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# Devon Calls

## LATE 2023

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### DEVON CALLS

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## STAR RECRUIT RUBY



This is Kenton's youngest ringer, Ruby Williams aged 10. Ruby came to the tower with her father John whom we have taught over the last 3 years. Ruby is a delight to have in the tower, she sits quietly reading while we ring and is now able to handle a bell on her own. Our aim will be to have her at least ringing rounds on Christmas morning. Ruby has the makings of a useful member of our team.

Michael Adams.Tower Captain.

## Editorial

I don't know how well the recruitment of ringers is going in your town or village but you will see that at Kenton it is going quite well. Ten year old Ruby who graces the front page is making steady progress and will soon be safely handling a bell on her own. Ruby's great grandfather, the late Peter Williams rang for Rackenford and is third from the right in this picture circa 1960. Can anyone name the other ringers and the date on which the photo was taken?



By contrast Ralph Chapman has been ringing for almost eighty years and has just retired as Tower Captain at Holsworthy. It has been a pleasure recording Ralph's ringing career and, as with other longstanding ringers that I have interviewed, it provides a deep sense of satisfaction knowing that their contribution to bellringing has been duly recorded and archived. If you have ever watched "Union with David Olusoga" on BBC 2 you will know what I mean. I hope anyone in future like David who decides to inquire into bellringing in the West Country will be reasonably well provided for.

By the way, if you can think of a ringer whose ringing career would be worth recording please get in touch.

I apologise for the slight delay in getting this edition into circulation. Robin, our Technical Editor, recently moved from Bordeaux to Ireland whilst at the same time I had to catch up with a great deal of work in and around the house. However, everything began to fall into place by late October. My hope now is that the magazine will reach you before the Devon Association AGM on 18th November- fingers crossed.

As always I am grateful for the time and effort which our proof readers spend carefully scrutinising the articles. Equally I am grateful to Robin for his time setting out the pages. The staff at Swiftprint are always helpful, willing and ready to provide a printer's proof before printing the final version of the magazine. Thanks to them and thanks to Nigel our Treasurer for helping to package and distribute the magazine.

Colin Adams



Five ringing stalwarts gather for an impromptu meeting of the Devon Association of Ringers at Chagford Show last August! L. to R. Jon Bint (Chagford). Linda & James Steer (Bow). Jenny & Mike Pascoe (Widcombe-in-the-Moor).



## THE RINGING CAREER OF Mr. RALPH CHAPMAN OF HOLSWORTHY

Anyone who has ever rung at the church of St. Peter & St. Paul Holsworthy will know what a glorious peal of eight bells they are, and will no doubt have met Ralph. Having first been appointed Tower Captain in 1982 he recently stood down and handed over the captaincy to his daughter Angela whom he taught to ring in 1974.

*It all began at Black Torrington.*

Ralph comes from a ringing family. His maternal grandfather learnt to ring at Shebbear and rang throughout his long life – retiring in his late 70s. His father was a ringer who learnt to ring when he was a teenager as did five other members of his family all having been taught by their uncle.

At times the family would ring all six bells at Black Torrington and in the 1920s they did very well in competitions gaining some worthy certificates which still hang on the walls of the tower today. Ralph told me that in those days when his father and fellow ringers talked about bellringing, the topic was discussed almost as though it were as sacred as a religion!

He said that his earliest memory of bellringing was as a ten-year old boy standing on the belfry steps at Black Torrington watching six old timers ring a Victory in Europe peal in 1945. The bells were silenced during the war only to be rung if an invasion was threatened. He was expected to become a ringer and his first tentative steps were taken in 1944 whilst helping his father check the bells and their fittings as they had been silent since 1939. When ringing resumed in 1945 he started to learn on the 5th bell and attended a few practices but said that, “much to his regret he didn’t continue.” His interest was however re-kindled when in 1965 he came to live in Holsworthy.

*The start of a new chapter at Holsworthy in 1965.*

After having moved to Holsworthy and attending the church he had a chance conversation with Charlie Lyle whom he described as being “one of our ringing stalwarts and a person dedicated to Holsworthy tower.”



