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# Devon Calls

Oct / Nov 2019

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## Our President meets the American Ambassador

On the 9<sup>th</sup> May 2019, and on behalf of the Devon Association of Ringers, I had the honour and privilege of travelling to London with my wife Mary to meet the United States of America's

Ambassador Mr. Robert Wood Johnson.

Robert Wood Johnson became the American Ambassador on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2017 and presented his credentials to Her Majesty the Queen on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2017. At the time of the presentation he heard the bells of St. Paul's Cathedral ringing. It was a special peal being rung for him. He was so impressed with the sound of the bells, and without knowing anything about bell ringing whatsoever; he asked if he might see the bells being rung. It was some six months later before this could be arranged, partly because a major scheme of work was being carried out on the cathedral's bells. Arrangements for the visit were eventually made and after he had safely negotiated all the steps leading to the Ringing Chamber he was able to see the ringers



L to R Tim Hines, John Barnes, Mary Barnes, Robert Wood Johnson

standing on boxes of various sizes ringing the bells. He was completely blown away with what he saw. Even more so when he was invited, with qualified assistance, to pull one of the bells out from its resting

position, and to feel its weight.

He was so intrigued with the history of bell ringing which had been explained to him, coupled with St. Paul's Cathedral itself, that he offered to host a reception for ringers and anyone else connected with bell ringing.

An invitation was sent to the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers (CCCCR). The council in turn contacted groups representing ringers across the country. Mrs. Rachel Avery, secretary of the Devon Association of Ringers, was one of the people contacted to see if the organisation would care to send a representative. Apparently on initially receiving the letter of invitation Rachael thought it might be a hoax. Further investigation however confirmed that the invitation was genuine. She then emailed me

**COPY for "DEVON CALLS" is always welcome and we rely on you to submit articles**

**Deadline for next edition - 19th January 2020**

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

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

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## ***American Ambassador—continued from page 1***



*John and Mary Barnes*

to see if I would like to attend and represent the Devon Association of Ringers. I replied saying I would be delighted to do so although I knew there were others much more deserving than me.

Following several email messages it was agreed that I should attend and on 26<sup>th</sup> April, which also happened to be our Golden Wedding Anniversary, I was pleased receive confirmation that my wife Mary could accompany me.

After travelling up to London on the 9<sup>th</sup> May we arrived outside Winfield House which is the Ambassador's private residence. It is situated on the Outer Circle, Regents Park. Here we found a group of ringers already waiting with many more still arriving. At roughly 6.00 p.m., and after showing our IDs, we were allowed in past the armed guards to the reception rooms. We mingled with the other ringers present

and found that we had full access to the ground floor as well as the gardens. It was an elegant and beautiful mansion house set in twelve acres of garden. Whilst mingling we were treated to copious amounts of drink and nibbles.

The Ambassador entered from a side room and I was one of the first people he spoke to. I said what an honour and privilege it was to represent the Devon Association of Ringers. He replied saying it was an honour and privilege having us all here.

During the evening the Ambassador gave a short address in which he praised bell ringers as well as the art of bell ringing. Christopher O'Mahoney, President of the CCCBR replied on behalf of the ringers. In his reply he said what a privilege it is to be a bell ringer and to be able to ring in some of the most ancient and historic buildings in the land, but that privilege he said also brings with it responsibility and that it is up to us all to keep our ancient tradition going for future generations.

Then followed a fantastic demonstration of hand bell ringing by a group of cathedral ringers. The ringing was spellbinding and at times during their performance you could have heard a pin drop, such was the atmosphere. The Ambassador then tried his hand at ringing rounds with the group, and he did extremely well, but perhaps he had a practice beforehand! My wife Mary is also a hand-bell ringer and naturally she thoroughly enjoyed this part of the programme.

At 8 o'clock the National Anthem was played and it was time to leave. It really was a memorable occasion.

***John Barnes***

## **A Notable Team at the Association Novice Competition**



The team representing Swimbridge in the Novice Competition at Ideford on March 9th was notable because it contained three generations (and four members) of the same family.

Michael Snell learnt to ring at Swimbridge about 60 years ago, and his family retain strong links with the village and church. Michael was joined by his son Andrew, granddaughter Esta and niece Chris in the competition. Esta only started to ring in October 2018.

In recent years, Swimbridge has been a dormant tower but since February 2018 the bells have been rung every Sunday morning and a Monday evening practice has been introduced with a healthy number of new recruits of all ages enthusiastically taking part.

The photo shows the team at Ideford. Back row L-R Tony Jeffrey, Andrew Snell, Adrian Pethick. Front row L-R Chris Ley, Esta Snell, Michael Snell.

***Chris Ley***



# Editorial

Whether you regard yourself as a novice or an expert, or even if you're a non-ringer, welcome to this edition of Devon Calls.

As you will see a great deal has been taking place in the world of call-change ringing over the summer months. So much so that it has been quite a task for James our Technical Editor to fit all the content onto the pages. To his credit he has done so and here we are, but this time with a 16 pages edition! We can never compete with social media for speedy news, but then the magazine is not meant to. As a hard copy it is intended to be available in Ringing Chambers to be read and widely circulated, and even archived. It is after all a ringing record, available to anyone who in future may wish to enquire into the world of ringing as recorded here in Devon.

