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President - Suzanne Driscoll

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# Devon Calls

Early 2023

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## Saint Paul's, Tiverton

The church was built by Manners & Gill of Bath in 1864 and forms part of the Westex development created by John Heathcote for his workforce. The South transeptal tower originally contained five clock bells which, according to the late John Scott, were "poor bells" (Scott J.G.M. 2007). These were removed from the tower in 1975, melted down and recast by John Taylor & Co into a new peal of six with a tenor weighing just over 8 cwt.



The idea to convert the old bells into a ringable

peal came from the late Reverend E. J. Arnold who was the vicar of St. Paul's at the time. The bells are named after his six children - Treble - Sarah, 2<sup>nd</sup> - Lois, 3<sup>rd</sup> - Ruth, 4<sup>th</sup> - Rachel, 5<sup>th</sup> - Simon, Tenor - John.

Sadly, the Revd. Arnold never heard the bells. He passed away just before the project was completed.

*Reference. Scott, John G, M. Mack, Frank D. Clarke, James M. (2007). "Towers & Bells of Devon. Part 2". pp 392 -393 Tiverton St. Paul. Vol.2. The Mint Press Exeter, 2007*

Colin Adams

## All change at St Paul's Tiverton!

When I moved back to Tiverton in 2018 there were three or four regular ringers at St Paul's under the able direction of Linda the tower captain. They relied on friends from St Peter's to make up numbers for Sunday mornings and Friday practices. Three older learners were also being taught, again with the help of St Peter's. I was then privileged to be asked to be vice captain, with a special interest in call change ringing.

### Any call change ringers out there?

Early in 2019 I advertised an extra session of call change ringing on Sunday evenings twice a month. I had contacts via Exminster with two or three other ringers I knew to be living in the area, and also made our wishes known on the DAR website. The new Sunday evening sessions were an immediate success, and we had the makings of a competition team within a couple of months. It seemed that there were

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It is helpful if articles are submitted in MS Word

Deadline for next edition - 11th June 2023

We would be very interested in including "Letters to the Editor"

Articles and letters should be sent to the Editor - Colin Adams - [devoncalls@devonbells.co.uk](mailto:devoncalls@devonbells.co.uk)

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## Tiverton - continued from page 1

quite a few in the area who were keen to progress in call change ringing. In 2019 we entered a good number of local competitions for experience and while not being in the top league we did not disgrace ourselves! We also put in teams for the Novice competition in 2020, but then...

### **Decline... terminal?**

Several things happened within a short space of time. Covid came, and that Novice competition at High Bickington was to be the last for two years; two of the older learners decided to give up; the third learner moved away; and Linda retired from ringing owing to health issues. I was elected tower Captain pretty much by default.

By the Summer of 2021 there were just three of us at St Paul's for Sunday mornings. I wrote in the AGM report, *'Thank you to the faithful few: particularly Hazel and Sharon for helping to keep things going whenever we could.'* Then Hazel moved away and Sharon was struck with a frozen shoulder!

The Sunday evening ringing restarted and was still popular, but those ringers all rang elsewhere on Sunday mornings so we desperately needed a new team of local ringers as well. But how?

### **Open doors**

Following Covid we rang with the big tower door open, despite the inconvenience of impaired ropesight between treble and second. This had an unexpected consequence! Being open to the street and a cut-through used by many people on foot, we



had a lot of interested people stopping to see what was going on when we rang – even if it was sometimes just three bells. Here I will hand over to Alison:

### **The accidental bell ringers**

*My daughter and I were walking through the church grounds at St Paul's, Tiverton as we do every time we go to town and this July afternoon was no different but today the door of the bell tower was open. We stopped to watch the occupants as they were practising ringing the bells. Very shortly the tower captain, Tim Jones appeared in the door way and beckoned us over. He explained to my 10-year-old daughter and me how the bells worked and how they were rung, using a wooden model. He invited us to a taster session the following Tuesday which we attended and that's where our journey began. Two sessions later my daughter persuaded her 14-year-old brother to come along and have a go. One year on and myself and my son are ringing independently, ringing for Sunday services, entering competitions, ringing for weddings, going on bell outings and practising at other local towers. My daughter is now confident to ring on her own under the watchful eye of our tower captain. Who would have thought that a moment's inquisitiveness would*

*lead to a new family activity and an extended group of friends, who are very supportive and encouraging?*

*Since then, another local family with young children has joined the bell ringing community at St Paul's and thanks to Tim and the other bell ringers they are developing their confidence and bell ringing skills. We are always looking to welcome new bell ringers.*

So since the Summer of 2021 we have seven new recruits from the two local families, including five young people now aged between eleven and sixteen. We had installed a simulator on all six bells which allows us to practise as much as we like without disturbing the neighbours, and once again the tower is alive with good natured banter across all ages. Alison and her son Samuel have already entered competitions for experience, and the others are not far behind. Sharon's shoulder is finally on the mend and things are looking up once more.

