tickets are to be returned by 29 May to Clive Ward, Rosendale, Clinton Terrace, New Street, Torrington EX38 8BE.



# Protecting Young Ringers

## Guidelines for Maintaining a Safe Environment for Young People in the Belfry

### Introduction and background

1. These guidelines are designed to ensure that young people can be fully and safely involved with ringing activities. Ringers are keen that they should reflect the need to cherish and defend the exceptional features of ringing, being an activity in which young and old meet and take part on an equal footing. This enriches those of all ages who know and respect each other, not only for their abilities as ringers but also as individuals. The guidelines should be viewed as a framework for sensible behaviour. In exceptional circumstances alternative arrangements might be made through full consultation with the young person's parents or guardians and the relevant Diocesan Child Protection Adviser.
2. These guidelines are a working document for Tower Captains. They are not intended to be exhaustive and should be read in the context of Diocesan guidelines, PCC policy, and the Church of England House of Bishops' Policy on Child Abuse *Protecting All God's Children 2004* and equivalent documents from other churches, as well as the Home Office publication *Safe from Harm*.
3. Ringers are urged to absorb these guidelines into the normal way that ringing is organised so as to minimise any fuss being made or any disruption caused.
4. The Children Act 1989 requires that all who work with young people (in voluntary or in paid employment) should keep them safe from harm. 'Children' are defined in the Act as anyone under the age of 18, or anyone who has been assessed as having a mental

age of under 18 (vulnerable adults need similar protection from harm). We refer to these as young people in these guidelines.

5. Allegations of abuse will affect not just those claiming they have been abused, but **those who are accused. Ringers all need to protect themselves and each other from such accusations by following good practice.**
6. To protect young people and adults who work with them it is necessary to create an open environment where the possibility of abuse or a false allegation cannot occur.
7. Abuse can be emotional, verbal, physical or sexual.
8. Each diocese has published a set of guidelines that it is the responsibility of every PCC to administer.
9. Most PCCs will have appointed a responsible adult to be the first point of contact should notification of child protection issues be necessary, and that person's name or other means of making a complaint should be prominently displayed in the belfry.
10. It is the responsibility of the Tower Captain to liaise with the PCC and understand local arrangements. The Tower Captain should ensure that he/she knows who holds specific responsibility for Child Protection issues in the church.
11. The PCC is responsible for appointing all those involved in church activities that have responsibility for young people. Among ringers this is likely to mean the tower captain and others who are likely to be in charge of ringing at any time. Each person will need to complete a confidential self-declaration form and have this information checked by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), an executive agency of the Home Office. It

does not imply any criticism of those asked to apply for a check. Ringers should be encouraged to apply without fear, in order to be able to ensure that young ringers continue to be recruited so as to secure the future of the Exercise. It is recommended that at least two adult members of the tower (preferably one of each sex) complete the declaration and CRB check procedure, and at least one of these should always be present when young people attend ringing.

12. Sensitive information about convictions or other matters will be taken into account only if it is relevant to the activity. Information disclosed by the Confidential Declaration or the CRB will be assessed by the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser or a Diocesan risk assessment panel and the incumbent advised how to proceed. In most cases past conduct will not be relevant. However, people with offences against children or some other serious offences will not be able to be leaders of mixed-age activities. Unless specifically required by the PCC, it is not necessary for all adult ringers to undergo this check or, for any who prefer not to do so, to be prohibited from taking part in ringing. Nor is it necessary for visitors to the tower to demonstrate that they have been "cleared" in this way, unless the Tower Captain has concerns.
13. We have referred throughout to the 'Tower Captain,' but it is important to remember that others in charge of ringing events where young people are present also carry the same responsibilities.

These guidelines offer an alternative procedure to that recommended in the House of Bishops' Policy. Compliance with local agreed procedures is required.