(Ralph amongst his ‘Beloved Holsworthy Bells’)

The subject soon turned to bellringing. Ralph said, “Charlie had heard that he had previously started to learn and asked if he would be interested in starting again?” Ralph said, “I was hooked”. Charlie was quite elderly at the time and he looked after the bells and the clock. The tower steps had to be climbed daily to wind the clock and it was clear Charlie needed help. Ralph said he was pleased to be asked and felt eager to get up amongst those magical bells.

He explained that at the time he was busy at work and trying to fit in the task of winding the clock daily was becoming increasingly difficult. Then a volunteer stepped forward to take on the task but he was an elderly man and very soon had to give up. He was left with the task again but in 1993, thankfully, the clock was converted to automatic winding. Finally, in 2010, age played its hand and he found climbing the steps and getting across the bell frame too much for his knees.

After 40 years service he handed over his duties to a fellow ringer. He said, “It has been a labour of love and dedication and although it is a fallacy to say so in my heart of hearts, I shall always feel that the bells are mine.”



Holsworthy ringers with Ralph sitting second left in the front row next to daughter Angela.

At the time when Ralph decided to take up ringing again he was joined by two brothers, Graham and Malcolm Piper who farmed on the outskirts of the town. The Tower Captain was Frank Rowland and according to Ralph he was a very capable teacher and a loyal and faithful kind of man. He said how pleased he is that the three of them, who had originally learnt together, have continued ringing ever since. At the time when they were learning there were 12 ringers, 10 of whom lived in the town. The bells were rung regularly each Sunday for morning and evening services. Practice nights were on Wednesdays.

#### *Four decades of maintenance.*

To his credit Ralph has maintained Holsworthy's bells, clock and carillon for just over 40 years! The latter piece of equipment is unique and known world-wide for its famous, "Air to Holsworthy Church Bells". The original carillon was installed in 1872 and functioned spasmodically up until approximately 1910.

With two World Wars intervening replacing the apparatus was not possible. Eventually it was accomplished in 1949 by Gillett & Johnston of Croydon and coincided with work being carried out by the company on recasting and re-hanging the eight bells. The combined project cost £2,200.00. The carillon operates electronically by a system involving pre-set linked compressed air chambers operating hammers which strike the inner sound bow of the bells. It was made as a one-off project and often needs to be adjusted.

How many times during the 40 years of maintenance must Ralph have climbed the 70 steps to carry out tasks to keep everything in working order? Not only this, but as anyone who has ever rung at Holsworthy will testify, the ringing chamber is an area which is always kept immaculately. Group photos of ringers past and present hang from the walls, and with the ringing certificates also on display, illustrate just how active the Holsworthy band were, and still are. The whole place creates the impression of being well cared-for and a sense of pride.



*“Air to Holsworthy Church Bells.”*

The Air was composed by Samuel Sebastian Wesley (1810 – 1876) who was a cathedral organist. Apparently, it was written whilst he was sitting under one of the large beech trees at the southern side of the town and as a dedication to the church organ which was installed in 1865. Ralph told me that over the years the town has been visited by many people who, having heard the music, wanted to come and hear for themselves the sound emanating from its source high up in the church tower.

*Becoming competitive.*

We talked about ringing competitions, and Ralph told me that back in the late 1970s at Black Torrington the Tower Captain, the late Norman Lock, formed a competition team which he was invited to join. He said, “This was a very exciting time for me because it was a stepping stone to the company of some fine teams and I met many friendly and interesting people.”

He said, “Norman was an excellent ringer, he was very strict and didn’t miss much but he taught us a lot. Looking back, I must pay tribute to Norman. Whilst he was much older than the rest of the team, his ringing expertise and skill shaped us into a very competitive team”.

Due to work pressures the team were only in existence for around 5 years but they were very memorable and thrilling times. We were actually unique because Norman, being an undertaker, used to take us around in a hearse! He was somehow able to adjust part of the inside of the vehicle so that it could be folded down to form a seat so we had an Eternal practice ride to the competitions”!