### **The future?**

So we now effectively have two teams - one for Sunday mornings consisting of all locals, and one evening team including all the locals plus those drawn from a wider area but still committed here. It would be tempting now to stop recruiting and concentrate on developing the local team; however our locals are mostly from just two families and must not feel overloaded, and our young people may well leave home for colleges in due course. We must keep teaching, and I am always on the lookout for interest from church members and passers-by.

At the recent Central Council meeting the president said he thought that being part of the church was seriously off-putting to new recruits, but here the fact that ringing is church based and church linked has been nothing but positive. Our new ringers are proud to feel part of the local church, welcomed by Andy our vicar at our recent AGM. Having a ground floor ringing chamber and a user-friendly modernised church building also helps greatly.

### **What of the smaller villages?**

My hope is that having a kind of 'ringing hub' in a local town like ours has helped bring together more isolated ringers. Ringing on Sunday evening does not conflict with their local duties. Some are bringing their own learners to have more experience, and we all ring where needed in the area when we can. Is this a model which could be replicated in other Devon towns and villages?

### **No Sunday evening service?**

No problem! We ring anyway, with the church's blessing. Let's be honest, bells are no longer needed to remind people to get ready for church. So why not loosen the link between the times of services and the times of ringing? If there is an evening service (on special occasions or for a series like Alpha) then we'll obviously stop ringing before the service. But on other occasions we ring simply because it is the Lord's Day, to give a message of hope and outreach to the neighbourhood. We get lots of positive comments and onlookers. On Sunday mornings we normally ring between the two services, but again it doesn't matter if sometimes we ring after or before the services. On all these occasions we try to leave the doors open to both church and street, to show we are a part of what's going on.

Maybe that's our main value – to be one small link between town and church, and earth and heaven.

**Tim Jones**



# Editorial

I want to start by making a sincere apology to Charlie Hard. In the Late 2022 edition of *Devon Calls* I gave a report on a birthday ringing trip which took place in South Devon under the heading, "92 Years Old and still Ringing!" I listed the people, both ringers and non - ringers, who attended but completely overlooked including Charlie's name. I have known Charlie for a very long time and he is a great friend of mine. Quite why I left his name off the list still puzzles me, but I can only apologise and include a photo showing him enjoying himself with some of the party, in an attempt to compensate for my error.



L-R Steven Came, John Dietz, Suzanne Driscoll, Charlie Hard

At the time of writing it seems the Devon Association of Ringers has received names from two people prepared to fill the vacant posts of Secretary and Treasurer. It is also possible that a replacement for James, who is our Technical Editor, has been found, as well as someone to take on the responsibility for keeping and maintaining the address list and printing the address labels. These are important tasks which enable *Devon Calls* to be circulated. Hopefully, the names of those who have kindly come forward to take on these responsibilities will be brought before the committee meeting in February. Their names will feature in the Mid 2023 edition.

Last April Andy Jarvis, who is the Tower Captain at Uplyme, organised a very successful 'Open' day of ringing which led to

£823.00 being donated to The Ukrainian Refugee Appeal. I would like to propose that the Devon Association organises a similar kind of day for the same cause. Invitations could be sent out to towers across the county inviting them to participate, or the Association could seek out four or five venues and organise the day itself. Apart from raising funds for such a worthy cause, it would go some way towards raising the profile of the Devon Association. What do you think? Please get in touch and let me know.

This edition contains an account of the commendable effort being made by John Irish and John Woods at Modbury towards teaching people how to ring. Tim Jones at Tiverton and Jon Bint at Chagford are also engaged in teaching young people as well as older adults. Are there any other ringers doing similar work? If there are, it would be good to hear from them. It would also be good to hear from any young people who have decided to give bellringing a try.