The front page justifiably features an article about our President John and his wife Mary having the pleasure of meeting the American Ambassador at a reception in London, and what an occasion it was as it coincided with the couple's Golden Wedding Anniversary. It is interesting to read that the reception came about simply because the American Ambassador was impressed by the sound of bells which he heard during a visit to London.

I'm sure that if the American Ambassador were ever to visit this county and hear some of Devon's bells being rung he would be equally impressed. Devon undoubtedly has some of the finest peals in England and with a new ring at Ugborough being added to the list, and work taking place on the bells at Kingskerswell and Woodbury, the degree of enthusiasm that exists amongst Devon's ringers is quite remarkable.. And it doesn't stop there because as you will see the magazine contains news of restoration projects being launched at Milton Abbot and at Oakford.

The number of teams taking part in the Devon Association Novice competition this year, 12 in the "round" ringing section and 12 in the "changes" section, is impressive. Well done to

them and to the ringers of Swimbridge who had young Esta in their team. Remarkably Esta had only been ringing for six months. How plucky of her to come forward and have a go. Congratulations Esta.

Well, what a close result it was at this year's Devon Final at Lydford. As you will see by the marks given for the top three teams, just a quarter of a fault separated the top two teams from Shaugh Prior who came third and even more remarkable was the fact that just one fault separated the top four teams. Combeinteignhead, qualifying for the second time in recent years, tying with Down St. Mary triggered a ring-off. Well, when was the last time a ring-off took place at a Devon Final (answers please)? Congratulations to Combeinteignhead on winning the Ross Shield and to Down St. Mary and Shaugh Prior for coming so close. All the teams who took part in this year's competitions are also to be congratulated on their efforts.

If you enjoy reading Devon Calls and would like to continue to receive copies please be sure to pay your affiliation fee on, or before, the AGM in November. At the same time make sure the Treasurer has your tower representative's correct address.

In December The Devon Ringers' Carol Service will be held. This year it takes place at Exeter Cathedral on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December at 3 p.m. Why not make a note of the date in your diary.

My grateful thanks to those who have contributed to this edition, either by submitting articles, proof reading or helping with the packaging and distribution. Special thanks to James for taking such care in setting out the pages.

Finally, may bellringing continue to be a constant in an age of change and un-certainty.

See you at the AGM in November.

**Colin Adams**

## Kingskerswell Restoration Update

The bells were removed by Nicholson Engineering in May and we hope the new installation will be installed some time after the end of October. The project has been delayed because of problems with the old 3rd bell. First a crack was found in the crown of the bell which was welded by Soundweld. Then the tuning process uncovered enormous areas of porosity and voids in the soundbow, which meant it was untunable. As no suitable 2nd hand bell was available from the Keltek Trust, the bell is shortly to be recast by Eijsbouts in Holland. The 2 new trebles were cast by Eijsbouts in March and these, and all the other bells, have been tuned/re-tuned by Nicholsons, the tenor now weighing 7-0-3.

We still have the 6 old wheels available and these are available for collection in exchange for a sensible donation to

church funds, and buyer collects. Further information is available from Philip Stevens at [philipandmostevens@gmail.com](mailto:philipandmostevens@gmail.com) or 01803 873562

Donations to our bell fund will be very gratefully received and can be made to 'The Friends of Kingskerswell Church' c/o Philip Stevens, 22 Priory Avenue, Kingskerswell, Newton Abbot, TQ12 5AQ, or on their donate page:- <https://platform.nationalfundingscheme.org/friends-of-kingskerswell-parish-church#.XW0yvS5KjiU>

**Philip Stevens**

# Horace Clements Celebrates His 90th Birthday

Horace Clements celebrated his 90th birthday on Sunday 1st September 2019. Horace has been ringing church bells since 1938 and Stoke Gabriel church last year marked his 80th year of ringing. Horace was interviewed by Radio Devon and BBC TV and these were broadcast on 10 June 2018 when a Sung Eucharist was held to celebrate his service. Horace was presented

with a model bell by the church, following the service.

This year, 2019, Horace and his wife Eileen celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary and hosted an evening meal for family and friends at the Stoke Gabriel Football Club.



The Stoke Gabriel bell ringers honoured Horace's birthday by an open ringing session and it was reported by guests that Horace was ringing as well as ever. Following the ringing the ringers had organised a buffet provided by and held in the Church House Inn, Stoke Gabriel, Horace's local after ringing and where he has played darts several nights a week.

Thanks were given to Horace for his many remarkable bell ringing achievements and for his dedication and loyalty as a bell ringer to Stoke Gabriel. Horace still continues to ring for the weekly services and practices and enjoys the many day long ringing trips. Despite the wear on his knee, he is certainly blest with good health and a supportive family.

Horace looks back to certain events during his life and states that some he regards as if they only happened yesterday. One memory is that as a 3 year old, sitting on his doorstep, the local school teacher asked Horace if he would like to attend school. With his parents' blessing, he did that day and stayed on until he was old enough to leave that school.

