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President - Keith Bavin

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Devon Calls

MID 2022

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COPY for "Devon Calls" is always welcome and we rely on you to submit articles

Deadline for next edition - 18th September 2022

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

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Devon's Bells Ring Out

Devon's bells rang out to mark H.M. the Queen's Accession to the throne and for the Platinum Jubilee celebrations. Representatives from the following towers got in touch to say they had rung on Sunday 6th February 2022 to mark Her Majesty the Queen's Accession to the throne: Bishopsteignton, Bovey Tracey, Marwood and Merton.

John, our PR Officer, has recorded the following towers as having rung over the Platinum Jubilee weekend.

CELEBRATORY BELL RINGING

Beacon Ringing

Thursday 2nd June

Devon Churches

Towers Rung

St Peter's Ugborough

All Saints Merton

St Mary's Charleton

St Nicholes & St Cyriac South Pool

St Michael de Rupe Brentor

St Swithuns Pyworthy

St George Monkleigh

St Michael & All Angels Torrington

St Gabriel Stoke Gabriel

St Mary Appledore

St Michael & All Angels Alphonston

St Michael the Archangel Chagford

Holy Trinity Drewsteignton

Simon Linford

Simon Linford

President

The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers

BELL RINGERS

CELEBRATORY BELL RINGING

Sunday Service Ringing

June 5th 2022

Towers Rung

St Andrew's Kenn

St Martin of Tours Exminster

St Ida Ide

St Nicholas & St Cyriac South Pool

St Calixtus West Down

St Mary Magdalene Mortheoe

All Saints High Bray

St Gabriel Stoke Gabriel

Holy Trinity Drewsteignton

St Michael the Archangel Chagford

St Mary's Kingskerswell

rang "5056 Jubilee Surprise Major"

St Andrew Chardstock

St Micheal & All Angels Alphington

Simon Linford

Simon Linford

President

The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers

BELL RINGERS

Additionally Susan Bray kindly got in touch to say that rounds and call-changes, which included The Queen's peal, were rung on the six bells at Chardstock on Sunday 5th June from 9.15a.m. – 10.00a.m. The ringers were: Susan Bray, Derrick Goff (Tower Captain), Lucy Herrod, Jason Hill, Stephen Goff, Kevin Newberry and Rikki Johnston.



The Widecombe ringers also rang the full Queen's peal on June 3rd, pictured L-R are Patrick Garvey, Ian Bowman, Michael Pascoe (Tower Captain), Ronnie Constant, Jenny Pascoe, Sam Hext, Simon Tame, Richard Mann, Frank Martin, Peter Blood and John Dracup

Congratulations to all those who took part. Each and everyone should feel proud of the fact that they rung marking the occasion when the Queen became the longest-lived and longest-reigning British monarch and the second longest reigning sovereign monarch in world history.

Colin Adams

CELEBRATORY BELL RINGING

Friday 3rd June

The St Paul's Service

Ringling in Devon

Towers Rung

St Michael & All Angels Aliphington

St Andrew's Ashburton

St Mary Kingskerswell

St Michael & All Angels Cornwood

All Saints Winkleigh

St John the Baptist Hatherleigh

St Calixtus West Down

St Peter Meavy

St Mary Dunsford

St Michael the Archangel Chagford

Holy Trinity Drewsteignton

St Mary the Virgin Throwleigh

All Saints Merton

St Peter Zeal Monachorum

St Edward Egguckland

St Mary Totnes

St Margaret Northam

St Martin of Tours Exminster

Simon Linford

Simon Linford

President

The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers

BELL RINGERS

Editorial

Welcome to this souvenir edition of Devon Calls.

From Hatherleigh in the West to Chardstock in the East and from West Down in the North to South Pool in the South with many more towers in between; Devon's bells rang out in celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Weekend which took place in early June. This issue contains a list of all those towers that took part in what was a unique and special occasion. We congratulate them all.

Probably the youngest ringer taking part was 12 year old Jess Lewis from Hatherleigh. Congratulations Jess. What a wonderful way in which to mark your introduction to bell ringing. We hope you will have many more opportunities to ring for prominent events both national and local and have a successful and enjoyable ringing career.

Included in this edition is an account by Isabella Whitworth of a project which has been launched to overhaul and restore Hatherleigh's ring of 8 bells. In her account she looks back to the time when in 1553 the tower contained just three bells. Included is an old photo showing the bells down in 1929 prior to being transported to the Whitechapel Foundry. Does anyone know the name of the young lad in the photo (3rd R) he looks so pleased with himself?

£75,000 is needed to enable the peal at Hatherleigh to sound-out for at least another century. We wish the ringers good luck in achieving their ambitious objective.

Projects completed in this Platinum Jubilee year include the

restoration of Milton Abbot's and Cadbury's peals of six. Work is underway to overhaul the six bells at East Anstey where our President Mr. Keith Bavin is the Tower Captain. Bigbury's bells have been removed from the tower and are currently receiving attention by Nicholson's Engineering Ltd.

Talking of Bigbury we wish Harry Barden's who is Bigbury's long standing Tower Captain a belated Happy Birthday. Harry celebrated his 92nd birthday in July.

An attempt is being made to generate sufficient interest to either restore or replace the six bells at Ashton. Devon's ringers have shown a strong commitment towards keeping the bells going in this lovely county of ours. To have Ashton added to the list of success stories would be a tremendous achievement.

We welcome a very interesting account by Mr. Simon Linford, President of The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers, on his experience at the recently held six-bell final. We hope Simon will feel inclined to pay us a visit again soon.

Putting this edition together has been quite a challenge. We received more copy than we were able to accommodate. We apologise to those people who made the effort to submit articles and now find they haven't appeared. Rest assured these will be held over and will feature in the Late 2022 Edition.

Thank you to all those who have contributed to the publication of this edition.

Colin Adams

Okehampton Deanery Festival 2022

After a long wait the Okehampton Deanery Ringing Association were able to hold their first post pandemic get together with their annual 6 bell festival, this year held at Drewsteignton. Held on Saturday 4th June of the Jubilee weekend, the festival was incorporated into the village's Jubilee celebrations. A rare occasion in itself as the festival normally clashes with the Teignton Fayre and hasn't been at Drewsteignton for many years.

Understandably many teams were unable to attend due to clashing with their own Jubilee celebrations, but nevertheless the teams who were available came together to reignite old friendly rivalries that had been missed in the previous two years.

The festival includes both novice (rounds) and intermediate (½ peal top ringing) sections to encourage the many new recruits that have been taught throughout the Deanery. With this being the case Jonathan Bint was able to give his many new recruits from Chagford and Drewsteignton their first taste of competitions.

As mentioned, the festival was part of the weekend celebrations happening in Drewsteignton. One part of this was the church setting up a cafe in the church. This was a welcome to the ringers in need of refreshments throughout the afternoon, and it was good to hear over £350 was raised over the weekend.

The judges for the afternoon were Brian Drake and Mervyn Langdon.

Main Section

1. Honeychurch 31 1/2
2. Sampford Courtenay A 41
3. Chagford 42 1/2
4. Sampford Courtenay B 50 1/2
5. Drewsteignton 67



The Honeychurch winning lineup L-R as they rung, Ben Squire, Amy Squire, Karen Squire, David Weeks, Tom Squire & Ray Squire

Intermediate – 1/2 Peal of Sixty on Thirds

1. Chagford 20
2. Drewsteignton 20 1/2
3. Sampford Courtenay 24 1/2

Novice – Rounds

1. Chagford 16
2. Drewsteignton 26

Hopefully next year more teams will come together and compete as we look to get the ringing world back on its feet. Next for the Deanery is the starting of quarterly meets to help encourage those towers who have struggled post pandemic.