## Guidelines for Maintaining a Safe Environment for Young People

### Protecting Young Ringers

#### Guidelines for Maintaining a Safe Environment for Young People in the Belfry

1. The parents or guardians of the young person (referred to here as the parents) should complete a consent form when the young person starts to learn to ring. This form should be updated annually and should set out the necessary rules for safe practice. The form should be available from the PCC, but a sample consent form is attached here and may also be downloaded from [www.cccbr.org.uk/guidelines](http://www.cccbr.org.uk/guidelines). The parents of young people already engaged in ringing should be asked to complete a consent form at the earliest opportunity. The parents should be encouraged to come to an early lesson to see what is involved.
2. The Tower Captain should endeavour to establish that the young person has no known medical conditions that may affect safety.
3. The Tower Captain should make sure that the parents are aware of and content with arrangements for young people travelling to and from ringing activities.
4. The parents should be told if there is any plan to use a video camera as a training tool, and the consent form should make this clear. The videotape should be erased after the teaching session, preferably in the presence of the parent or the Tower Captain.
5. The young people should undertake to ensure that suitable clothing is worn for all ringing activities. It should be loose under the arms to allow freedom of movement and not overtly provocative. These requirements should also be made clear to parents at the outset.
6. The parents should be informed that to act with sufficient speed in an emergency or when learning to control a bell, it may be necessary to raise one's voice, or make physical contact (e.g. by taking hold of the learner's hand to take control of the bell rope). This can be demonstrated to the parents during their early visit to a practice. Procedures for acting in an emergency should be rehearsed, e.g. following the instruction 'Let Go' if the bell gets out of control.
7. If an outing is planned, parents should sign a detailed permission form. Transport arrangements should be made so that young people do not travel in a car with just one adult. In the event of this being necessary as an exception, the young person should sit in the back.
8. Where a parent is always present during ringing, e.g. as a member of the band, the parent is responsible for the young person's welfare. However, it is important to bear in mind that there may be occasions when a parent cannot be there or the young person is taken out by other members of the band (e.g. to another tower). As with other aspects, it is advisable to follow the standard procedure in all cases so as not to make an issue of any changes in routine.
9. Two adults (if possible of different sexes) should normally be present whenever young people are taking part in ringing or being transported to or from ringing events. The Tower Captain should endeavour to ensure that at least two adults arrive at the start of any planned ringing.
10. The Tower Captain and any deputies who may run the practice or any ringing sessions where young people are present should be notified to the PCC, and will be responsible for ensuring that these guidelines are followed. It is likely that it will be these people who will need to undergo a criminal records check.
11. The Tower Captain should not delegate responsibility for the care of the young people unless it is to someone previously notified to the PCC and who has completed the criminal record check.
12. It is always good practice for an attendance register to be kept and completed, including the recording of the names of any visitors.
13. Young people should not be allowed into a potentially hazardous situation unaccompanied.
14. Normal Health and Safety issues should always be taken into consideration, and if possible a trained first aider should be present. A first aid kit should be available and an accident log-book kept.
15. A copy of these Guidelines should be displayed on the belfry notice board.

**Published by the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers, March 2004**



## The Bell Captain's Story told to Iris Cogger

High on a windswept hill, South of Barnstaple and West of the Taw Valley is the village of Burrington. A small community where Exmoor can be seen to the North East and Dartmoor to the South. In a square beyond the ancient oak is the fine old church of Holy Trinity, rebuilt in the 16th Century. Who better to talk about Burrington's past than Cecil Crocker, Bell Captain since 1952.

*"The boys were out milking at 6.30am, before school and the girls would help mother in the house."*

The family went to Northcote Farm when Cecil was about 7 years old, in the early 1920's. They kept sheep and beef cattle, breeding from their own stock. The boys were out milking at 6.30am, before school and the girls would help mother in the house. Mr Crocker would go to Market in the yard of the Portsmouth Arms to buy and sell stock.

Mother did all the washing with the aid of a built in wood fired copper and fetched water from a pump in the farmyard. Her washing machine was a scrub board, a bar of yellow soap, a hard brush and elbow grease. If the boys were around they would turn the handle of the mangle. Cooking was in an old bread oven built into the kitchen wall. It had to be white hot for bread baking and what a delicious smell. The family were well fed, there would be a huge joint on Sundays, which lasted well into the following week with plenty of vegetables grown in the farm garden and fruit when in season. Mother made butter and cream which they ate every day. Cecil remembers turning the churn handle for what seemed like hours to make the butter.