His first competition was a Tamar Valley event held at Bradworthy in 1979. It was the first time a call-change competition had been organised by the Tamar Valley Guild of Ringers. Sixteen teams took part which included two teams representing Holsworthy. When the results were announced



(SS Peter & Paul, Holsworthy - Photo by kind permission of Libbi York, Holsworthy Benefice Administrator).

Holsworthy were placed 8th and 12th. He said, “It was a very enjoyable day and good to have been able to meet up with so many ringers not often seen.”

The Tamar Valley Guild of Ringers was formed at the turn of the 20th Century and his grandfather, Thomas Blight of Shebbear, was a founder member who was present at the inaugural meeting held at Week St. Mary which is close to the Devon/ Cornwall border. It comprises 25 teams stretching from Boynton to Hartland.

A Guild Day is held in early May each year and a summer competition takes place at different towers. A very important event in Ralph’s ringing calendar was the annual 6 and 8 – bell open knockout competition at Holsworthy which was always well supported. He was the chairman of the Tamar Valley Guild of ringers for 12 years and said how much he enjoyed those days with his fellow ringers.

### *Judging at competitions.*

Another enjoyable part of his bellringing career was whenever he was invited to act as one of the judges at a competition. He said, "Sitting down with fellow judges and listening to some crack ringing by top teams was absolute bliss. Sometimes it was a long day, especially if teams arrived late." Then he would arrive home at around 10.30 p.m. but having had a very enjoyable day. He pointed out that there were occasions when he, "could still hear the bells long after the ringing had stopped when he finally put his head on the pillow and before falling off to sleep"! Unfortunately, the onset of tinnitus impaired his hearing and he made the decision to discontinue.

### *Memories of Shebbear.*

The late Bill Haine and Jack Bale, both from the village of Shebbear which is approximately five miles from Holsworthy, were two of Ralph's great friends. The three of them ran the Holsworthy competition for many years. Bill Haine judged regularly at competitions during the summer. Fittingly Jack Bale was elected President of the Devon Association of Ringers for 1996/97. Jack used to organise and run the annual Shebbear 6 – bell competition which was always held on the second Saturday in August. The event was so popular that it frequently attracted up to 20 teams.

### *Turning the Devil's Stone.*

Ralph recalled being invited to Jack Bale's birthday at Shebbear each year which coincided with the ceremony of "Turning the Devil's Stone." The event takes place on November 5th when the local ringers gather at the church. First the bells are "fired" which means all the bells are rung at once, then they are rung in rounds and with call-changes. The ringers then assemble outside the lychgate armed with crow bars to turn the heavy stone which lies on the grass verge. The ringing and the turning of the stone were traditionally done by the local ringers, but Ralph was invited because his maternal grandfather was a member of the original Shebbear team.

### *Other memorable ringing characters.*

The late Alf Copp of St. Giles-in-the-Wood was a totally dedicated ringer who used to judge with Bill Haine. Ralph fondly recalled an occasion when Holsworthy was ringing at Ugborough. One of the ringers was heard to say "Proper job – be nice to ring all eight". Alf Copp's response was brief and to the point, "You can't ring six never mind about eight"!! Then there were the two Wright brothers Tom and Ralph and Harry Docking from Down St. Mary. All three were great ringing stalwarts. Brian Drake as Captain of North Tawton regularly brought his team to compete at Holsworthy's 8-bell competitions and the team produced some truly memorable peals.



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*Memorable Occasions both bitter and sweet!*

Bitter at Stratford-upon-Avon.

There was a ringing occasion which Ralph said, "Will always stick in my mind." He always wanted to ring at Stratford-upon-Avon and the chance to do so came in the summer of 1985. It was a Sunday morning and, with his daughter Angela, he strolled over to the church to listen to the ringing. The Tower Captain and other members of the band were waiting outside. By sheer coincidence they were short of ringers and the Tower Captain asked them both if they would like to join them. "Certainly" said Ralph, "but we are call-change ringers". "That's fine" was the reply. So, they eagerly ascended the tower steps and entered the ringing chamber. Ralph caught hold of the 4th bell and Angela chose the 2nd. The first change was called "4 to 5" but as he hadn't first orientated himself to check the position of the bell he was ringing he

didn't change and felt extremely embarrassed. He said, "It was something I have never quite lived down"!