Stuart Bennie

Kenn Deanery AGM

At the Annual General Meeting of the Kenn Deanery ringers held on 5th May, four Devon Association's Long Service Certificates were presented to (pictured l-r) Mike Adams, John Staddon, Lewis Withecombe and Marcus Tape.

Long Service Certificates waiting to be presented are for Colin Adams, Simon Tucker, Maurice Sharland and Alan Greenslade.



The Meeting decided to encourage more Teams to take part in the Annual Festival being held in September and that it should be held in two parts. [1] Ringing for enjoyment with no judging or competition and [2] Ringing the full 60 on thirds with a rise and lower in a judged competition for the Kenn Deanery Shields and Cups

John Staddon

Long Service Certificates awarded by the President at the DAR Committee Meeting on June 16th



L-R Ian Avery, Mike Jeffrey, Keith Bavin, Julia Endacott, John Collins

John Staddon

Retirement from Bellringing

As some of you may know I have stepped down as Tower Captain and as a bellringer at Moretonhampstead, my hands are getting a bit arthritic now and can't handle the rope.

I started to ring in 1967 under the captain Jim Gill, I was one of three, and as we progressed we were allowed to sit in and watch on Sunday mornings. The ringing then was from the ground floor of Moreton church, so the bells were not easy to handle. We were told the reason for this was because the floor of the ringing chamber was unsafe, but we found out later it was actually because the ringers were getting older and could not climb the stairs! There were about 14 ringers here then so the same people did not have to ring every Sunday.

About 5 years later the ringers were younger and could climb the stairs, so, the ringing chamber was re-opened. This meant the ropes were much easier to handle and any bad language from the captain was not heard by the public, not that there was any - but just in case.

In 1976 the then Captain was getting problems with his health so decided to step down but would still ring if we were desperate. He asked if I would take on the role to which I agreed. It included the captaincy of North Bovey also. We were down to about eight ringers then but recruitment was not easy. At one time we had nine young girls, including my two daughters, learning but, of course, school exams had to take

priority and most never came back to it, or the family moved away.

We rang for several competitions; the Deanery was a lot bigger then, but the one that stays in my mind most is the novice competition we won at Lustleigh with three learners and three ringers, we had 28 faults.

I chaired the South Devon Six committee for ten years (it should have been seven) and the Moreton Deanery committee for over twenty years, I must say that on both these committees I had good backup officers.

Moretonhampstead has a very good peal of bells, I may be biased, but I think one of the best-sounding peals in the county. It is good to hear them being rung and most people in the town feel the same. Julie is the new Captain, and I hope she will get some support with new ringers. I wish her and ringers everywhere all the best.

Mike Jeffery

Mike is pictured above receiving his long service award.

South Brent Tower Open Day

On Saturday 30th April the ringers of St Petroc's Church South Brent held a Tower Open Day. We are fortunate in currently having around a dozen regular ringers, but it's never too soon to do a bit of future proofing and to try and attract some younger ringers while current numbers are buoyant.

The day proved extremely successful and we had a constant stream of visitors from the moment we opened at 10am until half an hour after our planned finishing time of 4pm! Thanks to the hard work and ingenuity of our ringers we had a variety of displays and activities to interest our visitors. Victoria produced an excellent power point presentation which gave a concise and informative history of bells and bellringing. There was a series of display boards containing ringing information on them. We also had Handbells, including a set of toy ones for the very young prospective ringers!

In the church we had a display bell and also the Devon Association's portable Saxilby training bell, in addition to our own Higby training Dumbell in the tower. Both were in continuous use throughout the day and we had visitors aged from 8 to 88 having a go! We must give a big thank you to Ian Avery and James Grant for the provision of the Association's training bell, their efforts were much appreciated! And of course, the day would not have been complete without a plentiful supply of tea and refreshments ably supplied by our Brent ringers.

We were delighted to welcome ringers from several towers across South Devon who rang with us to provide a demonstration of tower bell ringing to the many visitors present. A TV screen placed at the back of the church provided live pictures of our bells being rung.

One of the highlights of the day was our Vicar, the Reverend Gina Radford, ringing her first rounds and call-changes on tower bells for the best part of 50 years! We would like to thank all those who came to ring or help with the day, and of course our own ringers who put in so much time and effort. We also acknowledge the support given by Alban Forster who helped us throughout the day. Alban lives in Hertfordshire, but he is a frequent visitor to Devon as he enjoys the art of call-change ringing, although he is more often to be found ringing the bells at Westminster Abbey no less!

The Higby Dumbell was installed following the extensive works undertaken to reduce the amount of water ingress to the tower which was the subject of a substantial Heritage Lottery fund Grant. We are now looking to extend the use of the tower and facilities to provide more training opportunities for ringers across the South Hams district. We have a simulator for use with the Dumbell or the six bells hung in the tower, so we can hold plenty of training sessions without disturbing our neighbours!

Our bells are ideally suited to training purposes, although the six bells cast by Thomas Bilbie II date from 1759. They were most recently rehung in 1937 by John Taylor & Co in a cast iron frame and all new fixtures and fittings, a proper job which was worth all of the £329 it cost in 1937. 85 years later the 'go' of the bells is testament to quality of the job undertaken at that time, a salutary lesson for any parish considering a rehang of their

bells today.

If anyone is interested in ringing at South Brent, either to visit or to enquire about training opportunities, then please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Graham Sharland

Paignton Outing - Early Spring Bank Holiday Monday

The Paignton ringers were offered a short day trip for the early Spring Bank Holiday Monday. Their outings are normally held on that day, and also on the August Bank Holiday Monday.

Despite COVID still being present in our communities, the ringers jumped at the idea of an outing and it was encouraging that every active ringer turned up. In addition there were a few guests, ringers and non-ringers. Who can miss out on a day's activity with everything so well planned?

The day started at Exminster and we were met by Colin Adams who left us to it. A few rises on the eight got us all warmed up. The ringers on the 5th bell may have had a few glances, however, the teams of ringers did well. Although the rope guides had been removed this was not noticeable. From Exminster we went to Alphington and were met by John Staddon. Hot drinks and toilet facilities were available with cakes being supplied by some of our thoughtful ringers and this delayed our ringing. The bells went well having been overhauled by Taylors in 2018.

We then travelled out to Broadclyst where lunch was taken in the pub, The New Inn, Whimble Road. Yes, some ringers did have dessert after a very satisfying cooked lunch. Next on the itinerary were Broadclyst's bells, a 20 cwt peal of eight. They

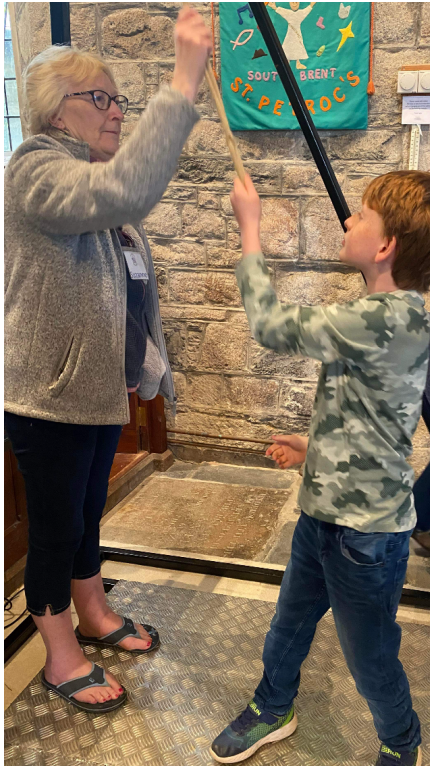
are a complete set of Taylors bells and were cast in 1937. To listen to the sound of the bells is a dream, as is ringing them. With such a wonderful set of bells there was no post lunch lag and, despite full stomachs, the ringers were fully attentive and rang exceptionally well justifying the quality of the bells.