My sincere thanks to all those who have made the effort to submit articles for this edition, whether long or short. Our three proof readers, Elinor, Colin and Peter have once again given their time freely, as has Chris, who packages and distributes the magazine.

This edition is sadly the last one for James, our Technical Editor. He took over when Dr. Colin Barnes announced his intention to retire at the AGM in November 2017. James and I have worked together for just over five years, during that time we have established a harmonious working relationship, so much so that it has made the task of putting together each issue a pleasurable and satisfying task. Thank you, James for all that you have done.

**Colin Adams**

## Brief Notes from the AGM, Chagford, November 12<sup>th</sup> 2022

The Chairman Ian Avery welcomed members to the 88<sup>th</sup> Annual AGM.

Over 40 towers were represented. Apologies were recorded.

The minutes of the 2021 AGM and the 3 Committee Meetings held since the AGM were approved.

The Treasurer gave her report which was approved by all present. In discussion that followed it was proposed and agreed that the Affiliation Fee should be increased to £20 from the next AGM. It was also agreed that individual membership should be increased to £15. This increase is needed to cover the increased costs of printing the 3 editions of *Devon Calls* together with the increased cost of postage.

Verbal reports were given by the Publicity Officer - John Staddon, the Training Officer - Graham Sharland and Colin Adams as Editor of *Devon Calls*. - Julia Jarvis, Fundraiser, reported that there were on, 12<sup>th</sup> November 2022, 183 members of the 300 Club, and £1585 had been donated to the Devon Church Bell Restoration Fund.

The Election of Officers of the Association. James Steer - Chairman, John Staddon - Publicity Officer, Colin Adams - Devon Calls Editor, Graham Sharland - Training Officer, Julia Jarvis - Fundraiser, Tim Jones - Webmaster, Charles Conibear -

Safeguarding Officer, Ian Avery - Guild Liaison. The Trustees of the DCBRF are Graham Sharland, Elaine Grant and James Steer. The DAR Bell Advisors are Graham Sharland and James Steer.

Posts that remained vacant, Vice Chair, Hon Secretary, Hon Treasurer, North & South Competition Secretaries.

The Meeting approved the amendments proposed to the DAR Constitution.

### Competitions in 2023

Novice - 11 March 2023: St Pauls, Tiverton (tbc)  
6-Bell North Devon Qualifier - 13 May 2023: Colebrooke (tbc)  
6-Bell South Devon Qualifier - 13 May 2023: Buckland-in-the-Moor (back six)  
6-Bell Minor Final - 27 May: tbc  
6-Bell Major Final - 10 June: Denbury  
8-Bell - 16 September - Plympton St Maurice (tbc)

AGM 2023. It was agreed that it should again take place at Chagford. N.B. Due to the Jubilee Hall availability, the AGM will be held a week later than usual on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> at 4 pm.

**John Staddon**

# DCBRF Report for Devon Association AGM

## 12th November 2022

During 2022 we have seen several projects finally come to a conclusion after the shut down and restrictions of Covid paying out some £23,100 so far this year with a further £9,200 expected to be paid very shortly.

Inspections continue to be a large part of our work and since the last report in November 2021, Quinquennial bell inspections have been completed at Cadeleigh, Clayhidon, Stoke Gabriel, Holcombe Burnell and East Portlemouth. Other inspections have taken place at eighteen towers in the County and on top of this, completed restoration work has been checked and signed off at Butterleigh, East Anstey, Milton Abbot, and Cadbury. This means that during the year the Trustees have inspected the bells at twenty eight towers, so over two per month. All of this is done in their own time and at no cost to the Bell Fund, Association or Guild.

We held our usual two meetings during the year, the first on 11<sup>th</sup> April at Janet Deem's home in Exmouth and earlier this afternoon (12 November 2022) in the church at Chagford.

The changes in Chairman and Secretary that occurred during the last 18 months have bedded in now and we are both very busy, David with inspections and Janet with admin.

The bulk of our financial assets remain in the form of the investment portfolio purchased from the William Smale Bequest, and continue to be managed through the Discretionary Portfolio Service of Cathedral Financial Management Ltd of Exeter. The approximate value is currently a little over £320,000, however, values are very up and down and are unlikely to stabilise any time soon. As anticipated the dividends received from the investment portfolio this year are lower than pre Covid at £7,927 but there is one more payment due this year which should bring us up to approximately £10,000.