At school discipline was strict and they had to work hard or woe betide them! The days started with a scripture lesson followed by Reading, Writing and Arithmetic. The hours were 9 to 4 and they left school at 14, the boys to work on the land and girls went into service at farms or the manor house, Northcote Manor. With no vacuum cleaners or washing machines a lot of help was required. There was little or no crime, doors were left unlocked and a visitor had only to lift the latch to be sure of a

warm welcome. Children were very polite, raising their caps to adults and any rudeness was rewarded with a good hiding. There was a forge near the school and a second forge down the hill attached to the cottage where Cecil lived. There was a mill where they made flour, housewives had the strong flour to make bread. Mother would get most things in the village but occasionally she would go to Barnstaple on the train. The line is now known as The Tarka Line. Northcote Manor was the biggest employer in the village having a Chauffeur, Carpenter, Mason, Gamekeepers, Gardeners and Estate Workers and about twelve women and girls employed in the house. The maids lived in and had half a day off a week.

Entertainment was an annual outing to Exeter by bus for the Pantomime and in the summer the Sunday School organised an outing to Exmouth or Teignmouth. One further delight was the Barnstaple Fair. These were simple pleasures, but the main topic of conversation for weeks before and after the events. At Christmas the Crocker children would hang up their stockings and were delighted to find oranges, apples, nuts and sweets and if they were very lucky a shiny new half crown. As the boys got older they would spend the day out shooting rabbits and have a party in the evening. There would be the usual party pieces, a song, poem or monologue, all applauded enthusiastically. The church had Christmas Parties for the choir, bellringers and Sunday School children.

*"When Cecil was 16 a new Vicar encouraged some of the youngsters to take up Bellringing"*

On Sundays the family would attend the Sunday morning service at 7.30am and Sunday School in the afternoon. When Cecil was 16 a new Vicar encouraged some of the youngsters to take up Bellringing. Cecil enjoyed this and rang for the rest of his life. The Burrington team attended Bell Festivals all over the county, deriving great pleasure and making friends.

The road through the village was tarmac but the side roads were just rough tracks with great cobblestones and huge ruts left by the carts that were still in use. There

were three car owners in the village, the owners of the Manor House, the Vicar and a Wool Merchant. The Doctor, who lived in High Bickington also had a car. As people had to pay for the Doctor's visits, most mothers had their own remedies and did not send for the Doctor. The District Nurse was a familiar sight riding her bicycle to tend to the sick in all weathers.

After the war, at the age of 30, Cecil married Iris, a local girl and they had one daughter. In 1952 Cecil became the Bell Captain and in 1977 was responsible for removing and replacing a cracked bell.

Cecil had completed a lot of tapestries, he would draw his own designs and a beautiful example is one of Holy Trinity Church.

Cecil died on 1 September 2003 and additional chairs had to be brought into church to accommodate bellringers from all over the county who wished to pay their last respect to their dear old pal.

Cecil served the church so faithfully all his life, he was a sincere man who had found true happiness and contentment through his faith and a life of service to others.

### Thanks from Mrs Crocker

I would like to thank the Devon Association of Ringers for their support and kind words of Cecil. The service was lovely with so many friends and the many peals that you rang for him. He loved the bells and would have been so pleased.

Cecil was very honoured when he was asked to be President of the Association and he carried out his duties with pride.

He had a faithful team of ringers who were always willing to help and be there for him. I was so pleased that Cecil was able to have his Ringing Festival with the help of his team.

I would like to thank his ringers for their loyal support. I hope that our grandson, Stephen Herniman, will be able to keep the bells ringing. He has to rely upon outside help as our number of ringers is small. We hope that we will be able to have a ringing festival again, later this year as I know that would be Cecil's wish.

My best wishes to you all,  
from Iris Crocker.