The final tower of the day was at St Peter's, Tiverton. All the ringers managed to park reasonably near to the church. St Peter's surely must be the best way to end a tour keeping the ringers on their toes, and well motivated. What a challenge this complete set of 8 bells are having been cast by Taylors in 1923 with a tenor weighing 25 cwt.

Some readers may have noticed that in the afternoon the bell weights increased. This ensured that all ringers were able to adequately pace themselves! The ringers excelled themselves throughout the day and for some the day was rounded off with a pre-planned visit to the curry house in Tiverton.

Thanks to John Kelly for organising the trip, to those who arranged the refreshments and, of course, the ringers and friends who made this outing possible and so enjoyable. I now look forward to the August Bank Holiday Monday outing.

Michael Webster



The Association training bell being put to good use

Fundraising at Hatherleigh

Hatherleigh Bellringers have recently embarked on a major fundraising appeal to restore their eight bells. The architectural features of the church tower and spire (1300s -1400s) coincided with economic prosperity from wool in the Middle Ages but there is no known written record of actual bells until 1553, when the Inventory, or Survey of Church Goods, lists three. It is possible these were the work of the Exeter Foundry as Exeter bells are still found in neighbouring churches.

Little more is known until 1813, when Thomas Bilbie III of Cullompton recast any existing bells to make a ring of six. Two trebles were added by Taylor's of Loughborough in 1883 when a new frame was installed. This was made either by Stokes, or Hooper, of Woodbury. No signature has as yet been found on the frame.

The Bell News and Ringers Record published an article, on the dedication of bells and the opening peal on October 9th, 1883 when a party of Devonshire Guild members assembled to ring at Hatherleigh Church. The writer remarks that Bilbie 'seems to have had a mania for turning out maiden peals, utterly regardless of tune. This peal is no exception for the musicians of the party declared that there was very little difference between the 4th and the 5th, and the same might have been said of the 7th and tenor.'

Unless tone deaf, this sad state of affairs must have been all too obvious to sisters Elizabeth and Heroine Churchward, who lived in a house overlooking the churchyard. In 1929 they funded the recasting of all eight bells, as well as a chiming clock, in memory of their late brother, George Gould Churchward. The eight bells were recast by Mears and Stainbank of Whitechapel Foundry. The bells are tuned to F major, with a tenor weight of 13 cwt – 2 qr – 6lb.

For the last 100 years ringers and townspeople of Hatherleigh have enjoyed the sound of greatly improved bells, widely-known for good tuning and beautiful tone. However, they have had a reputation for being difficult to ring except, as the Exeter and



Photo: Isabella Whitworth

Plymouth Gazette reported at the 1929 rehang, 'to their regular ringers who had become accustomed to their 'go' through habitual usage'. Nowadays their 'go' is a challenge even to regular ringers. The frame was steel-braced in 1929 and was probably already causing problems. Today it flexes, making ringing unpredictable, so bolts must be tightened regularly; ropes are long, and after the addition of the church clock they do not all hang vertical.

Bellhangers were consulted in 2019 and reports concluded that the frame could not be repaired. A new steel one is required, along with general restoration of the bells. The need for this work coincides with the church's separate fundraising campaign for repairs and modernisation. To accommodate some of the church's alterations, the ringing floor will be raised one level, so reducing the length of the ropes.

The project must raise a total of £75,000 and recently secured the cash deposit to book the services of bellhanger Matthew Higby. Bells are likely to come down at the end of 2022, or early 2023.

Donations to the fund will be very welcome. There is a GoFundMe page listed as Hatherleigh Bellringers Restoration Project. Any questions can be emailed to Isabella Whitworth (Publicity Officer) on imswhit@gmail.com. You can follow the project on Instagram @eightbells8 and the Hatherleigh Bellringers' Facebook page.

Many thanks for help with information for this article supplied by Ian Smith (Trustee, Devon Bells Restoration Fund), Monica Jones (Hatherleigh History Society), Roger Stokes (great-grandson of Harry Stokes I) and Pete Embling (former Hatherleigh bellringer).



Bells down for Whitechapel recasting, 1929. L-R S. Palmer, Churchwarden; Reverend J.C. Rossiter, Vicar; F.W. Down, Churchwarden; unnamed representative from Whitechapel Bell Foundry; Charles Short, Caretaker and stonemason; Emanuel Palmer, Captain of Bells. The boy is believed to be the son of the representative from Whitechapel (photo: Hatherleigh History Society)



Left to right, back row: Ian Grantham, Richard Harrison, Alex Harrison, Sadie Harrison, Rebecca Harrison (Ringing Captain), Ryan Milton, Garry Bater, Mark Wonnacott (Captain of Bells). Front row: Isabella Whitworth, Jess Lewis, Zoe Wonnacott (photo: Donna Lewis)

Isabella Whitworth

Ringling for The Ukrainian Refugee Appeal

The sun shone, it was a beautiful spring-like day as ringers gathered at The Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul Uplyme on Saturday 30th April. The aim was to raise funds for The Ukrainian Refugee Appeal. This 'open' day of ringing, consisting of both method and call-changes, had been organised by members of the church community assisted by Tower Captain Andy Jarvis.

Bunting in the now familiar colours of blue and yellow fluttered from the railings of the church path, the Ukrainian flag flew from the top of the tower. With an abundance of bluebells and primroses on display in the woods and hedgerows leading to the village, it appeared as though Mother Nature was communicating her own message of support for the people of Ukraine.



Uplyme Church Photo: Michael Day

Ringers representing: Axminster, Branscombe, Chardstock, Combe Raleigh, Exminster, Kenton, Kingsteignton, Lyme Regis, Musbury and Shute took part. Ringing took place between 10.00am and 4.00pm. Overall, the quality of striking achieved on Uplyme's delightful ring of six was very good. There was a mixture of ages and sexes taking part and several new faces present. By far the youngest ringer was

11 year old Esme Kerslake from Exminster who acquitted herself very well. Esme is the daughter of James and Kathryn who are also ringers.

No one could fail to have been impressed by the warm hospitality extended to each and everyone. Tower Captain, Andy Jarvis worked hard to ensure that everyone had at least one peal and that no one was overlooked. The ladies provided an excellent array of refreshments which were served in the church throughout the day. The atmosphere created was rather like that of a ringing competition but without the friendly competitive rivalry. Ringers mingled easily with each other, exchanging views, telling stories, joking and laughing; reminiscent of gatherings that used to take place at ringing events prior to the pandemic and subsequent

series of lockdowns.

It was an honour to have been invited to take part. Thanks go to Andy Jarvis for the invitation and for overseeing the ringing throughout the day, and also to the people of Uplyme for organising such a successful day which in the end raised £823.00 for The Ukrainian Refugee Appeal.

Colin Adams

Ringkly Ringers - Meet 2nd Wednesday of Each Month Do Join Us

The Ringkly Ringers, has been in operation since at least the 1990s. It is a group of ringers of varying ability from throughout Devon who meet on the second Wednesday of the month and who do not mind travelling to other towers within Devon. We now ring at two towers in the morning, the first normally supplies coffee and biscuits and, after ringing at both towers, we finish by having an organised lunch, usually in a local pub although we have been to garden centres and various restaurants.

The meetings are from February through to December and there is a pre-arranged calendar of towers to ring at. In December after ringing we then enjoy a Christmas Meal. Dates may vary, as the February date may be later and the December meeting may be earlier and it is advisable to check beforehand for any last minute changes if you are not on the email list.

In May this year we visited Holcombe Burnell and Tedburn St Mary and ate in the King's Arms at Tedburn St Mary. We

numbered 20 for the meal although not all of the 20 rang as we welcome partners and guests who simply wish to have a day out.

In June we are planning to ring at Coffinswell, where it is anticipated that coffee will be available, and then at the newly augmented peal of 8 at Kingskerswell. Many ringers will not have rung at Coffinswell and probably even more have not rung at the new set of 8 at Kingskerswell. For July we will be ringing at Lewtrenchard and Bridestowe.