Income during the year (excluding that from the investment portfolio) has so far amounted to £6,805.91, including £863 received from Association towers and events. £3,333 from the Guild and its Branches, £1,271 from personal and miscellaneous donations and £320 following tower inspections. Personal donations made through the CAF donation facility on both the Guild and Association web pages has amounted to

£347.04, and donations via AmazonSmile raised a further £64.98. Tax refunds following gift-aided donations and bank interest make up the balance.

At the beginning of 2022 the liquid assets of the Fund stood at £66,929. Since that time four grants totalling £23,100 have been paid. £6,000 to Cadbury where the bells were rehung in the existing frame with all new fittings plus tuning of all but the mediaeval fourth and tenor bells. £9,000 to Milton Abbot where the bells were rehung in a new frame with mainly new fittings, the bells were turned and tuned. A new belfry floor was built and a new rope guide was added. £5,700 to East Anstey where a total rehang of the six bells with mainly new fittings has been completed. £2,400 to Butterleigh where the 3 bells have been conserved and restored to allow for automated chiming, also trapdoors were cut in the floors to allow the bells to be removed and returned.

At present the liquid assets of the Fund stand at £58,562.89.

Grants agreed this year include £3,700 for Huntshaw where all three bells are to be rehung on new headstocks with all new fittings. The 2<sup>nd</sup> needs to be welded. The treble is to be hung to allow swing chiming by rope, and all bells to be hung for chiming with electromagnetic hammers. The creation of trapdoors will allow access to the bells for removal and repairs to the intermediate chamber including the insertion of two steel beams. The bells are currently at Taylors.

This afternoon we have also discussed giving £3,730 to four new projects. £1,200 to Cotleigh where some general renovation has been completed, £300 to Tiverton St Paul who wish to replace all 6 clappers to improve the sound and go of the bells, £900 to Stoodleigh to have the cracked treble bell removed, welded and returned, £380 Sampford Peverell where new gudgeons are required in the tenor headstock and £950 to Uplyme where the frame needs scrapping down and repainting plus a general overall of the bells and fittings. Assuming all of the nine grants agreed to date are taken up, the uncommitted liquid balance of the Fund stands at approximately £25,000.

*Janet Deem*

## Quilted Wall Hanging

Back before the world went crazy, I had started to raffle a quilted wall hanging to raise funds for Chagford's Bells. It was a quilt that I had made some years previously, as an exercise in shapes and colours. However, when we returned to some form of normality and still the raffle hadn't been concluded, we decided it was time to begin again. This time though, as the Chagford bells were all complete, I decided (with Jon Bint's approval) that any money raised should go towards the Devon Bell Restoration Fund, as this had been mentioned at the AGM.

So, at our annual Ringers' Coffee Morning and later in church, where it was displayed



for several weeks, people bought numbers (raffle tickets). It didn't raise a great sum but £52 is not to be sneezed at, and it all helps, I imagine, towards the funds that are needed.

The draw took place in church after the morning service on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2022, and was won by a local parishioner.

*Elinor d'Albiac*



# Six Ringing Recruits Prepare for the Return of Bigbury's Bells

## BIGBURY LEARNERS

Peter, Carole, Henry, Rita, Heather and Vanessa came along to Modbury in Aug/Sept 2022 with no previous experience of bell ringing. They all live in and around Bigbury. There have been no ringable bells at Bigbury for many years now, but the bells will be re-hung in the Spring this year with a new frame, new wheels, and new bearings and most importantly a new team of ringers! No doubt Harry Bardens and Brian Carson will pass on their expertise as well.

## MODBURY PRACTICES

Teaching 6 new ringers this autumn has proved to be quite a challenge for John Woods and myself, and I pass on my sincere thanks to him for all his help and support! We started training with the bells 'up' and showed them our small scale working bell model so they could visualize what they were actually doing.

First, we let them catch hold of the end rope whilst we controlled the sally stroke. We then tried them on the sally with us controlling the end rope. This is the most important stage of learning, where patience and concentration are definitely needed! A shout of "LET GO!" if the rope wanders is necessary! Then we combined end and sally stroke and made sure they could set the bell safely. We progressed to following another bell and ringing in rounds with a few bells. Eventually they will learn how to raise and lower.

Come Coronation Day on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> May we hope that the bells will ring out over Bigbury, not just for our new King, but in gratitude to those who have given so generously to the fund-raising efforts.