## Germansweek a peal of six?

Germansweek is an unspoilt village situated at the northern end of Roadford Lake and next year it will celebrate 100 years of the recasting of the five bells. How will this be celebrated? Brian Singleton of Broadbury is towerkeeper and junior Churchwarden of Germansweek and 12 months ago had the bells ringing after a 40 year silence of regular ringing. The plan for the celebration is to add an extra bell although this will require the agreement and support of the PCC. Adding a treble of



*St Germans, Germansweek*

about 3 cwt will cost about £2,500 and quotes have been obtained from Whitechapel and Peter Bazely who has already undertaken some work. This will be courageous work for Germansweek with a population of 112. Ringing there is regarded as a club and they have three new recruits and regular help is given from

Bratton Clovelly and Ashwater. Brian especially thanks Gerald Box, Gordon Jennings and David Corthine. Brian learnt to ring at Clawton by Preb. John Scott, who also married Brian 41 years ago at Germansweek. Ringers can be forgiven for not knowing Brian for he did not continue ringing until he retired. He says that people came looking for him and he now says that he wished he had never stopped ringing.

Brian is adamant that ringing is beneficial for his health. It stretches the frame and is good physical and mental exercise. Brian has been so keen that he has read Steve Coleman's books to assist his ringing. A brief history of the bells.

1553. Three good bells in the tower  
1865. Recorded that all three bells were in a bad condition.

1874. Some restoration work was carried out and included the recasting of the three bells into a peal of five bells thought to have been undertaken by Penningtons.

1905. Mears and Stainbank recast and retuned the bells.

1995. Refurbishment including clappers, headstocks, wheels and frame. RSJs were placed under the frame with the work undertaken by Peter Bazely.

## Ide to be retuned

Ide, the only church in Great Britain to have the name of St Ida, last had the bells rehung in the 1920s when the woodwork was treated. The Warner set of 6 "off the shelf" bells of 1880 are to have new fittings, clappers and headstocks and to be retuned. The work is to be undertaken by Robert Parker, Taunton and tower have already raised £7,000 towards the expected £16,000. No requests have yet been made to any Trusts.

Ray Capps, the captain, has wonderful and enthusiastic support and the fund raising has been fun for the participants. Events so far have been a sponsored ring at 10 towers throughout the day and this is expected to run again this year as this was so successful, along with local events of car boot sales, raffles, cards, BBQ and a quiz.

Fortunately the tower is sound and the team intend to undertake work in the ringing chamber while the bells are missing. Some replastering has already been started by an Ide ringer, Simon Tucker. It is hoped to raise the remainder of the money this year and for the work to start in 2005 probably after the Annual Invitation Competition that is run on the first Saturday in April.

## Listening Walk. More Church Bells of Dartmoor on CD

An innovative event which introduces people to ringing in an unusual way is a listening walk. These took place at Shaugh Prior, at Walkhampton, where the public was invited to participate in listening walks as part of Aune Head Arts' Dartmoor Changes project which is celebrating change ringing and method ringing in thirty-three communities across Dartmoor.

These walks are part of a series of six listening walks being hosted during the course of the project. The walks are all free and open to all. During the walks the sounds of the church bells are being recorded for a special CD which will contain recordings of thirty-three church towers within the Dartmoor National Park. The CD will be available in late autumn 2004.

The plan is to start by meeting the

ringers, learning a bit of history about bell ringing on Dartmoor and in Devon and (safety permitting) viewing the bells. Whilst the bells are rung the walkers will be taken on a circular route around the parish, most of which will be within earshot of the bells. Each walk will take up to an hour, wind and weather permitting. The routes will include some 'ups' and 'downs'. Given the changeable weather on Dartmoor walkers should be prepared to encounter a bit of mud and possibly rain, waterproofs and wellies may be the order of the day. While walking will be on footpaths, tracks, verges and lanes, suitable footwear is a definite consideration. The two walks will be led by Andy Stevens, Co-Project Coordinator. Andy is an experienced bell ringer, musician and sound engineer.

After returning, walkers will be able to visit the ringing chamber and chat with the bell ringers a bit more. As one of the intentions of the project is to recruit new bell ringers on Dartmoor, walkers who are 12 and over can try their hand at bell ringing (under supervision and within the restrictions of the Church's insurance policy).

The aim to finish listening and ringing by about 1:00pm, thus a pub lunch and further conversation with the ringers will allow an optional conclusion to the event.