Sweet at Holsworthy.

By contrast he said, "There is a ringing occasion which I will never forget". It was a truly memorable peal that he rang at Holsworthy in 1990 in the 8-bell open section. Brian Drake invited him to join the North Tawton team and to ring the 3rd bell. He said how excited he was to be ringing with the Devon 8-bell champions. All went well and we won the cup with a loss of just 8 ½ marks! He remembered Bill Haine saying to him as he left the tower, "You will never ring in a better peal than that Ralph." How right he was and it is still considered to be the finest 8-bell peal ever rung at Holsworthy.

*A sense of achievement and satisfaction.*

Having been Tower Captain for 41 years, served on the PCC for 40 years and been a churchwarden for 12 years he has made a tremendous contribution to the life and work of the church. Seeing six ringers whom he taught forming the present band justifiably provides a deep sense of satisfaction for him. In closing he said, "I would like to pay tribute to my fellow ringers and friends who have always been so loyal and supportive over the years."

The long years of devoted service which he has given would not have been possible without the consistent support of his wife Shirley. The couple have been together for an amazing 66 years! We hope they will remain together for many more years to come.

We hope Ralph will maintain his interest in ringing and continue to share his memories with us. We congratulate Angela, who happens to be a fourth-generation family ringer, on being appointed Tower Captain and feel confident that she will maintain and uphold the high standards set by her father Ralph. We can be confident that Holsworthy's bells will remain in safe hands and send our best wishes to Angela.

Colin E. Adams

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## WRINGING THE TRUTH OUT OF A BELL RINGING SONG



St. Thomas of Canterbury, Northlew. Photo reproduced by kind permission of Devon Churchland.

*The Bell-Ringing* is a hugely popular song but how many people really understand it? The action leaps about from Devon to Cornwall as the men of Northlew battle it out with the men of Broadwood and many technical terms are used. John Foxen asked veteran bell-ringer and singer Geoff Hill to fill in the gaps in our knowledge.

“The contest could possibly have taken place in the reign of King George III,” says Geoff Hill, a Lamerton farmer. He is a trustworthy authority as he has been a bell-ringer since he was 15. “We moved to Court Barton farm in 1963, next to Lamerton church and I fell in love with the sound of the bells,” he says. Geoff also rings at St Eustachius in Tavistock – “I went to school with the son of the bell captain at St Eustachius so I got drawn in” – and has rung in churches all over the country.

He is also a fine singer and some years ago performed *The Bell-Ringing* at the church of St Peter Ad Vincula in Ashwater which hosted the first historic contest between the men of Northlew (known as North Lew when the song was composed) and the ringers of Broadwoodwidge

(shortened to Broadwood in the song). The occasion was a concert to raise money for the restoration of their famous church bells. “And I wore a hat laced with gold,” Geoff says. In 2003 for Dartmoor Changes, a celebration of bell-ringing on and around Dartmoor, he was recorded singing the song at St Peter’s Church, Peter Tavy.

His view of the possible date of the contest is borne out by the first line of the song:

*One day in October,  
Neither drunken nor sober,  
O'er Broadbury Down I was wending my way  
When I heard of some ringing,  
Some dancing and singing,  
I ought to remember that Jubilee Day.*

The jubilee celebrations for George III were held on October 25, 1809, and if Geoff’s supposition is correct, then such a contest might have been part of the local festivities. At this time, he says, bell-ringing was a hugely popular form of entertainment and whole villages would have turned out to enjoy the contest.





(Geoff looking resplendent wearing a hat trimmed with gold.)

Indeed, Sabine Baring-Gould, a parson who collected the song, wrote: “Bell-ringing was a pastime dearly loved and much practised in Devon at the time. There were contests between the ringers of various churches, and challenges, the prize being either money or a hat laced with gold. All over the county one comes on old songs relating to these contests.”

The parson also left us the words to a song about the ringers of Torrington but did not provide a tune. (One has been written by Nick Wyke and Becki Driscoll and a link to their performance is given on the What’s Afoot Facebook page).