Horace started ringing at Diptford in 1938 and recalls ringing 80 years ago on Sunday, 3 September 1939, the day that war was declared. He next rang for VE day in May 1945, as ringing was not permitted during the war years, for ringing the bells would have been a signal of an invasion.

Horace recalls that the Totnes Deanery Bell Ringers was formed in 1947 and has been going from strength to strength ever since. Winter League competitions are now an annual and well supported event.

Marriage to Eileen took Horace to Stoke Gabriel in 1949. The family always knew never to arrange things on a Thursday, bell ringing practice night or on a Sunday when Horace would be ringing for the morning and evening service.

As Horace was a regular ringer, this encouraged Stoke Gabriel to enter ringing competitions in the mid 1960s. The team in those days was Stan Martin, Brian Baker, Colin Heath, Bob Scadding, Horace and Art Seymour, the Captain.

Through the dedication of those ringers and the example of Horace not missing any event, and with the regular support, the team improved rapidly. In the 60s not only were there numerous teams, there was also a very high standard of striking. That team laid the foundation for future years and Brian and Colin continue to ring for Stoke Gabriel in competitions on a regular basis.

Horace had been Vice Captain of Stoke Gabriel Tower and then Captain from 1976, a role he held until 1994. He continues to ring for all services and special events. In 2001 he was honoured to be elected as President of the Devon Association of Ringers. Throughout this long career of ringing, Horace has been loyally supported by his wife Eileen.

For his 90th birthday Horace was delighted to receive 73 cards from all over the country. Greetings were also received from Australia. Horace is so grateful that people thought enough of him not only to wish him a happy birthday but also to send him a card.

Horace reported that his 90th birthday was a thoroughly enjoyable day. As it was a Sunday he was ringing in church and when he came down the tower steps the choir sang "Happy Birthday". Then the vicar asked him into the church where the congregation and choir sang "Happy Birthday" a second time accompanied by the organ.

I am not alone in wishing Horace a happy 90th birthday and offer him all the best wishes for the future.

**Michael Webster**

# Milton Abbot Peal Appeal

There can't be many people reading this who have travelled along the main Tavistock to Launceston road that hasn't rung at Milton Abbot at one time or another. The beautiful church of St Constantine is mainly 15<sup>th</sup> Century although the tower has traces of being older and is some 70 feet in height.

Five bells are listed in the inventory of Church Goods of 1553 and it is suggested that some of these could have been cast by Robert Norton, the Exeter Bell Founder. In 1769 the existing bells were recast into a ring of six by John, Christopher and William Pennington of Stoke Climsland, and are listed for preservation as a complete and unaltered ring of one date by them. In 1902 Harry Stokes of Woodbury completely rehung the bells in a new oak frame and although the bells have been regularly maintained, after 117 years a major restoration is necessary. The tower has a long tradition of ringing history. The vicar of Milton Abbot, for a staggering 52 years from 1836, was The Rev. Sir St Vincent Love Hammick, Bart who succeeded his father to the baronetcy in 1867. He was a ringer and a member of The Ancient Society of College Youths. The Rev. Ian Watson was also a ringer and rector of Milton during the 1960s. The present vicar, The Revd Andy Atkins is also a keen ringer and is enthusiastic to get the bells rehung. The tower is also affiliated to The Devon Association and The South Devon Association qualifier was held here in 1982. The Tavistock Deanery Ringing Festival has also been held there in



the past and the bells have always been available to visiting teams. Sunday service ringing was very much the order of the day but this has declined in recent years due to the condition of the bells. The team also took part in competition ringing and their first Tavistock Deanery Competition at Lydford in April, 1964. The team contained 3 members of the well-known Lovell family, Robert, Henry and Ronald. Bob was a member of The Association S.E.Rs and regularly rang with them and

Henry was a member of the Tavistock team that won The Devon Association 8 Bell Ross Shield at Barnstaple in 1999. It is nice to know that Bob's daughter Pat is Milton Abbot PCC Treasurer and is keen to see the bell project through. The outcome will be a superb ring of bells that will be easy to handle and a joy to listen to.

Locally everyone is enthusiastic in raising funds to restore this historic ring, however, Milton Abbot is in need of your help!!! A leaflet will be out sometime soon to highlight the appeal and any donations toward the restoration would be so welcomed. Please support us in any way that you can.

*Geoff Hill*

## Oakford Bells to be Restored

Oakford bells are an original ring of 8 cast by Mears in 1825. They were given to the church by the Oakford Rector, Revd James Parkin. Originally rung from a gallery, this was removed in 1905 and the 8 became a ground-floor ring. Now notoriously difficult to ring because of their long draught, lack of rope guides and plain bearings, they are nevertheless a fine peal of bells in an interesting gallows-end frame.

The restoration plan includes rehanging in a new frame, the installation of a new ringing gallery and the creation of a toilet and kitchen area on the current ringing floor.