Anyone interested in joining these, or other organised walks, or who would like more details, can contact: Emma Bush at AHA on 01822 890 539, [info@auneheadarts.org.uk](mailto:info@auneheadarts.org.uk). Dartmoor Changes is being funded through a Local Heritage Initiative award.



## Tower Guides

### Tower Guides

For many months, several ringers have been working on the publication of a Devon Tower Guide Booklet. Sincere thanks to all those who have assisted – there isn't room here to list all the names, but you know who you are. The copies were available early March 2004. You will be able to obtain your copy from Paul Pascoe and Tim Bayton, or Wendy Campbell the Guild Secretary or Jereme Darke.

All monies raised will be forwarded to the Devon Church Bell Restoration Fund. No ringers in Devon should be without one!

The Secretary will still keep an up to date tower contact list – please continue to let your local Committee member or the Secretary know if contact information is incorrect or has changed.

## Offwell

### Offwell-the Minor Final Venue

This fine light six, is hung in a Taylors frame. The original five were re-hung in 1952 and a treble added. The tenor bell weighs 7-3-9 cwt and the treble 3-3-0 cwt. The tower does not stand too tall and is approximately 45 feet. The bells are rung from a platform and are all on ball bearings. Sunday ringing occurs on a regular basis

*"a new parish hall, where teas will be served and parking is plentiful"*

There is a new parish hall, where the teas will be served and parking is plentiful.

The Offwell ringers are led by Mr John Seymour. They are very much looking forward to the Association's visit. Let's hope we have the full compliment of 10 teams!

## Obituaries

**Mr Dennis Elstone** a long serving ringer of Broadwoodkelly. He did much to promote ringing in the mid Devon area and the Association as a whole. Many will remember him for his efforts in distributing voting cards at the AGM.

**Mr Edward Punchard** who led the Kingsbridge 8 bell side for many a year. A former president of the Woodleigh Deanery. Despite having failing eyesight, Edward was not perturbed – he continued to ring for many a service and competition.

**Mrs Valerie Dummett** of Ashreigney. The wife of Ashreigney tower captain, who was a great ambassador for bell ringing.

**Peter Tucker** an Ide ringer for 50 years died after an illness. Peter undertook numerous carpentry jobs for the church and also sang for the Exeter Male Voice Choir.

## Braunton Handbell Ringers

The Braunton Ladies Handbell Ringers formed in 1968 by the wives of the St Brannock's bell ringers celebrated 35 years of handbell ringing. Their talents are now in demand as they bring much loved entertainment to many elderly people's homes, WIs and hotels throughout the area. Thelma Crook of the group said: "The church bell ringers were celebrating winning a cup and the wives all said to each other why can't we do something like this. We started with the old set of bells we found in the church tower and two or three years later bought our first set for £400. We now have 42 bells insured for £12,000 and have 12 members in our group - four of which are founder members." Thelma added: "Hand bell ringing is very popular. We joined the Great Britain Association of Handbell Ringers and when we first started there were 123 members, there are now 1,393. But there is a lot more to it than meets the eye." Many fundraising dances and coffee mornings have been organised by the bell ringers over the years and the group is very proud to have donated a staggering £8,000 to local charities. The ringers have decided to support the North Devon Hospice

Bedded Unit Appeal throughout 2004. Thelma said: "We never keep any of the money we raise for ourselves - it all goes to charity and any repairs that are needed are funded through the club. The main thing about it all is dedication. We are as strong as each other and have all grown together over the years. We have a fair few invitations every year which we are very happy with. It is always nice to visit new places but just as nice to return to familiar ones. We all love it as much as we did 35 years ago and as well as fundraising for very worthwhile groups we do it for ourselves. It is something for the girls. It all started with our children hanging on to our skirts and now we are all grandmas but long may it all continue." The handbell ringers joined the Devon Association of Bell Ringers for the special Christmas Service at St Peter's Parish Church in Barnstaple. This was a spectacular event and all who attended were very impressed. It was a wonderful moment for handbell ringers. This was one way of the ladies showing that while their husbands are out at competitions they too can ring but without the challenge of 15 metres of rope and heavy bells.