In the first edition of his *Songs Of The West*, Baring-Gould says he heard The Bell-Ringing from an old moorland farmer William George Kerswell at Two Bridges and also from James Down, a blacksmith at Broadwoodwidger.

He had two musicians to help him note down the tunes and they offered two versions which both differ from the one commonly known today. The folk process has worked well here because the version currently sung is better than those of the two academics who may well have made mistakes. Also, they were not above “improving” the tunes they heard, sometimes to their detriment.

They both admitted it was a strong tune – certainly so strong, that one of them, Reverend Henry Fleetwood Sheppard, said it invaded every song Mr Kerswell sang for them afterwards which put a bit of a damper on their song-collecting for that evening. Baring-Gould theorised the air could be based on an old bell-ringing pattern and it certainly rolls like a peal of bells.

Back to the contest: Geoff says the first contest would have been held at Ashwater because it was neutral ground. “If you ring at your home church, you have an advantage because you know the bells.” He believes other sides were probably involved but only the top two teams get mentioned in the song.

As for the prize money: “It might well have been put up by one of the local publicans who would have been the first to benefit from such a big event. The crowds would have been in and out of the pub all day and the prize money and more would soon have been made.”

This fits in with the narrator saying he was neither drunken nor sober. The Rev Sheppard wrote rather sniffily: “The narrator is unhappily slightly intoxicated but no one thinks the worse of him.” Unhappily? He sounds quite happy.

What form did the contest take? Back then it would have involved a seven-minute peal of round-ringing by each team. Round-ringing was gradually replaced in the late Victorian period by change-ringing in which a peal on six bells can take half an hour or more – and can be considerably longer. For example, in 1996, Geoff and his daughter took part in a “long peal” at St Eustachius. This involved 5,040 changes and took around three hours. “Once you get into the rhythm of bellringing it’s not hard to keep it up for long periods,” says Geoff.

But for the longer peals, teams of ringers are needed. The record for ringing changes was set in Loughborough in 1963 and took 17 hours and 58 minutes. At that rate a change-ringing contest between half-a-dozen sides would have taken well over a week. During marathon bell-ringing stints you need a good captain to ensure mistakes do not creep in. Although the men of Broadwoodwidger were good, the song tells us that in the first contest an error was made:

they gave “a blow on the tenor should never have been”. “It's likely that mistake was the tenor ringing when the peal should have stopped,” says Mr Hill.” That would have been a full fault and would have lost them the match.”

It's worth noting that some singers wrongly give the line as “a peal on the tenor” which would have been far longer than the fault that cost the men of Broadwoodwidge the match. Those men of Broadwoodwidge might have been good ringers but not good losers: the song, as the parson wrote it, continues:

*They of Broadwood being naughty  
Then said to our party,  
We'll ring you a challenge again in a round,  
We'll give you the chance in  
St. Stephen's or Launceston.*

So another neutral ground had to be found and St Stephen's was proposed. Here Geoff points out two mistakes made by Baring-Gould. For Launceston the parson should have used the old spelling of Lanson because then it rhymes with “chance in”. Neither is it “St Stephen's or Launceston”. These are not two separate places. The correct line is “St Stephen's by Lanson”. St Stephen's is the parish church of that Cornish town and at that time had a fine set of bells cast by Pennington of Cornwall.

However, Geoff says, they were heavier than the bells the ringers of Northlew and Broadwoodwidge were used to so the match was switched to Callington. There is no verse to tell us this, the location just switches. The verse may have been lost or perhaps the writer decided that it slowed down the action.

In Callington, the parish church, St Mary's had recently acquired a fine ring of six bells cast by Mears of Whitechapel in London, says Geoff. They were lighter than those of St Stephen's and more like those at Northlew and Broadwoodwidge. Sadly, those Callington bells were lost in a fire in 1895.

There is no clue in the song to tell us when the rematch took place but we do know that once again the men of Northlew proved the better side and won that five-pound note – not a bad prize for the six

ringers as it would have been worth about £380 today.

It's to be hoped that this article might not only get you thinking about and singing the song with more appreciation but also that some of you might even try bell-ringing and help keep this old tradition alive. Asked what makes a good ringing side like that of Northlew, Geoff says the secret is unity and comradeship.