The local band are keen to ring but struggle with the bells in their present condition. The PCC Secretary approached the Guild for help and the tower has affiliated to the North East Branch of the Guild. Branch officers have visited the band on



their practice night and plan to help the band once the bells have been put into good order. I imagine that Association members will also be interested in this restoration appeal. If you would like to support Oakford ringers with a donation, cheques (payable to "Oakford PCC re Tower Fund") can be sent to the PCC Treasurer, Mrs Wendy Boynton, Combe Water, Oakford, Nr TIVERTON, EX16 9HF. For online donations by

BACS the Sort Code is 60-21-27 and the Account No. is 06510795 using the payment reference "Tower Fund". I am sure that we all look forward to a successful appeal and restoration project and a chance to sample these good bells when they have been restored.

*Les Boyce*



# Ringling Related Articles in The Mid Devon Advertisor

The 3rd May edition of the Mid Devon Advertisor carried the following two related articles by the Kingsteignton History

Society which may be of interest to our readers.

## Henry Robert Cooke, Vicar of Kingsteignton 1925—1939

Kingsteignton's list of vicars can be traced back as far as 1259 and many of the incumbents have distinguished themselves in all manner of good works.

One vicar, north Devon born Henry Robert Cooke, was educated at Cambridge and whilst serving as a curate at St Luke's, Torquay he volunteered for the army and served as a chaplain from 1915 to 1919. He was twice mentioned in dispatches and was also awarded the Military Cross. After the war he was made vicar of Princetown before moving to Kingsteignton in 1925.

During his 14 years vicariate at Kingsteignton he supervised the recasting and re-hanging of the church bells and secured the gifts of two extra bells to increase the peal from six to eight. He also oversaw the repointing of the church tower and the repair of the church roof. Another scheme that he started, which was to bear fruit several years after he left, was the start of a fund to build a church hall. With the building of the New Park Estate the Rev Cooke saw the need for new facilities at the north end of what was still a village.

He also rescued a piece of Kingsteignton's heritage when he found a boy chopping up part of an ancient screen for firewood. The screen bore the arms of James I and had been hidden under layers of lath and plaster in a cottage near the church. Mr Cooke had the remaining part of the screen



*Rev Cooke with the recast bells in 1929*

restored and displayed in the church.

For more information on the history of Kingsteignton visit the KHS website at [www.kingsteigntonhistorysociety.com](http://www.kingsteigntonhistorysociety.com).

If anybody has any pictures they would like to share please phone me on 01626 356317 after 7.00pm or e-mail [kingsteignton.hs@btinternet.com](mailto:kingsteignton.hs@btinternet.com)

## Cooke Family News



*Robert Cooke and family in Kingsteignton belfry*

A trip back to Kingsteignton, where he grew up, was a day to remember for 94 years old Robert Martin Cooke and his family. The trip was organised by his son, Richard Cooke, who now lives in Selby and had contacted Ian Avery of Kingsteignton PCC to see whether Robert could have a look around the church where his father the Rev Henry R Cooke had served as vicar from 1925 to 1939. When it was explained to the family that the Rev Henry Cooke had supervised the recasting and rehanging of the church bells in 1929 none was keener than 94 year old Robert to make the trip up the tower's spiral staircase to see the bells. Robert was able to tell Ian that as a toddler he had fallen in the leat and almost drowned. Ian was able to reassure him that some good came out of his misadventure as it conferred on him the status of being a true Teigntonian.

*Both articles courtesy of Steve Harris & the Kingsteignton History Society*

## Another Ringing Article in the Mid Devon Advertiser



*Back row L-R Ian Avery, Mike Mears, Elaine Grant  
Front row L-R Rachel Avery, James Grant, Lee Avery*

The June 14th edition of the Mid Devon Advertiser carried this short article and photo:-

"Bell ringers from Combeinteignhead are celebrating winning a prestigious competition. The group from All Saints Church took first place in the Major Final Competition of the Devon Association of Ringers. The Ross Shield that will soon be engraved with the Combe bell ringers names has been going since the 1920s. Church warden Clare Wreford said: 'This is a very prestigious award and we are so proud of them.'"

A full set of results for all Association 2019 Competitions is published on page 10.

**Colin Adams**

## Photos from the North Devon Qualifier



*John Barnes presenting the George Facey Shield to Bob Robinson from Down St Mary*



*John Barnes presenting the Arnold Cup to Ben Hicks from Clawton*

**Chris Ley**

## D-Day Commemoration at Alphington



*Back Row L-R John Staddon, Paul Ramsbottom, Charles Conibear, Cliff Wilson, Marcus Tape, Nigel Bateman  
Front row L-R Herb Piper, Chris Piper, Lewis Withecombe.*

The Alphington ringers rang a peal on June 6th to commemorate the D-Day Landings before the Normandy Veterans laid their wreath at the Alphington War Memorial at 11 am.