## Carol Service

Just before Christmas, with the shops and the town of Barnstaple in full swing, the Parish church in the centre of town was the venue for the annual Bell Ringers Carol Service. Well over a hundred in the congregation, enjoyed an hour of singing, music and hand bell ringing. After the frantic atmosphere in the town it was an oasis of peace, just what was needed to get the true spirit of Christmas.

The bells were rung before and after the service, both call changes and method were rung, with a particularly good touch of method just before the service. Many well known North Devon ringers were there with a scattering of ringers from the South. The President, Harry Bardens with his party and Gerald Bowden who read one of the lessons were much in evidence but North Devon made up the bulk of the Congregation. After a very warm welcome from the Rector and a very enjoyable service, with superb performances from the handbell ringers, choir and organist, it was time to leave the warm church and return to the other world outside. Next time it is St Andrews Plymouth, but that is a whole year away! Chris Clayton

## Burlescombe

Peter Walter, captain of the tower at St Mary the Virgin Burlescombe, says the bell-ringers of the parish are in a pretty good position - after all, there's a ringer for every bell, and not everyone has that. "We can get away with five bells, but it would be good if we had a few extra people to fill in," he said. Peter is obviously passionate about his campanology. "Different people do it for different reasons," he said. "Some people do it simply because they want to contribute to the church, others - and I think I fit more into this category - do it as a hobby. It's difficult to describe what there is about it - it has an interest of its own. Even though it's not a particularly physical hobby it does require co-ordination and a fair bit of brain-work. Peter was 10 years of age when he was first introduced to the bell ringing. "I've been doing it on and off for about 50 years now," recalls Peter, now 66. "It's a congenial way of getting a bit of exercise." The ringers are always looking to raise cash and they are always looking for that bit of extra help with ringing. Peter adds: "Here, because our services are at different times each week, the requirement is only about two services a month, plus all the special occasions like Easter, Christmas and weddings. "It's not a drain on your time really, especially if you enjoy it like we do."

## Chawleigh

Chawleigh villagers wanted to mark a momentous occasion with their own contribution. So Phyllis Way and Bill Turpin secretly organised this and when the great day arrived for the 100th birthday of Noel Gordon of Glebe House, Chawleigh he was presented with a fine, solid wooden garden seat and a commemorative plaque. He was also given some artist's materials and a card with the names of all the subscribers to these gifts. School children came around to sing happy birthday while he sat on the bench. At 6pm Chawleigh Bellringers rang a special peal of bells in his honour at St James' Church. Noel is an artist and author, while his wife Elna is an accomplished cellist and pianist. In recent years he has had two books published - *The Gordons*, a family history, and *Made in India*, where he was born. However, he is best known for his lovely paintings of the fine avenue of lime trees in Chawleigh Churchyard, and many villagers are proud owners of his paintings. Visitors to Chawleigh's Jubilee Hall cannot fail to notice the large mural of St James' Church and Churchyard, which covers the western wall. This painting is the work of Noel and many of the villagers who attended his special art classes some years ago. They all wish Noel well and look forward to seeing him on his daily walks in Chawleigh.

## Upton

In February bellringers from across Devon rang out an extra special goodbye to a Torquay rector. Eight skilled ringers gathered at St Mary Magdalene Church in Upton to ring the bells for more than three hours. The Yorkshire Surprise Major contained a peal of 5,088 changes and was organised to wish farewell to Rev Brian Gerry who has just retired. The achievement took the team three hours and one minute to complete. Captain of St Mary Magdalene Don Roberts said they were pleased to organise the event. He said: "It is very difficult to do this type of peal as it takes a lot of concentration over quite a length of time. That is why we had to draw our bellringers from far and wide but I am pleased to say they did it without mistake. We cannot aspire to ringing a surprise as you need to have eight people who know the changes and can stand the test of time. It is quite complicated but it was a treat to hear." The peal will be recorded by the Guild of Devonshire ringers, which was founded in 1874.

Upton, host the AGM venue for the South Devon Eight Bell Association and are known for call change ringing. The team participated in a Deanery "Three Towers" competition run in March where seven towers were represented in this prestigious event. The joint winners were Ipplepen and Kingskerswell.