Are young people keeping up the tradition? Geoff says: “Over the years there has always been a balance of older and younger people ringing church bells, although recently numbers had dropped. A national recruitment drive took place leading up to the Coronation to encourage people of all ages to ‘Ring for the King’. This was very successful and more youngsters are joining nationally now.”

And he knows that bell-ringing keeps you young. Geoff is very proud to be a member of the Ancient Society of College Youths, the most prestigious bell-ringing order. “Not only is it a great honour,” he says, “but it's flattering to be called a youth at 74.”



You can hear Geoff and his wife Valerie (pictured above), play in a video on the What's Afoot Facebook page. For the past 50 years they have organised a handbell ringing festival in Lamerton community centre, each year raising money for a different charity. This year's festival will be held on Saturday October 14, starting at 7pm.



The preceding article comes from *What's Afoot*, the Devon Folk association magazine published four times a year, covering folk music, dance and song in the county. With acknowledgement to: John Foxen, Editor "What's Afoot" and Geoff and Valerie Hill for giving permission to reproduce this article (Ed.).

To obtain a copy of *What's Afoot* No 132 which features this article, or to subscribe, contact Steve Gill at Maleth, 11, Cleveland Rd, Torquay, TQ2 5BD. Telephone 01803 290427, email [anne.m.gill@icloud.com](mailto:anne.m.gill@icloud.com)

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## Departed

We are sorry to report the deaths of three long serving ringers. We send our condolences to the members of their families.

### **Ken Down**

President Elect Kenneth (Ken) Down passed away in mid August. A Thanksgiving service for his life and work was held at St. Andrew's Church, Colebrooke on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September. Ken farmed at Zeal Monochorum and he was a ringer at St. Peter's Church.

**George Tucker** who lived and rang at Lapford passed away in mid August. George had been a faithful and long standing ringer at the church of St Thomas of Canterbury.

### **Peter Brewer**

It is with sadness and regret I must report the passing of Peter Brewer. Peter was for many years a ringer and member of the band at Kingsteignton and died peacefully on Saturday morning.

Peter was part of the Kingsteignton band that won the Devon 8-Bell Ross Shield on no fewer than eight occasions. The first being the year Kingsteignton won the trophy for the first time in 1967 when the competition was held at Newton St. Cyres.

Peter continued ringing at Kingsteignton until well into the 1990s and was considered by many to be one of the best 8-bell treble ringers of his time - a tenor ringer's dream. He rang the treble on all eight of his Ross Shield triumphs.

It was rather fitting that Peter passed away last Saturday on the day that Kingsteignton won the Ross Shield at East Budleigh where Peter was a member of the winning team there with Kingsteignton in 1990.

In his last few months of failing health, Peter's youngest son, Michael, had promised to take a recording of Kingsteignton's bells to Peter for him to listen to. He did this on Friday evening.

One of Peter's wishes was to have an improvisation of the Ringers' Hymn played on the organ at his funeral. Something I hope to have the honour of doing.

Ian Avery.

COPY for "Devon Calls" is always welcome and we rely on you to submit letters, and articles.  
The deadline for the next edition is 28<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

We would be very interested in including further obituaries for the gentlemen mentioned above. This would be appreciated and feature in the next edition. Obituaries, articles and letters should be sent to the Editor: Colin ADAMS - [devoncalls@devonbells.co.uk](mailto:devoncalls@devonbells.co.uk)

## Competition Results

### DEVON 8-BELL RESULTS

1 <sup>st</sup>	Kingsteignton	19 1/2
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Exeter Cathedral	37 1/4
3 <sup>rd</sup>	High Bickington	70
4 <sup>th</sup>	Chudleigh	115
5 <sup>th</sup>	Chagford	188 3/4

Despite the weather not being its best, those of us who were at East Budleigh on 16<sup>th</sup> September had an enjoyable afternoon. Some decided to get there early and partake in the hospitality of the local hostelry with lunch.