**John Staddon**



## The Art of Devon Call Change Ringing



*The demonstration band, Suzanne Driscoll (treble), Jon Bint, Barbara Dart, Robin Canniford (all the way from Australia!), Owen Borlase, John Barnes*

St Mary the Virgin Church, Laira, Plymouth provided the location in July for a repeat of the “Art of Devon Call Change Ringing”, first held at St Mary the Virgin Church, Ottery St Mary, in September 2016, a joint presentation by the Devonshire Association Music Section (DAMS) and the Devon Association of Ringers. Jo Maddick, tower captain at Laira, had organised a team of parishioners to prepare the Church for an afternoon of ringing and singing, culminating in a Devon cream tea.

£200 was raised, divided between the Church, DAMS and the Ringers’ Association.

Jon Bint began by describing the origins and social history of call-change ringing and method ringing; Graham Sharland then gave a brief technical description of the mechanics of bellringing, which was followed by a demonstration of the 6-bell competition peal. Marilyn Tucker and Paul Wilson from Wren Music, sang songs inspired by bellringing tradition and, as in 2016, ringers and musicians discovered there was much they had in common.

**Kathy Wyke**

## Jon Bint’s 60th Birthday Ring



*Jon’s celebration ring*

*Back Row L-R Kevin Tingey, Gabriel Bint, Tim Waller \*  
Front Row L-R Colin Barnes, Chris Smallwood, Jon Bint, Jerry Burnham\*, Clara Waller  
(\* - Jon’s contemporaries who rang together at the University of Birmingham)*

Jon Bint, Chagford Tower Captain, recently celebrated his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday with a celebration ring (see photo). This, with Joe Bint’s 21<sup>st</sup> birthday was also celebrated by a full peal by:

The Guild of Devonshire Ringers  
at St Michael’s, Chagford, Devon (18-0-22 in E)  
On Tuesday, 13 August 2019 in 3h 6m  
5056 Bristol Surprise Major Composed by A J Cox  
1 John A Foster  
2 Pauline McKenzie  
3 Peter L Bill  
4 Lester J Yeo  
5 Ian V J Smith  
6 David Hird  
7 John R Martin (C)  
8 Michael E C Mears

**Colin Barnes**



# Ugborough Bells Update

This is an update to follow on from my last article written in the March 2018 edition, where the Ugborough Bell Project Team were just about to place an order with Taylor's for a full recast of our ring of eight, although we were still somewhat short of the £91,000 required. However, as we had amended the project from just welding and repairing to a full recast, we were able to raise further donations by offering the opportunity for bell inscriptions.

In March 2018 the work started, under the direction of Andrew Ogden of Taylor's and five volunteers from the ringers. Although a very daunting task to start with, it turned out to be fairly straightforward, once the tenor had been nudged through the trap door and then lowered using a chain hoist to the ringing chamber floor (one story up from ground level). The bells were then taken out through the inside window of the ringing chamber using a 'spider' crane, and thence on a trolley to the church steps to be picked up by a telehandler (kindly donated by a local contractor) for transfer to a lorry (kindly donated by Riverford Transport). This process was repeated for all eight bells and within five days all the bells were on their way to Taylor's in Loughborough.

When the bells were being recast two visits to Taylor's were organised, so that the ringers and supporters had the opportunity to watch the amazing casting process, which has not changed substantially over the years. Seeing and feeling the heat from the molten bell metal at over 1100 degrees centigrade was awesome.

At the end of July 2018, the bells and their fittings were ready to be returned. Once the bells had arrived in the church, we celebrated with an amazing three day bell and flower festival, with all the arrangements having a bell theme. We were concerned about the security of the bells, so had a sleeping roster in the church to ensure their safety! The following week, the process of re-installing the bells commenced.



*Putting the final touches to the installation*

Essentially this was the reverse process of taking them out, but it took about three times as long as the bells needed to be carefully positioned, fittings attached and then set to work. On 26 August, we had our first ring under the guidance of Graham Sharland. The bells sounded wonderful, but it was clear that the Ugborough ringers had a bit of work to do to match their standard!

To complete the project, a Rededication Service was held on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> August 2019, with the

bells being dedicated by Bishop Mark Rylands. This was a wonderful occasion, which included ringing before, during and after the service and gave Simon Adams from Taylor's the opportunity to hear the bells sounding at their best. It was noticeable that the standard of our ringing has improved considerably over the past year. The service was well attended and was a



*The Rededication Service L-R Taff Jones, Martin Crossman, Anthony Lugger (Bell Captain). Rt Revd Mark Rylands, Simon Adams (Taylor's), Francis Douglas, Steve Bulgen, Juliet Collis, Brian Meek, Christine Mathews, Clifford Johns, Revd David Sayle, Sue Prowse, Jacqueline Lugger.*

great finale to the project. We are very grateful to all the individuals and organisations who supported our project and enabled it to have such a successful outcome.

As a team, we have decided to donate our ringing fees from the next wedding at the end of the month to the Loughborough Bellfoundry Trust. We have been so fortunate to have our bells recast at Loughborough which is a wonderful facility and we would like to support their work to help safeguard the foundry for future generations.

Our donation on its own won't make a big difference, but if we could encourage other teams across the county to contribute in any way that they can, collectively this could make a difference.