## Half a century of fund raising

Spanning more than five decades, the Paignton Handbell Ringers have raised over forty thousand pounds for various charities with annual contributions to the Dame Hannah Rogers School at Ivybridge. They are one of the school's regular supporters and their Christmas carol concerts and collections have kept the funds mounting. "Now with over £1,450 we collected at various events in December and through the festive season, we have pushed the total for the school to help its development to well over £30,000," John Kelly revealed. The handbell ringers

have presented a cheque for £1,250 this year to Bill Evans, principal of the school, at a celebratory dinner party arranged at the Dainton Hotel, Waterside, Paignton for the performances over Christmas and New Year. The captain John Kelly, whose charitable work earned him Royal recognition with a BEM in 1990, said that the ringers also gave £150 to the Miracle Trust, a cancer charity run at Torbay Hospital and £51 to Paignton Hospital League of Friends. Meanwhile John says he's looking forward to completing 50 years with the team next

Christmas. "It will certainly be a unique occasion," he said. John stated that he was impressed with the support from his team who give up so much of their time over Christmas and New Year. He said "That without them and the other supporters we would not be able to function and I do thank them all. I am sure that they all enjoy themselves and we are very pleased with the new recruits." John, Captain of Paignton Parish Church, is also a well known judge and started church bell ringing in 1948 at Moretonhampstead.



## Devon Association of Ringers Committee Meeting Minutes

**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2004**

Mortimore Rooms, North Tawton.

Abridged. Full version is available from the Secretary, or at AGM in November. Minutes to be agreed at next meeting.

**Matters arising** – Mr Bint stated that it was a disappointment that the offer from Holcombe Rogus for the 2004 Major Final had to be turned down. Mr Drake stated that it was a pity, but that was the wish of the meeting. There were no other matters arising.

**Correspondence** – Mr Darke had received items of correspondence – two letters had been received from Mr Clayton of Sampford Courtnay – the first dated 26.11.03 and the second dated 28.01.04. They were commenting on election protocol at the AGM in 2003 and the developing Constitution. Mr Darke replied in writing to Mr Clayton on 28.11.03, hopefully answering Mr Clayton's questions. There was some discussion from the floor. Mr Sharland suggested that most of Mr Clayton's questions would be answered by the Constitution. The President then put forward a proposal that the current Constitution draft be adopted at the next AGM. This was seconded by Mr Ward and carried by the meeting.

Reference voting at the AGM by affiliated towers – it was agreed to ensure that voting cards were available at future AGMs to allow members to cast their votes under any decisions requiring membership approval.

A letter had been received from Mr D Row of Topsham, enquiring about the constitution, novice team qualification, the names of Committee members and sub county structure. Mr Darke replied to Mr Row's letter, hopefully answering the questions raised. Mr Darke proposed that the suggestion about a 'year card' to give members contact information be adopted – this was carried by the meeting. Members were asked if they were happy for their name, area represented and phone number to appear on a year card – this was agreed. Mr Darke would organise this and include a 2004-year card with this years' competition schedules which will shortly be distributed to the affiliated towers.

**Constitution.** The final adoption of the Constitution had already been addressed – it would be placed on the agenda of the 2004 AGM for members to finally ratify.

**Order of Service.** Mr Hookway proposed that the service be unaltered but that the Secretary and individual priests have discretion to adapt. The meeting carried this proposal.

**Annual Dinner** – Mr Drake reported that the Waie Inn was available on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2004. Mr Drake asked members to bring prizes for the raffle draw. The evening would start at 7.30pm for 8.00pm. Mr Drake asked that members booked their tickets by 13<sup>th</sup> March.

**2004 competitions** – Mr Darke brought the members up to date. There were no known problems. The meeting gave consent for using a strapper at the Eight Bell in Winkleigh, and verified the advisory rule that any ringer may only ring and only strap once in a competition.

Mr Darke asked members for support at the Novice Competition and wished members to encourage a good entry number. Mr Sharland asked if in future, that bells should not be adjusted/modified between practices and the competition. This pertained to Dodbrooke in 2003. Members agreed this. Mr Darke stated that certificates were almost finished and would be a similar cost as last year (£150).