The ringing started at 2.30pm and due to there being only five teams in attendance we got through all of them before the service which was taken by Fr. Steven Martin from Colyton which saw most of us there. Following the service, the team of ringers from East Budleigh provided us all with a lovely tea. Thank you to all of them.

I would like to see next years 8-bell competition with a few more teams entering, so please, you have 12 month to get yourselves organised and practicing, I know there is more towers out there who could possibly enter. Teams of all standard are welcome just come and support to keep this event going. Well Done Everyone

Julia - South Competition Secretary.

### KENN DEANERY FESTIVAL 2023

Held at St. Gregory's Church, Dawlish  
on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> September.

Following a break in 2020 owing to the Covid epidemic, the Kenn Deanery Call Change Competition was revived, with a change to its format as a Ringing Festival, at Doddyscombsleigh in 2022.

It was agreed at the AGM this year that owing to the success of last year, the 2023 Festival would follow a similar format of being divided into two sections. To encourage novice and intermediate

ringers, a non-competitive section of teams ringing off the stay and for more experienced teams to ring the full 60 on thirds with a rise and lower, which would be judged.

There were some changes to the planned running order as unfortunately owing to Covid, Exminster had to withdraw from the second section and for the same reason Kenton elected to change to the first section. Teignmouth were forced to withdraw by a commitment to ring for the Ordination of Lay Clergy at St Michael's, Teignmouth.

In the first section there were 8 mixed teams from Ide, Exminster, Kenton, Kenn and Dunsford who rang the "Queens Peal" and two Ladies' teams who elected to ring "Saucy 5" in an allocated time of at least 5 minutes. 4 teams took part in the Judged section. The results were:

*First Certificate and Deanery Shield*  
Dunsford 14

*Second Certificate and Cobley Cup*  
Alphington 37

*Third Certificate and Bennett Shield*  
Ide 48

*Fourth Certificate and Reg Staddon Shield*  
Dunsford 75

After the results were declared thanks were expressed to John Coulthirst who judged the competition, but also loosely marked the festival entries and offered feedback. Thanks were also given to Cathy Chappell and the Dawlish Band for their hospitality and provision of a delicious selection of cakes, Teas and Coffee. The pre-organisation by John Staddon who is currently on a Cruise, is much appreciated, also for giving me the chance to experience management on the day.

Hopefully, next year will be even more successful in attracting entries and allow all the Kenn Deanery certificates and Trophies to be presented.

Charles Conibear.

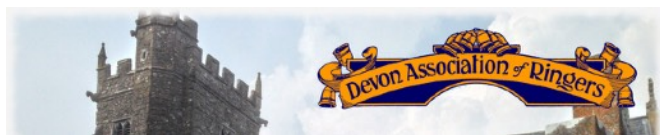


## **Congratulations to Shaugh Prior on winning the Major Final**



Congratulations to Shaugh Prior on winning the Devon Association Major Final in June - Results posted in previous issue. Photos from top left, clockwise -1) The Ross Shield with Shaugh Prior tower in the background. 2) Shaugh Prior ringers, winners of the 2023 Devon Association Final. Back row L to R: David Crocker, Roger Trout, Ryan Trout (Tower Captain), Nick Trout, Front row L to R Angela Trout. Natasha Trout. 3) The Reverend Nick Shutt with members of the congregation and the Shaugh Prior team.





## **Devon Association of Ringers** **Affiliation Fee**

The Annual affiliation fee for 2023 -2024 is £20.

**If paying by cheque**, your cheque and details should be sent to me: Mr Nigel Bateman, 2 Anning Crescent, Alphington, Exeter, EX2 8NG Cheques should be payable to; DEVON ASSOCIATION OF RINGERS.

Please confirm **only** your tower name. **Only provide address details if your contact details to post the Devon Calls magazine have changed since last year.**

**You can also pay by “bacs”** to the DAR NatWest Bank account using these details:

Account Name - **Devon Association of Ringers**

Sort Code - **53-50-28**

Account Number - **09202153**

If you use “bacs”, please put your tower name on the payment sent, so I can check on the monthly bank statements. Please also send me an email at [hon-treasurer@devonbells.co.uk](mailto:hon-treasurer@devonbells.co.uk) confirming your tower once you have paid. Only include your address for Devon Calls if it has changed since last year.