<https://loughboroughbellfoundry.org/how-you-can-give-and-donate/>

**Francis Douglas, Project Manager**

# 2019 Association Competition Results

## Novice Competition held at Ideford on 9th March

### Rounds Section

1. Kingsteignton '1' 11½
2. Chagford Red 12½
3. Kingsteignton '2' 12½
4. Berrynarbour '2' 13½
5. Chagford Blue 14
6. Berrynarbour '1' 23½
7. Dartmouth 28
8. Bishops Tawton 32
9. Chagford Green 35
10. Swimbridge 37
11. Stoke Cannon 65
12. Kenton 70

### Changes Section

1. Chagford Yellow 16
2. Kingsteignton '2' 18½
3. Chagford Orange 21
4. Berrynarbour Red 24
5. Ideford 31½
6. Bishops Tawton '2' 35½
7. Berrynarbour Blue 36
8. Kingsteignton '1' 39
9. Stoke Cannon 41
10. Bishops Tawton '1' 45½
11. Dartmouth 57
12. Broadhempston 62½

*Judges: Colin Adams and Mervyn Way*

## North Devon Qualifier held at Ashwater on 11th May

1. Down St Mary 19¼ – George Facey Shield
2. Clawton 33 – Arnold Cup
3. Sampford Courtenay 38½
4. West Down 39¼
5. Burrington 39¼
6. East Anstey 52¼
7. Bow 70¼

*Judges: Ken Down, Andrew Vincent and Mervyn Way*

*Scrutineer: Margaret Down*

## South Devon Qualifier held at Combe Raleigh on 11 May

1. Shaugh Prior 28½ – George Facey Shield
2. Combeinteignhead 34½ – Archie Furzeland Memorial Trophy
3. South Brent 42½
4. Stoke Gabriel 45½
5. Broadhempston 65¼
6. Kenton 70
7. Dunsford 79¼
8. Holbeton 80½
9. Lamerton 99¼

*Judges: John Dietz, Mark Lovell, Victoria Tucker and Ruth Tuckett.*

*Scrutineer: Hania Lee*

## Minor Final held at Swimbridge on 25th May

1. Dunsford 73¼ – Thomas Oatway Shield
2. Lamerton 76¼ – John Fidler Cup
3. Kenton 77
4. East Anstey 82¼
5. Bow 99
6. Kingsteignton (novice) 18 – Hooper Cup

*Judges: Colin Avery, James Clarke, Stephen Herniman and Graham Sharland*

*Scrutineer: Karen Squire*

## Major Final held at Lydford on 8th June

1. Combeinteignhead 30½ (ring off 21) – Ross Shield
2. Down St Mary 30½ (ring off 23 3/4) – Shelley Cup
3. Shaugh Prior 30¼
4. South Brent 31½
5. Burrington 37¼
6. Stoke Gabriel 41
7. Lamerton 47
8. Clawton 49
9. Dunsford 50¼
10. West Down 51
11. Sampford Courtenay 57¼
12. Broadhempston 64¼

Jack Hine Perpetual Trophy for Top Ringing won by Combeinteignhead 14¼

*Judges: James Clarke, Mark Lovell, Victoria Tucker and Andrew Vincent*

*Scrutineer: Margaret Down*

## 8 Bell Final held at Georgeham on 21<sup>st</sup> September

1. Kingsteignton A 29¼ – Ross Shield and Passmore Cup
2. High Bickington 49¼ – George Campbell Grills Cup
3. Chittlehampton 65¼ – William Barlow Cup
4. Exminster 83¼
5. Tiverton 105¼
6. Kingsteignton B 120¼

Walter Mortimore Trophy for Top Ringing won by Kingsteignton A 14

*Judges: James Clarke, John Dietz, Barry Osbourne, and Andrew Vincent*

*Scrutineer: Martine Mardell*



# The Kenn Deanery



*Kenn Church. Photo by Alison Day*

What is the Kenn Deanery ? Rather an odd question to start an article you may ask.

So which churches actually comprise Kenn Deanery ? This will depend on who is producing the list. According to the Devon Family History Society { DFHS } in 2015 they list 26 [ see [www.devonhs.org.uk](http://www.devonhs.org.uk) ]. The Diocese of Exeter in Wikipedia lists 25 [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diocese\_of\_Exeter] but only 10 of these are contained in the DFHS list.

If we use the Diocese of Exeter (DoE) list for our Kenn Deanery ringing purposes there are 21 churches with bells , though Ashton with 6 bells are currently unringable, Ashcombe [3] also unringable and Mamhead [6] are hung dead for chiming only. This leaves us with 18 other ringable towers within the Deanery, from the DoE list; Bishopsteignton [6], Bridford [6], Cheriton Bishop [6], Christow [8] Dawlish [8], Doddiscombesleigh [6], Dunsford [6], Exminster [8], Holcombe Burnell[6], Ideford[6], Kenn[6], Kenton[6], Powderham [6], Tedburn St. Mary [6], Teignmouth both St James [8] & St Michael [8], Whitestone [6], and Dunchideock with only 3 bells . However for many years both Alphington [8] and Ide [6] churches, whilst being members of the Christianity Deanery, have remained associated with the Kenn Deanery and remain very active members of it. Rumour has it that Harry Brewer, a former Captain and dedicated ringer at Alphington, made sure that when the Christianity Deanery subsumed Alphington he insisted the “tower” should remain within the Kenn Deanery so that they could continue to ring in the Annual Deanery Competitions. Whether or not this is true remains a mystery. It is not known if a similar story exists for Ide.