If you require more information please contact the main organiser, John Staddon, Tower Captain at Alphington, who is also the Publicity Officer of the Devon Association of Ringers. To make contact go to: <https://www.devonbells.co.uk/index.php/make-contact-2/> and look for Publicity Officer. If you know the undersigned, I, too, will be pleased to answer any questions.

Michael Webster

Open Day at St. Winifred's, Branscombe

Tower Captain John Bass and the ringers at Branscombe are organising an 'Open Day' on Saturday 3rd September 2022 to run between 10.00am and 4.00pm. The aim is to provide an opportunity for anyone in the East Devon area who might be interested in bell ringing, or learning how to ring, to come and see what's involved and to have a go.

John would like any ringer who is interested in recruitment and teaching people to ring to come along. If enough ringers come to support the day it will provide an opportunity for ringing demonstrations to take place.

Light refreshments will be available throughout the day.

With support from the wider ringing community this could be a very good opportunity for boosting the number of ringers in this corner of Devon. There was a very good atmosphere surrounding the event at Uplyme on Saturday 30th April. Let's make an effort and support John and his team and see if we can create a similar atmosphere on Saturday 3rd September at Branscombe.

Colin Adams

Hatherleigh Young ringer



Congratulations to young Hatherleigh ringer Jess Lewis. Jess has made such good progress in learning how to ring and achieved her goal by taking part in ringing for The Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

The photo shows 12 year old Jess being presented with her certificate and mug by Tower Captain Mark Wonnacott.

Isabella Whitworth

Poem

THERE SOMEWHERE

Although there must be something
Living in the hole,
You only see the molehill,
You never see the mole.

Although about the meadow
The little lanterns show,
You never see the glow-worm,
You only see the glow;

And Sunday after Sunday,
Our village vicar tells,
You never see the ringers,
You only hear the bells!

Photo taken in the ringing chamber of Gargrave, North Yorkshire

Dave Trout

DAR Lottery

In case you are not all aware, the Devon Association have started a Lottery instead of holding the annual draw. The first lottery number was drawn at the end of April which was won by Juliet Collis of Ugborough. May was won by John Andrew from Tawstock.

To all members,

I do not know if you are all aware but the association will not be doing the Annual Draw as it was, due to this we will not have the funds to send to the Devon Bell Restoration Fund.

In the light of this I have come with the idea of holding a lottery each month, we will need at least 300 members to be able to hand over an equivalent sum of the amount we have sent in the past.

This can only be organised if everybody is prepared to set up a Standing Order to the Association of £1.00 per month, ideally paid yearly (£12), this is for one number so of course you can have as many numbers as you are prepared to buy.

We will hold a monthly prize draw of £25 for 11 months of the year and in December we will have 3 prizes of £200, £75 & £50. This can be reviewed if we get a lot more members joining.

Please set up your Standing Order to :
Devon Association
Sort code.....30 98 97
A/c No.....59389963
with your name as reference.

It would help me if Standing Orders were all set up for the 1st of the month and will start as soon as possible.

We would like all tower captains to try & encourage all their ringers to join and of course non-ringers as well. Please try and get as many as possible to sign up to make this viable.

Thank you.
Julia Jarvis
DAR Fund Raiser

It is not too late to join and you can have as many numbers as you like. All you need to do is set up a Standing Order and let me have your name and contact details. Further details are below.

Julia Jarvis

I would like to sign for the Devon Association of Ringers monthly lottery.

I agree to start a Standing Order to the Association to be effective from the 1st of the month .

Print
Name.....

Tel.
No.....

or/and

Email.....
...

Signed.....
....

Please send these details to:-

Julia Jarvis
18 Manor Gardens,
Abbotskerswell,
Newton Abbot.
TQ12 5RB

julia.kevin799@btinternet.com

I can be contacted on 07854474669 if anyone wishes to discuss this with me.

The 2022 Devon Association Major Final

On Saturday 11th June at Molland, Combeinteignhead were victorious in the Devon Association's 6 Bell Major Final, the signature event in the call change ringing calendar. They did the best job of mastering a tricky ring of bells to carry away the coveted Ross Shield, which they also won the last time this contest was held in 2019. The team from Shaugh Prior, whilst placed third in the overall standings, collected the cup for the 'Top Ringing' of the day.

This was my first experience of a Devon call change competition and a Devon Association Festival. I have become more and more interested in this style of ringing and the singular focus on striking that it generates. My local band in Moseley is humouring me in this pursuit, and we are planning an open competition of our own in June next year.

My day started quite early given it was an afternoon event, with a 5.45 alarm and 6.40 departure, but I was to drop Eleanor at the station for her day trip to Bolton, and I had targeted Severn Bridge parkrun to break my journey. Charlie was going to have a day shopping in Birmingham with a friend, and after explaining that "after lunch we are going to hit Primark", a five hour trip to Devon or even a day in Bolton suddenly looked like particularly good options.

The tower selected for this contest was Molland – quite a small village on the edge of Exmoor that is home to more cows than people. This was a village with few facilities and even less mobile reception. The landlady of the pub wouldn't give up the Wi-Fi password in case it slowed down her card machine. However, in terms of a venue for a six bell striking contest it had the necessary ingredients, namely a church with a ring of six, a pub next door with Exmoor Ale, a wonderful view, and sunshine.

Before the competition got underway, another important part of the Festival awaited – the church service. The small and beautiful church, whose interior has escaped any Victorian or later re-ordering, packed in a large number of ringers, their heads just visible over the tops of the high box pews. The particularly rousing rendition of the hymns was noted by the Reverend Penny Lawson, who said "the church has not heard such singing in years". We had two solid Victorian classics, and a fine ringers' hymn composed specially for the Association in 1949. The service finished with both the politically acceptable verses of the National Anthem - there was not to be any 'frustration of knavish tricks' today despite the great rivalries present.

I am quite used to not being able to write legible notes by the time it comes to the results of major striking competitions, but it is new to be in such a position at the draw. However a combination of strong Devon accents, team names I didn't recognise anyway, and the general hubbub of excitement, left my scribbled attempt at noting the running order looking like a delinquent four year old's spelling test.

Eleven teams were contesting the Major Final after one late drop-out, with seven teams having competed in each of the North and South Devon Qualifiers a month earlier. The Devon



The winning Combeinteignhead squad (l-r): Elaine Grant, Kate Carew, Will Carew, Ian Avery, James Grant, Mark Pring, Hania Lee, Andy Teed, Lucy Campbell, Mike Mears, Eva Lee and David Burgoyne

call change community has been particularly badly hit by the pandemic and is only slowly recovering. Pre pandemic the qualifiers would have attracted 12-14 teams each. This year only seven teams entered each of those competitions, so with five teams going through to the Major Final the qualifiers were just a warm up, especially as the two winners of the ensuing Minor Final (held between losing teams in the qualifiers) would go through as well! Apparently in days of yore there would have been up to 40 teams in the qualifiers, but such a change in participation is not unique to Devon - more an indication of how strong a culture there has been of competition ringing.

For those not familiar with Devon's call change competitions, there are a few differences to what you might expect from competitions in the method world. There is no practising on the bells, either during the 12 months before the contest or on the day itself. Each team rings their peal straight off – you get used to your bell while raising it up, and maybe curse it on the way down. The piece of ringing, which comprises a raise, the fixed set of changes called 60 on 3rds, and the lower at the end is called a 'peal'. The peals are timed because you have to ring for a minimum of 15 minutes irrespective of how many rows you end up ringing, and are disqualified for not doing so. Four judges mark faults which are then simply added together and divided by four, with a 'Scrutineer' responsible for the adding and production of results. All teams get a very fine certificate, which you see adorning the walls of many a Devon tower.