*John Irish*

## 2022 Devon Association Ringers Long Service Awards



John Barnes   Mike Webster   Tony Jeffery



John Dietz, Maurice Sharland and Barry Osbourne with Suzanne Driscoll



John Orchard   John Barnes   Claude & Joyce Nicholls



### At the AGM in November held at Chagford

Suzanne Driscoll DAR 2023 President received the DAR Presidential Sash from Keith Bevin the 2022 President.

## Obituary - Raymond Treeby

Ray, my late father, died on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2022. His ringing career began at Plymstock where he was taught to ring by his father during the last World War. At the time the only light in the ringing chamber came from gas lights. Dad's ringing career at Plymstock spanned 70 years. He rang in the Devon six-bell competitions for many years along with his late brother Ivor, and the team were very successful, ranking as one of the top teams in the county. In the team were: Len Collingwood, Frank Crowe, Wilf Weeks, Ivor and Ray. They were led by Tower Captain Jack Hine. Monday night was ringing practice night and afterwards this was followed by a pint in the Plymstock Inn. The team would ring twice on a Sunday, morning and evening. Ray joined the team on many bellringers outings ringing in towers in Devon, Cornwall and Somerset. He last rang at Plymstock in



December 2019.

His funeral service took place at St. Mary and All Saints Church, Plymstock on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022. Many ringers came to pay their last respects to a loyal, faithful and highly valued Plymstock ringer. The bells were rung before and after the service and during the service the Ringers' Hymn was sung.

*Dawn Rowe*

## Obituary - Mrs Mary Margherita Jarvis

Mrs Jarvis was the organist at St. Peter's Church, Dalwood, in East Devon between Honiton and Axminster, for a remarkable 73 years! She was first appointed organist when she was just 14 years old. She also learnt to ring at Dalwood but never rang a great deal because of other duties which she carried out, i.e. flower arranging and cleaning the church brass. Her late husband actually rang there for 40 years; he also sang with the choir and was one of the churchwardens. Son Andy learnt to ring at Dalwood when he was 9 years old. He still rings and teaches ringing at nearby Stockland, Membury and Uplyme.

Mrs Jarvis loved the sound of the bells and whenever visiting bands came to ring she would invariably make a point of listening out. Whenever the weather was favourable she would venture down to the church to meet the ringers and sit on one of the seats in the churchyard to listen to the ringing.

Her funeral took place on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup>



November 2022 at Dalwood. The little church was filled to capacity with mourners; testament to her popularity. Fittingly the church still had the colours depicting Remembrance Sunday on display, adding to the dignified atmosphere. The service was conducted by Reverend Julie Lomas and the organist was Mrs. Kathy Laing.

Half-muffled peals were rung before the service and during the committal. The ringers were: Donald Pike (Tower Captain), Michael and Colin Adams, Nigel Bateman, Jon Kimber and David Wills. Son Andy joined in the ringing following the committal. It was a fitting tribute to his mother's life long devotion to duty.

*Colin Adams*

## Departed

We are sorry to hear of the death of:  
**Ivor Warren** who rang at South Molton.  
**John Lock** who rang at Dolton.  
**Trevor Sellick** who rang at Morethoe.  
**Harold Down** who rang at Tawstock and Atherington.

On behalf of the Devon Association of Ringers we send our condolences to their respective family members.

*Colin Adams*



***A fine bunch of men – all dressed up and looking in their prime!***



***Back row L. to R.***

*F. Payne. J. A. Rogers. R. Selley. T. Perkins.  
R. S. Perkins. R. D. Pyke. L. Vaughan.  
H. J. Brewer.*

***Middle row L. to R.***

*W. Slack. F. D. Lake. G. Grimes. W. Burge.  
R. A. Rogers. T. Hicks. W. H. Pook. W. J. Little.  
A. G. Wills. E. J. Moxey.*

***Front row L. R.***

*N. G. Osborne. H. Parnell. A. J. Pike. (Sec).  
J.J. Brewer. (Captain). F. G. Coles. (Treasurer).  
F. J. Brewer (Sub Captain). F. G. Rogers.*

F. G. Coles (alias Foxy) kept the New Inn opposite the church and ran it with his two sisters. He also donated a shield to be rung for in local competitions. Does anyone know where this shield is now?

***Colin Adams***

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