Please also note, to conform to the DAR Rules, include a list of your Tower Ringers with your affiliation fee. This is required in Rule 2.1 of the DAR Rules. This is also to maintain our membership of the Central Council for Church Bell Ringers. The Committee realises and accepts that many ringers ring in more than one tower. Do please however, list all who are ringers in your tower. It would also be useful to know the number of learners you have, but please do not identify them by name. This would help to indicate future trends for ringing throughout Devon.

If you wish to receive your own personal copy of Devon Calls please send a cheque for £15 with your details to me at the above address.

Best wishes, *Nigel* - Treasurer 2023.

## **Devon Association Lottery**

The DAR Lottery is going well but there is always room for some more members. So please feel free to set up a Standing Order, or send me a cheque for as many entries as you'd like, the cost is only £1.00 per month or £12.00 for the year for one entry. You may have as many entries as you wish.

Standing Order Bank Details:- Sort Code  
30-98-97 A/c No. 59389963

Cheques can be sent to me, made payable to Devon Association of Ringers.

However you pay please make sure that I have your Name & contact details so that I can send you any winnings.

Just a reminder to all who paid by cheque last year, if you'd like to stay in the lottery your payment is now due.

Please continue to join and encourage others as we need to raise as much as we can for the Devon Bell Restoration Fund.

Please note I have a NEW ADDRESS,

Julia Jarvis,  
The Roost,  
Slades Linhay,  
Broadhempston,  
TQ9 6BY

[Julia.kevin799@btinternet.com](mailto:Julia.kevin799@btinternet.com)

07854474669

DAR Fundraiser



## Musbury St Michael's Church Bell Restoration Fund



Musbury Ringers - L to R Sue Irving, Dee Hearne, Cherry Sargent, Lindsay Smitham, Michael Ellis (TC) Stuart Heal.

It's a whopper of an amount to raise £51,000! but the dedicated team of Musbury ringers wouldn't be put off. So we started the fund off in August 2023 by holding an "Open" garden at Sunnyside, Axminster Rd in the village with cream teas and cakes. As an extra to make it more special we invited 6 ringing teams from, Axminster, Colyton, Combe Raleigh, Honiton, Uplyme and Exminster to ring at St Michael's. It was so lovely to hear the bells throughout the day which attracted so many visitors. The day itself raised an amazing £1,641.30. To date we have now reached £2,539.30. The next stage is to think of another fundraising event so, watch this space.

The outline specification for the restoration of the bells is to: Remove the remains of the cast-in crown staples from all the bells and drill out the centre holes; repair a crack in the 3<sup>rd</sup> bell by using specialist welding techniques; tune all six bells and turn them to present unworn surfaces to the blows of the clappers; re-hang the bells with new fittings, at the same time putting all the hanging radii, wheel diameters and clapper throws into perfect alignment; tighten all fixings to the bell frame, clean the frame and paint all the

iron work and in addition clean the whole of the bell chamber.

An article taken from Musbury Heritage and published in the parish magazine states that, "The earliest mention of the bells was in 1553 when there were 3 bells in the tower. These 3 bells were melted down in 1785 and from them a peal of five bells was cast by Thomas Bilbie III of Cullompton. Later in 1896 a sixth bell, the treble, was added. This was a gift from Major F.E. Lock of Mountfield House, in memory of his sister. At the same time the bells were re-hung on a massive oak frame by Harry Stokes of Woodbury. Before this the bells had been considered unsafe to ring and a fund-raising collection was required to finance the repair work."

*Donations to the appeal can be made by contacting Lindsay either on 07923500470 or by email [Lindsaysmitham77@gmail.com](mailto:Lindsaysmitham77@gmail.com) Lindsay Smitham.(Fundraising Co-ordinator).*

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Devon Bellringers' Carol Service



**Saturday  
9th December 2023  
4.00 p.m.**



**ST. MARYCHURCH, TORQUAY**

by kind permission of Father Nick Debney

Bells available from 3pm and after the service – ALL WELCOME  
Mince pies and mulled wine available after the service



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