Immediately before the service I got the opportunity to experience the bells myself by being invited into the Judges Peal. This was only my second exposure to proper Devon call change ringing after joining the Kingsteignton outing last year. I acquitted myself pretty well, and got first-hand experience of the third bell which was to become such a factor in the competition proper.

You may remember the German pentathlete at the Tokyo Olympics who was reduced to tears when the horse assigned to

her by the event organisers refused to jump, sending her from potential gold medal position to 31st. The same was felt by most ringers of the third, which resolutely refused to strike or 'speak' at the start of the raise and end of the lower, perhaps giving the judges something of a dilemma of how to mark a missing bell, and its consequential effect on the others.

Ringing later in striking competitions is generally acknowledged to be favourable for those teams with high performance aspirations. It is a combination of the accepted phenomenon of 'serial order effect' which conspires to make judges more lenient as competitions wear on, and the removal of nerves from teams who have been able to enjoy a little light lubrication. Serial order effect is not about judges getting tired though, they do that as well – it is caused by how our minds remember and compare similar things heard in sequence. This was analysed in the context of the 12 bell contest by a series of articles in *The Ringing World* by Liz Orme.

It became clear quite early at Molland that this contest was going to be won and lost in the raise and lower. Thirteen or fourteen minutes of the finest call change ringing could be blown into insignificance by the minute or so of getting the bells up and down, but such is the nature of this form of competition. Bells are raised quickly, and you can see why. The later teams were listening intently to the early peals, noting the issues being faced by three and five in particular – possibly referring to their previous notes on the bells' idiosyncrasies. Ringing later was definitely going to be an advantage.

Another factor that could affect the judges' appreciation of the later teams was the quality and scale of the tea. Ringers' teas can of course be a thing of legend but they are elevated to another level in North Devon. For less than the cost of a gallon of petrol, the locals of Molland, including the vicar, served up a veritable feast including (Cornish?) pasties to die for and a dazzling array of cream-based-puddings. I noted that the scones had the cream hidden under the jam, but then the layer of jam was also hidden underneath a plump strawberry. The vicar kindly wrapped up an extra large pasty in a napkin for my long journey home.

I didn't spend all day listening intently. I spent an enjoyable hour in the London Arms drinking some excellent Exmoor Ale and discussing and comparing the approaches of the best call change teams with my experiences of ringing in the Birmingham 12 bell band. I had only met Scott Adams and Ryan Trout online during lockdown, but have come to know them through my efforts to promote this style of ringing more widely, firstly through the YouTube competition the Central Council organised early in lockdown, and now through the publication of my eBook on call change ringing (callchanges.cccbr.org.uk).

In the middle of the afternoon I did an hour's circular walk around Molland, without meeting another human being, and I

listened to what would turn out to be the winning peal while trying to find my way out of a cow field which was not on the route plan that I had designed while I still had mobile reception, and which my decidedly urban footwear was not designed for.

It was not until gone 7.30 before the ringing was over and everyone assembled in church for the results. There is no long analysis of teams' ringing here – the scores speak for themselves. Three teams stood out – the three that I had noted on my initial draw list as the ones to watch. Combeinteignhead's victory was put down not least to David Burgoyne's quick mastery of the third.

Results

1 st	28 ¼	Peal 8	Combeinteignhead A
2 nd	30	Peal 5	Down St Mary
3 rd	30 ¼	Peal 11	Shaugh Prior
4 th	46	Peal 6	Bow
5 th	51 ¾	Peal 2	Sampford Courtney A
6 th	57	Peal 7	South Brent
7 th	67	Peal 1	Stoke Gabriel
Jt 8 th	77 ½	Peals 3 & 4	Tiverton St Paul's and Sampford Courtney B
10 th	81 ¾	Peal 9	East Anstey
11 th	94 ¼	Peal 10	Combeinteignhead B

Judges: Barry Osbourne, Mark Lovell, Ken Down, Paul Wright

Scrutineer: Margaret Down



In the London Inn: l-r Roger Trout, Scott Adams, Ryan Trout, Simon Linford, Graham Sharland, Tony Jeffrey

It was a shame that the difficulty of the bells meant that this was not the showcase of striking that it usually is and promised to be, with only the top three teams really producing the sort of striking I was expecting to hear. For me it was too much about the raise and the fall, both of which were dominated by the bells' difficulty. This pinnacle of the Devon call change calendar is often won by teams with fault counts in the single figures, which given how many six bell rows you can ring in 15 minutes, is remarkable accuracy.

As the day drew to a close, I was sitting on a grass verge, discussing call change ringing with old and new friends, and I noticed my foot was tapping to the metronomic and measured beat of Shaugh Prior's peal. I never tap my feet to ringing! This style of ringing is growing on me.

Simon Linford

This article first appeared in The Ringing World.

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Moses Luxton (1829-1908) Bell-Hanger and Campanologist of Winkleigh

England was known in the fifteenth century as “*the ringing isle*” because of the constant pealing of bells from numerous parish churches and abbeys. Four hundred years later, the Victorians had a passionate interest in the Middle Ages and they spent enormous sums restoring the old Gothic churches. In the West Country with its rich heritage of medieval churches, many with fine bell-towers, there was a surge in church renovation and bell-hangers were much in demand.

Moses Luxton (1829-1908), was the son of Moses Luxton (1787-1867) a carpenter, and his wife Betsy Saunders (c.1783-1882). He was baptised at All Saints Parish Church Winkleigh on the 17th May 1829. Moses was a well known and much respected bell-hanger and campanologist in Devon in the second half of the nineteenth century. Old West Country newspapers such as the *North Devon Journal*, *The Western Times*, *Exeter Flying Post* and the *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette* carry reports on many of the Devon churches where he restored the bells and I have plundered their columns to tell his story.

But first I will say a little about his family background. His father Moses (1787-1867) the first of that name in the family and his wife Betsy Saunders had fifteen children, all were baptised at All Saints the parish church in Winkleigh. I have the baptism record for eleven of the children. These reveal that Moses senior was a Cartwright in 1813, a wheelwright in 1815, 1819 1819, 1821, 1823 and a carpenter in 1826, 1829, 1832, 1836, and 1838. This elder Moses is listed in White's Directory (1850) as a gun-stock maker and in Billings Directory (1857) he is Moses Luxton & Son machine makers, brass founders and gun-stock makers. Billings also records that he erected a gallery at the west end of Holy Trinity Church Burrington in 1819. The census returns provide us with further details. Moses and family resided in 1841 in Middle Street Winkleigh where he was a machine maker. The family had moved to Cross Street by 1851 and Moses was a machinist and brass founder at Walters in Winkleigh in 1861. Moses Luxton senior, machinist, died at Winkleigh on the 2nd April 1867 in his 81st year.

Moses senior was the son of Peter Luxton (1748-1811), a carpenter and miller in Winkleigh and his wife Mary Lock who had a large family including Henry (1785-1856) a miller at Taw Mills who was Moses elder brother. In earlier generations many in this family had been millers in Winkleigh and Cullompton and Moses's line can be traced back to Scipio Luxton a substantial yeoman farmer in Winkleigh who was a grandson of Hugh Luxton (d.1568) of the Barton Winkleigh.

Moses Luxton (1829-1908), the bell-hanger was the ninth child of Moses Luxton senior. He was a 27 year old carpenter when he married Mary Ann Westaway at Winkleigh in 1855 and the couple had a large family of at least eleven children. In 1861 they lived at Pound House Winkleigh and 31 year old Moses was a machinist and brass founder. In Kelly's Directory (1883) Moses is listed as Messrs Luxton & Sons Winkleigh, agricultural implement makers. His wife Ann died aged 45 and was buried at Winkleigh on the 8th January 1883, leaving Moses a widower who continued to reside at Pound House. The 1891 lists him there as a 61 year old bell-hanger with four children still at home including his eldest daughter Ellen Laura aged 24 who was his house-keeper.