So today we have 19 towers which are considered to form the “Kenn Deanery” amongst ringing circles. Six have 8 bells, the rest 6. Every year the Deanery Competition is held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday in September and is always rung on 6 bells. On advice from the Devon Association’s and Church Surveyors that the amount of ringing should be restricted to preserve the tower Alphington has not hosted the annual competition for some years. Hopefully in 2020 Whitestone will become the last tower to join all the other towers to host the competition so far in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

As part of the on-going encouragement of all the ringers in the Deanery to get both more experience and meeting

ringers from other Deanery towers, on the last week of 10 months of the year an evening of ringing is organised on the practice night of the tower visited. This ensures that over 2 years all the towers in the Deanery are visited. The Annual Competition in September makes up the 10<sup>th</sup> month. As part of the organisation of these events I, as Secretary of the Deanery, circulate emails to over 120 ringers who ring in towers in the Deanery. Each month they are reminded of the location and date of that months ringing evening. Generally only about 20% of Deanery Ringers attend but those who do always have a pleasurable evening’s ringing and the exchange of gossip and other stories, though not always associated with ringing. The Deanery’s AGM is held each year on an evening in May, where the previous year’s Competition was held. An annual subscription of £10 is levied and enables any tower within the Deanery to apply for a grant towards bellringing costs. Recently grants towards ropes have been made to Bridford, Powderham and Tedburn St. Mary. Applications can be made at any time during the year to the Secretary and approval is sought and discussed at the next monthly Deanery evening.



*St Michael's Church, Teignmouth. Photo by Takver*

It is worth realising that the towers in the Kenn Deanery “suffer”, as do many towers across both Devon and the rest of the UK, by the diminishing number of Bellringers. Most towers are supported on their practice nights by ringers who also ring at other towers. Unfortunately many towers find ringing every time their church has a Sunday service a problem, as those who can support on a week-night at another tower cannot always be available on a Sunday to ring as they need to ring at their own tower.

Alphington for example is supported on practice nights by a total of 16 ringers, who also support at many other towers. These include, Kenn, Kenton, Exminster, Powderham, Whitestone, St Thomas Exeter, Woodbury, Pinhoe, but have also on occasions at Newton St Cyres & Broadclyst.

**John Staddon**

***With thanks also to Google !!! and proof readers, Linda, Herb & Colin.***

# The Loneliness of the Long Distance Ringer!

Have you ever set out on a journey full of hope and expectation and suddenly been confronted with a series of events you had never considered? I'm sure you have, we all have. Such situations catch us unaware and we can be thrown by them and the effects can linger for some time. Suddenly we must think of ways of coming to terms with the problem with which we are presented, it may involve abolishing our original plan or plans altogether. These surprise events have been described as: "the law of unplanned consequences", they affect large organisations, as well as humble individuals such as bell-ringers.

A loyal and faithful ringer, whom I know well, recently had experiences he hadn't expected as he set out to attend a meeting. The meeting was the Kenn Deanery Ringers' AGM. It was scheduled to take place at Dunsford Church on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2019. To get to Dunsford he had to use public transport. Having studied the local timetable he first caught the bus into Exeter. His connection was a bus going to Moretonhampstead via Dunsford.

The bus left Exeter on time and he had calculated that it would arrive at Dunsford before the meeting was due to start. Sitting comfortably he prepared for what he thought would be a pleasant journey. So far so good, that is until the bus reached Pocombe Bridge, situated on the western outskirts of the city. Surprise, surprise, instead of the bus heading towards Dunsford Hill the driver turned left at the Alphington interchange and headed towards Tedburn St. Mary. Then on to Whiddon Down, eventually arriving at Moretonhampstead!!

Alighting at Moreton, he came across a sign which read: "Road Closed between Exeter and Moretonhampstead due to road works"! Ah, but in the distance came the sound of bells pealing and he made his way towards the local church. All was not lost and his luck was in; it was Moreton's practice night and so he made his way to the church, climbed the steps, cautiously entered the ringing chamber and introduced himself. Introductions done he was then invited to help with teaching as it was actually a learner's practice night, and this he willingly did. At 19.45 and with practice over, he politely asked, "Is anyone going



*The original destination, Dunsford. Photo by Robert Cutts*



*The actual destination, Moretonhampstead.*

*Photo by Mypouss*

back towards Exeter?" There was silence, and then one person said, "Well, I can get you to Bovey Tracey if it helps." With a feeling of relief the lift was gladly accepted as there was the possibility of being able to catch a bus from Bovey Tracey back to Exeter.

Arriving at Bovey and checking the timetable, feelings of hope quickly gave way to despair, when he discovered that the last bus from Bovey to Exeter left at 19.50 hrs. In arranging their timetable clearly Stagecoach had not taken into account that it was Moreton's practice night!