**2005 competitions** – Mr Darke reported that a letter of invitation had been received from Widecombe in the Moor for the Eight Bell Competition. Mr Trout expected invitations from Tamerton Folliot (South 6 Bell) and Kenton (Major final). Mr Drake reminded members that invitations needed to be in writing to the Secretary by 1<sup>st</sup> August.

**Annual draw** – In Mrs Endicott's absence, Mr Bint informed the meeting that the 2004 Annual Draw was being organised

**Website** – Mr Enderson stated that there have been 92,500 hits. There was now an online calendar in place. The web site had greatly assisted in promoting the Association especially after the Ringers' Road Show in Lincoln, during 2003.

The current CD stock was getting low – any member wishing to purchase a copy should contact Mr L Yeo. The next CD would involve the 'Dartmoor Project', to include recordings of bells from towers on Dartmoor.

**Carol Service** – the collection totalled for the 2003 Ringers Carol Service. Mr Hookway replied that a sum of £227.24 was raised for the Children's Hospice. The meeting agreed that this was a splendid service and letters of thanks are to be written on behalf of the Association to Mr I Avery for arranging the service and to the Braunton Ladies Handbell Ringers.

**Membership** – Mr Hookway reported that he had 125 affiliations to date, and that the Association's finances were in excellent shape – £910 in current and £3290 in savings account.

**Next committee date and venue:** Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2004 at the Mortimore Rooms, North Tawton.

JJ Darke-Hon Secretary  
06.02.2004.

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# Notices

## Affiliation Fees

The annual affiliation fees due in November 2003 have been increased to £5. Entries for the 2004 competitions have been increased to £1.50 a ringer. 6 bell total will be £14; 8 bell total will be £17. The increase was approved at the 2002 AGM and will now cover insurance, along with certificate and administration costs.

## Dates

The Carol Service is to be held at St Andrew's Plymouth on 18 December 2004.

**Next committee date and venue:**  
Thursday 16 September 2004 at 7.30pm in the Mortimore Rooms, North Tawton.

The next AGM will be Saturday 13 November, North Tawton, 2.15pm.

## Editor

Members have been reminded to think and look for suitable venues for the Festivals in 2005. Two verbal invitations so far for the eight bell is from Widecombe and East Budleigh. If you have or know of a suitable venue, please write to the Secretary by June/July 2004. The Minor and Major competitions alternate each year between North and South Devon, i.e. North and South of the A30.

## Competition Dates

### Eight Bell

24 April—Winkleigh

### North Devon Qualifier

8 May—St Giles in the Wood

### South Devon Qualifier

8 May—Loddiswell

Minor Final: 22 May—Offwell

Major Final: 12 June—Langtree

## Clothing

Any bellringing related clothing or badges can be obtained from Janice Gist (Iddesleigh and St Giles in the Wood).

## Badges

Association badges are available from the Secretary at a cost of £3.

The views expressed here do not necessarily represent the views of the Association. Any articles, comments to The Editor, see page 2.

## Next Edition of Devon Calls

I have been handed a tape recording by Richard Merson who has recorded some interesting tales. I will transcribe the tape and edit it ready for the next edition planned for June. This article, I am sure, will prove of great interest to many ringers. I am thankful for all the correspondents making my life so much easier and to all who have promised articles for the next edition. I am grateful to organisers who have kept me informed of their trips and events. It certainly shows that there are a lot of events within the county. If you have any ideas or suggestions please do not hesitate to make them known to me. Honest feedback will only assist in me being able to issue a newsletter that is informative and interesting to all the readers, whatever their ages.

## Crediton

The bells were rung for the last time on Easter Sunday before the restoration work gets under way. The project is the culmination of a five year campaign to raise £100,000 towards the scheme. The existing peal of eight bells will be transported to Whitechapel Bell Foundry where they will be recast into ten. Bill Jerman, of the Bells Appeal said: "The bells are totally worn out and out of tune. Recasting is essential to preserve a tradition that has existed in Crediton for more than 700 years. The new bells will sound infinitely better and will allow us many more musical combinations".

It is hoped that the new bells will be rung for the first time in November and are expected to last for more than 200 years. The old bells had been in use since 1774.

-Advertisement-

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