Moses bursts onto the scene in a hilarious escapade worthy of one of Thomas Hardy's Wessex tales. In February 1863 Moses, Thomas Davey, William Turner and William Hunt, the



All Saints, Winkleigh

bell-ringers in Winkleigh, were brought before the county magistrates on a charge of sacrilege preferred by Mr. George Luxton, acting churchwarden, for maliciously damaging the belfry door to the value of 15 shillings on the 22nd of January. In the mid nineteenth century bell-ringers had acquired an unsavoury reputation for “*unseemly conduct and improper language*” in the belfry. The Winkleigh ringers had somehow given offence to Mr. George Luxton, the acting churchwarden and he had refused to let them ring the bells. To prevent them he had taken the keys from the house of the parish clerk where they were usually kept for general use. The ringers got around this by asking the vicar, the Rev. Fisher Turner and Mr. Letheren, the vicar's churchwarden, permission to ring the bells which was given.

The ringers knew that Mr. George Luxton would not give them the key but one of them was able to get over the church door through an aperture and let the others in. Shortly after they commenced ringing George Luxton with a constable entered the ringing chamber and ordered them to quit which they refused to do. George Luxton then made the mistake of ordering the police constable to take them all into custody which he foolishly attempted to do. A scuffle ensued and “*naughty words*” were said. The P.C. attempted to put “*hand-bolts*” on one of the ringers which the others resisted. Mr. Churchwarden Luxton and the P.C. left the ringing chamber to procure assistance. The churchwarden locked the tower door on the outside and he refused to let the ringers out until the P.C. returned with extra force to take them all into custody. Naturally the ringers did not like being “*confined to the tower*” and they burst open the door and escaped. When the magistrates heard the evidence they dismissed the case against the ringers, who were compensated! To celebrate, they composed a song in which occurs this couplet:-

***The ringers went up and made a good Pale (peal).
They got five shillings and a gallon of ale.***

Moses was the unfortunate victim of an assault on 22nd April 1863. With his brother and another young man he was returning home to Winkleigh from North Tawton Fair in the early hours of the morning when seven or more men waylaid and pounced upon them in a very rough manner. Moses was severely ill-treated in the affray. Three of the gang were fined 10 shillings each and expenses at Chulmleigh Petty Sessions and a warrant was issued to apprehend the fourth member of the gang.

Not long after this incident Moses himself got into trouble with

the Law. When P.C. Rutter was called by Mr. Hammett the landlord of the Butchers Arms at Winkleigh at a quarter to eleven on the night of the 27th May 1863 he found Moses had a man named Ware by the throat and was endeavouring to choke him. The landlord asked P.C. Rutter to expel Moses but when he put his hand to him Moses caught him by the wrist, wrenched off the skin, threatened to split his skull and tore his uniform. Moses was upset and angry because the stewards of the benefit club in the house were squandering the fines of the club in "grogs." At the Chulmleigh Petty Sessions he was fined 10 shillings and costs of one pound and eight shillings.

Moses made agricultural machinery and one of his mowing machines was offered for sale in July 1867 at the Winkleigh Fair. At the same Fair in July 1868 he exhibited a horse reaper and a reaper and mower combined. In November that year he was fined 5shillings including costs for obstructing the highway on the 30th October with a machine for digging potatoes. While many farmers in Winkleigh had their own machines Moses had three machines cutting corn in the local fields in the late summer harvest of 1869.

In early April 1868 Moses revealed another side to his character when children with Lucifer matches set fire to a cowshed belonging to a malster in Winkleigh. He was one of the first on the scene and after a lot of effort he managed to get the cow out of the shed before the animal was much burnt. Once free the cow bolted out of the village. Moses hands were badly burnt and his hair and whiskers were singed in the blaze. He could be loyal to friends and when the Rev J. Fisher Turner was buried in his family vault in Winkleigh in December 1871 Moses travelled 30 miles to assist in ringing a muffled peal on the bells. He proved useful in an emergency too. In August 1880 Mrs. Marles of Winkleigh severely lacerated her wrist when a bottle she was corking burst. Moses who was near the house and he succeeded in stopping the blood before the doctor arrived.

By 1870 it was recognized that All Saints, the ancient parish church of Winkleigh, had fallen into a shocking state of disrepair. Many of the windows had lost their tracery, and the upper portion of the tower was in a dangerous state. George Henry Pinckard (1805-1892) who had been born at Court Barton, Winkleigh, generously offered to bear the cost of restoration, providing the parishioners subscribe the sum of £150.

As part of the restoration, the church tower was refurbished in 1873 and a peal of six new bells were installed, presented by Mr. George Pinckard of London. Moses as a bell ringer in the parish and as a machinist was involved in hanging the bells and what he learnt in hanging the Winkleigh bells appears to have kick-started his own illustrious career as a bell-hanger.

The old five bell peal, having been in use for many years, were defective and had been taken down "a long time since." Cast by Mears and Stainbank's bell foundry in Whitechapel the new bells weighed 7 tons and together with the framework required for hanging them were sent to Eggesford station by the London and South Western Railway. Horses and wagons were provided free by five farmers to convey the bells and frame to Winkleigh. The horses and wagons were trimmed with evergreens and were met on their approach to Winkleigh by the local band wearing ribbons preceded by a red flag and followed by a large crowd of men women and children in festive mood. When the wagons entered the churchyard with the bells three cheers were given for Mr. Pinckard and his wife for presenting the bells to the church. The band then marched off to the Kings Arms to spend the evening in singing and music.

Messrs Warskitt from the bell foundry and Moses were then engaged in hanging the new bells which cost £800. The new bells were hung by June 1873 and the four copper gilded vanes made by Moses for the pinnacles of the tower were fixed and finished. The new tower clock fixed by Mr. Funnell of Bath also worked well. It struck the quarters and the tenor bell in which it struck out the hours could be heard at a distance of five miles. It was considered one of the best toned bells in the kingdom. The renovated church and its bells were re-opened on the 22nd October 1873.

The gear that worked the church bells at South Molton had become much worn and dangerous by May 1874. They needed a thorough repair and the Press announced that Messrs Luxton of Winkleigh "*who are celebrated for their skill in hanging bells and have been engaged in church bell hanging in many places in the county*" have been engaged to suspend the South Molton bells upon the latest and most improved principles. The church expected the work to cost £70 but Moses guaranteed that he would do it for £40.

In the spring of 1875 Moses was responsible for re-hanging a fine peal of six bells in the embattled tower of the newly renovated thirteenth century church of St. James in Chawleigh. The tenor bell weighing 16cwt. was in the key of F. Two of the bells had been re-cast, the fifth and tenor by Mears and Stainbank in Whitechapel and were the gift of Lord Portsmouth and were inscribed, "*Isaac, 5th Earl of Portsmouth and Evelin Alicia his wife. Mears and Stainbank, bellfounders, London, 1874.*" Following the parish fair in early May a prize bell-ringing match was held with £7 prize money to prove the quality of the bells. A large arch was formed with evergreens near the Royal Oak Inn and another extraordinary large one close to the Portsmouth Hotel. Shrubs were placed on the pinnacles of the church tower and the Union Jack was hoisted on one pinnacle. Bell-ringers from all over Devon took part in the competition and they praised Moses for his work in re-hanging the bells and after a good ring Barnstable won first prize. The contestants attended a dinner in the Royal Oak Inn. In a speech one of the umpires commented that while they had church bells on the continent they could not ring properly and he thought it would be good if they could be instructed in ringing.

Moses erected the new tower clock in place at Chawleigh in early June 1874. The beautiful clock contained two four foot copper dials with gilt figures, black grounds, and south and west dials. Placed at about 45 feet high it was an eight day clock with an escapement on the dead beat principle.

The Earl of Portsmouth was once again the benefactor. This time at Coldridge "*where the music of the belfry would have been well nigh-effaced from our memories had not the distant towers of neighbouring peals by -those of Winkleigh, Chulmleigh, Lapford and others-been occasionally wafted to Coldridge on the breeze.*" Two of the old bells which had compound fractures, the 4th and 5th bells, were taken down and re-cast by Mears and Stainbank into new bells of fine and elegant mould, of splendid tune and bearing the names of the donor and his wife inscribed in enduring gun metal on their circumference. They were hung in their place in February 1876 by the "*experienced bell engineer, Mr. Moses Luxton who also re-hung the other four bells by a method far superior to that which prevailed formerly.*" Moses and his fellow bell-ringers at Winkleigh set the Coldridge bells in motion "*in masterly style*" in March 1877 to celebrate the re-hanging of the bells a year earlier.

Once again the Earl of Portsmouth was a large subscriber to the re-hanging of the bells at Witheridge in 1876. For the previous two years the beautiful bells were almost silent, being

Moses Luxton - continued from page 12

out of repair. Moses carried out the re-hanging which occupied most of May and was finished by the last day. The bells were re-hung on the newest principles. The gudgeons were set in cast iron saddles which also carried the stock. Worked in gun metal the gudgeons were of the best charcoal iron and warranted not to break. The large tenor bell received a combined cast iron and wood stock, the cast iron one carrying the two gudgeons which were bound to remain always on the true line. This was considered a great improvement on Taylor's wrought iron bowed gudgeon. The diameter of the tenor bell indicated this was the heaviest peal of six in Devon. This bell measured at the brim at 4 foot 6 inches and was 3 and a half inches thick at the sound bow. Most of the bells were cast at Chepstow. On the treble bell the inscription reads *"Come let us ring for Church and King W.E. 1754"* On the second bell, *"Prosperity to this town and parish"* on the third *"Peace and good neighbourhood"* on the fourth, *"We were all cast at Chepstow by W. Evans 1754"* on the fifth, *"Rev P. Dicken vicar and John Cooke and James Matthews, churchwardens. Cast by Thomas Bilbie, Cullompton, 1800"* on the tenor bell, *"Let my sound move thee to God's glory. The Rev. Thomas Melhuish, vicar. W. E. 1754"*

The church bells at East Buckland were re-hung in February 1878 by Messrs Luxton & Son Winkleigh and several ringers from adjoining parishes were present to celebrate the ringing of the re-hung bells.

An inauguration ceremony took place at Langtree in late June 1878 to celebrate the renovation of the old peal of bells. Two of the old bells, one of which was the third which was cracked, were recast by Messrs Taylor of Loughborough and the re-hanging of the bells was entrusted to Moses Luxton and his son whose contract was considerably lower than the tender of any other bell hangers. The work was carried out efficiently and well at a cost from £80 to £90. The opening peal was rung by the Langtree old ringers who were succeeded by a younger set from the same village and then by sets from Winkleigh, St. Giles, Great Torrington, Parkham, Monkleigh and Alwington.

Moses Luxton & Sons, bell-hangers of Winkleigh, re-hung four of the bells at Alphington Parish Church in early 1879, namely the 3, 4, 6, and 7th. On the Easter Monday fifteen bell-ringers from Holsworthy came to Alphington to re-open the bells. The ringing throughout the day was good and the ringers were very highly pleased with the *"going of the bells."* The same day, Easter Monday 1879 Mr. Joseph Mallett and his team of ten ringers were invited to re-open the splendid peal of eight bells at the beautiful church of St. Mary's Bridgwater in Somerset. The tenor bell weighed 30cwt and was in the key of D and the bells had been lately re-hung by Moses at a cost of £84. Mr. Mallett commented on the very satisfactory manner in which Moses had carried out his contract, the result being that the bells could now be easily rung.

The year 1879 was a busy bell hanging one for Moses Luxton & Sons of Winkleigh. They re-hung the beautiful tenor bell at Frithelstock, said to weigh 28cwt. The bell which had been cast by Christopher Pennington in 1656 with the inscription, *"So, Abbot Ne, Vigres"* was in the grand key of E flat. Moses took off the bell's cannons for the purpose of a short tuck up and turned it a quarter so that the clapper could strike on new metal. The bell used to require three men to ring it but after Moses re-hung it one could ring it with ease.

At the annual meeting of the Guild of Devonshire Ringers held at St. Paul's Schoolroom in early June 1879 it was announced that Mr. Luxton of Winkleigh had re-hung the four bells at East Buckland, had hung a new treble and executed repairs at Langtree, had taken down two of the three bells at Parracombe and re-hung them in the new tower and had also

done some repairs at Alphington. During the course of the year bands of ringers had been practising various methods. At Huntsham, for example, peals of treble bob and grandsire minor, touches of grandsire triples, Stedman's triples and treble bob major had been rung.

The Earl of Portsmouth, who owned a considerable portion of East Worlington and who was also a patron of the living, seeing the dilapidated condition of the old church, determined to re-build it. This was done at his expense and took about two years. The massive tower about forty feet high had four bells. These were re-hung in September 1879 by Moses Luxton & Sons of Winkleigh with all new fittings and a new bell cage of the very best English oak.

In September 1879 too, the ancient parish church of St. James, Iddesleigh was re-opened for divine service. It had been re-built in the late fifteenth century at the cost it, is supposed, met by Henry V11, the benefice being in the hands of the Tudor family. During the Victorian restoration the bells were re-hung by Moses Luxton and so arranged that the clappers could strike on new metal. A new set of bell ropes of ornamental appearance were obtained from Mears and Stainbank bell-founders of London. The work cost £32.

In early December 1879 Moses & Son re-hung the bells in the parish church of Meshaw the cost being met by the rector, the Rev. F. Hancock. As part of the restoration work in the parish church of St. Michael, Clyst Honiton, the old bells were sent to Loughborough in August 1882 where Messrs, Taylor, the famous bell founders, re-cast a new peal of bells in the key of E. Messrs Luxton & Son of Winkleigh re-hung the bells in November that year and the event was celebrated with a dedication festival. The treble bell of the new peal was in C sharp and on it was inscribed, *"To the glory of God & in memory of Laura Elizabeth Broughton, died October 20th 1880, aged thirteen years."* The second bell in B natural was inscribed, *"Hitherto hath the Lord helped us,"* *"Glory to God in the highest"* are the words imprinted on bell No. 3, the tone of which was A natural. The fourth bell bears the words *"Peace and good will towards men"* being in G sharp. On the fifth bell in F sharp was the appeal, *"Draw near to God,"* The sixth and last bell in the peal was in E and on this was imprinted:-

*"I to the church the living call,
And to the grave do summon all"*

The weight of the new peal was 64cwt. 16 lbs. Moses was praised at the dedication festival for the good work he had done in hanging the bells. He took a great interest in church matters and he disliked seeing churches in a dilapidated state as St Michael's Clyst Honiton had been before restoration work had begun.

He had made a big improvement in the re-hanging of church bells. From time immemorial church bell ringers had complained of the gudgeons getting oval and that when the bells were being rung up to the mark for change ringing, they kept falling in which proved very tedious to the ringer. To remedy this defect Moses introduced cast-steel gudgeons in lieu of iron ones. The new cast steel gudgeons wore a thousand times longer and would go fifty per cent lighter for the ringer. The Clyst Honiton church bells were the first peal in England that were hung with cast steel gudgeons and gun metal bearings. The church's tenor bell, with its fittings weighed about 22cwt. but one man could very easily ring this heavy bell with one hand.

A ringing match was held at High Bickington in October 1884 in honour of the re-hanging of the church bells by Moses. The match took place between twelve sets of ringers from

Alphington, Ide, West Worlington, Winkleigh, Dolton, Ashreigney, Burrington, Swimbridge, Chittlehampton, Landkey, West Down and Braunton. Each set rung for fifteen minutes, up to the mark, including the 48 changes and rose and fell as they pleased. First prize went to the ringers from Winkleigh.

Samuel Steers noted in a letter of 4th September 1885 to the editor of the Western Times that his *"old friend Mr. Moses Luxton, bell-hanger and engineer showed him around his works in Winkleigh and that at present Moses was engaged in re-hanging the bells of Stoke Canon and Abbotsham churches."*

The dedication of two new bells at Stoke Canon took place in December 1885. The bells cast by Llewellyn and James of Bristol were hung by Moses. The treble bell weighed 4 and a half cwt. and the second bell 5cwt. They joined four bells from the old peal. The re-hung bells were rung for the first time by the St. Sidwell's Ringers who found that the third bell, one of the old ones, should be sharpened to bring it into harmony with its new companions. The work had so far cost £130 and the re-casting of the defective bell would cost about £14 to re-cast. The vicar, Rev. W. G. Tanner-Davy, in his speech, *"hoped the ringers would remember that the belfry was a part of God's House, and there would be an avoidance of all unseemly conduct and improper language when they assembled for ringing."*

In April 1888 two new bells were dedicated for use in the fine old tower of the parish church of St. Andrews in Alwington. The peal now consisted of six bells instead of the four formerly in use. One of the old bells was also re-cast. The belfry had a new cage, floor, wheels and ropes etc. The total cost of the work was £180. The re-casting was carried out by Messrs Llewellyn and James of Bristol and the re-hanging was entrusted to Messrs Moses Luxton of Winkleigh.

At the funeral of John Cowle of Bransgrove Farm, Winkleigh on the 7th February 1889, the *"Dead March"* in Saul was played on the organ and a muffled peal led by Moses Luxton was rung on the church bells.

Two new bells were dedicated at All Saints, Winkleigh on the 10th June 1889. They had been added recently to the pretty peal of six placed in the tower in 1873. Cast by Messrs Mears and Stainbank the new bells were hung by Moses and son. The village was decorated with flags and bunting by the villagers. A short peal was rung on the bells by the Winkleigh local band under the conductorship of Moses. During the afternoon a bazaar was held on the vicarage grounds. There was dancing in the Vicarage House and in the evening the grounds were illuminated and a display of fireworks was given.

In June 1891 the High Bickington ringers, a noted set of campanologists, visited Winkleigh and played about ten peals on the bells. They expressed themselves highly pleased with the tone and going of the bells and gave credit to Moses for the efficient manner in which he kept the bells.

The four bells in Clovelly church tower were joined by a fifth new bell, dedicated in September 1900. Cast by Mears & Stainbank of Whitechapel, the new tenor bell, weighing ten cwt. was inscribed with the following lines from Tennyson:-

*"Ring out the old, ring in the new
Ring out the false, ring in the true."*

The work of re-hanging and re-arranging the bell cage was carried out by Moses Luxton and space was allowed for a sixth bell to be added when funds permitted.

In June 1905 a bell ringing festival was held at Pilton, Barnstaple. It was remarked that bell ringing had at one time got into a bad reputation but it was now managed differently and ringers as a rule did not forget that the belfry was part of the church. Mr. Moses Luxton Winkleigh was one of three judges when several sets of church bell ringers in North Devon, numbering between 50 and 60 ringers, gathered for their second annual festival.

The Colyton ringers visited Winkleigh on Easter Monday in April 1906 and after refreshments a competition was held between the Winkleigh and Colyton ringers. The home set rung the first peal, the ringers being Moses Luxton, senior (treble), Moses Luxton, junior, T. Davey, Henry Luxton, R. Robins, A. Wonnacott, the Rev. H. Bremridge, vicar of Winkleigh and Mr. Kerslake Dingley (tenor). Unfortunately the rope of the third bell broke and there was some delay in mending it. On re-starting a mishap occurred to the treble bell and the Winkleigh team were unfortunate in not being able to make a good peal. The visitors then handled the bells and rang a fair peal to take the honours for the day.

At 3 o'clock a service was held in All Saints, the beautiful parish church of Winkleigh. The vicar, Mr. Bremridge, in his address pointed out the wholesome exercise derived from bell ringing and he set before the ringers the lesson of a Godly life which every ringer should aim at attaining. He reminded his hearers that in 1889 when Bishop Bickersteth preached in the church on the occasion of the dedication of the two new bells to complete the octave his Lordship chose as his text the words, *"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the Light of Thy countenance."* (Psalm 89 verse 15). These words perhaps applied to everyone within reach of the sound of the bells, but the words of the text were especially applicable to ringers.

To celebrate the dedication of two new bells, making a peal of six, great festivities were held at East Buckland in August 1906. The new bells cast by Mears and Stainbank were re-hung by Moses and Son who had to raise the roof of the tower to admit the new bells and make them ringable. The bells were dedicated by the Rev. J. Thompson, rector of Romansleigh, a former master of the Devon County School who preached a fine sermon on bells.

Moses Luxton of Pound House, Winkleigh, blacksmith, died aged 79 on the 22nd June 1908. The administration of his estate valued at £249. 5s..4d. was granted at Exeter on the 17th October to his son Henry James Luxton church army officer.

Moses' household furniture, his working premises and his tools were sold by auction on the 24th November 1908. They included a drilling machine, lathe with iron bed, four vices, two anvils, lifting tackle, two blacksmith's bellows, a large quantity of patterns, sheet iron, two pit saws, a tower cage, a tank for boiling hoops, a trolley, wheelbarrow, a quantity of iron bars, old iron, a large number of tools, two ladders, wheels shutting, reed-comber, a new fly wheel, iron breast grindstone, about 30 oak, ash and other planks (2, 3, and 4 inch), elm blocks, three oak trees and other timber, plus a large shed with a galvanised roof and numerous other lots.

Although Moses was dead and buried the church bells he re-hung were to ring out across the Devonshire countryside for many years to come.

Brian C. Luxton

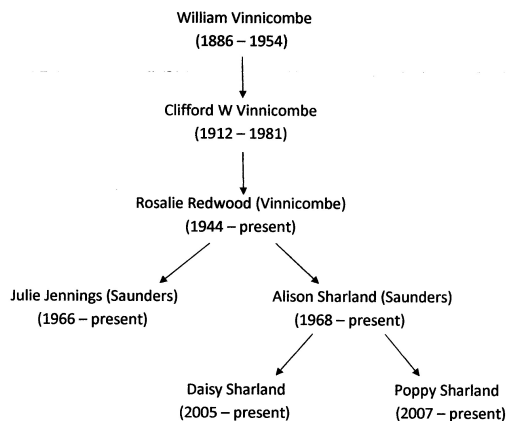
With thanks to: Brian C. Luxton and the publishers of Devon Family Historian for granting permission to reproduce this article. Editor.

Celebration of 5 Generations of Vinnicombe Bellringers at St Andrew's Church, Halberton



William Vinnicombe

William Vinnicombe, who was born in 1886, was a bellringer at St Andrew's Church, Halberton for 40 years, many of those years as captain of the tower. He was succeeded by his son, **Clifford William Vinnicombe**, who was a Halberton ringer for 54 years, 26 of those as captain. Clifford's daughter, **Rosalie Redwood**, has been ringing at Halberton for 65 years. Rosalie's two daughters, **Julie Jennings** and **Alison Sharland** also ring. Julie learnt to ring for the Silver Jubilee in 1977 and rang with her mother and grandfather for the occasion. Alison has been ringing for 42 years and is currently enjoying ringing with her own two daughters **Daisy Sharland** who learnt in 2019, and **Poppy Sharland**, who learnt in 2021.



1977

L-R Rosalie Redwood, Julie Jennings, Clifford Vinnicombe



2022

L-R Daisy Sharland, Poppy Sharland, Alison Sharland

Rosalie Redwood and Poppy Sharland



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