Well, undeterred, even at this time, the ringer walked to Heathfield in the hope of catching a bus travelling up from Plymouth. How many miles is it from Bovey to Heathfield? At a

guess it must be between two or three. After spending time at Heathfield, and with no bus in sight, the next leg of the journey was contemplated, to walk from Heathfield to Newton Abbot. Well how many miles must this be?

Arriving at Newton Abbot at 22.20, ten minutes after the 22.10 service to Exeter had left, and 50 minutes before the next one was due, he decided to walk to the Railway Station to see what might be the best option. Much to his relief he discovered that a train to Exeter was due at 23.03. The train duly arrived and he hopped on. "Ah Exeter, and nearly home", he must have thought. Well, not quite. Unfortunately there weren't any city buses running which meant walking from St. David's Station to the Bus Station at the top of the city, a distance of approximately two miles. At last relief when he found the new night service out of Exeter was in operation. Half an hour later and at 1.30 a.m. this valiant and indomitable ringer arrived safely home, at long last a rest for his sore and weary

trotters!

Who was this ringer you may well ask? Well he wishes to remain anonymous, but what I can tell you is he is well into his senior years. I'm sure you will agree with me that he needs to be applauded, not only for using public transport but also for helping to protect the environment and save the planet, and all in the name of a ringers' AGM!

**Colin Adams**



# Obituary for Roy William Stickling (1927-2019)

I am sad to record that Roy Stickling died on 9<sup>th</sup> June this year in his 92<sup>nd</sup> year.

Many people will remember Roy who was a long-time ringer here in Devon. He was born in Yeovil, then the family moved to Crediton where his father was the postmaster. Later he moved to Bridport when his father became the Head Postmaster. The family moved again, this time to Warminster where Roy completed his education. At school Roy was so good at mathematics that he overtook the talents of his teacher. He was so gifted that at secondary school he spent most of his time in the library taking himself through the advanced syllabus.

After leaving school he was Articled to a firm of architects in Yeovil, university was out of the question at this time. Architecture was to be his first career. During the war he volunteered as a fireman where his life took a happy turn as it was at this time that he met Betty who was to become his wife of over 64 years.

After marriage Roy and Betty moved to Torquay where he worked in the Borough architects department. He was responsible for the design of several public buildings in Torquay. However, he then became interested in computers and saw the potential for processing information. Computers were newly introduced to commerce and Roy moved to work with the computer department setting up systems for design and taking the tedium out of calculating such things as payroll and data management. Computing was to be his second career choice. During his time at Torquay, Roy took up several hobbies and rekindled his interest in bellringing which he had been taught by Betty's father. He became the Captain at Cockington in 1955.

In 1973 he and Betty moved to Exeter when Roy obtained a post at County Hall as Principal Management Services Computer Applications Assistant. It was then that Roy joined the Kenn team and where I got to know him first, he was a stalwart member there, and having joined the S.E.Rs, he also became treasurer of the Devon Association of Ringers for several years.

In 1980 Roy and Betty moved to Presteigne in Wales to be near to their daughter Jaqueline. He took up ringing again and rang for Presteigne and Knighton and did his best to get them ringing call change style. Roy could also ring methods but confessed that the Devon style was what he preferred.

He was a truly remarkable character who enjoyed solving logic puzzles, became a member of MENSA although, I gather, he only attended a few meetings as he thought it was populated by histrionic cat-mad women and dotty old professors. Those who knew Roy might say "pots and kettles", for he certainly had his own eccentricities. There is so much more which could be said about this remarkable man but space limits a fuller tribute.

Following the death of Betty Roy lived on his own and largely cared for himself until a few months before he died. It was a privilege to have known him and the world is diminished for his passing.



*Roy with one of the restored bells from Presteigne, Wales*

**Michael Adams** with grateful thanks to Simon and Jaqueline, Roy's children for their help in compiling this tribute

# Obituary for Montague Cecil Bertram 'Monty' 1944-2019

The funeral of Monty, as he was affectionately known, took place at St. Mary Magdalene Church, South Molton, on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2019. Monty had been unwell for several years, and his condition gradually deteriorated. He died peacefully at home surrounded by his family.

He learnt to ring at South Molton when he was eleven years old. He was taught by his uncle, Cyril Holland. After many years of regular ringing he was appointed Tower Captain, a position he held until ill health forced him to retire.

During his ringing career he also helped out by ringing at Chittlehampton, and frequently rang with the team in eight and six-bell ringing competitions. His competition ringing started during the 1960s, and continued up until the time when he became ill. Having been out and about ringing for such a long time Monty knew many of the old members of the ringing fraternity: people such as- the late Tommy Kingdom of Witheridge, Jack Toze of Swimbridge, Ralph and Tom Wright of Down St. Mary. He was a good conversationalist (the less charitable might say chatter-box), and there was nothing he liked more than going back over past ringing events and recalling some of the dry comments made by ringers who were around at the time. Of course, being such a character himself many ringers from across Devon knew Monty very well.

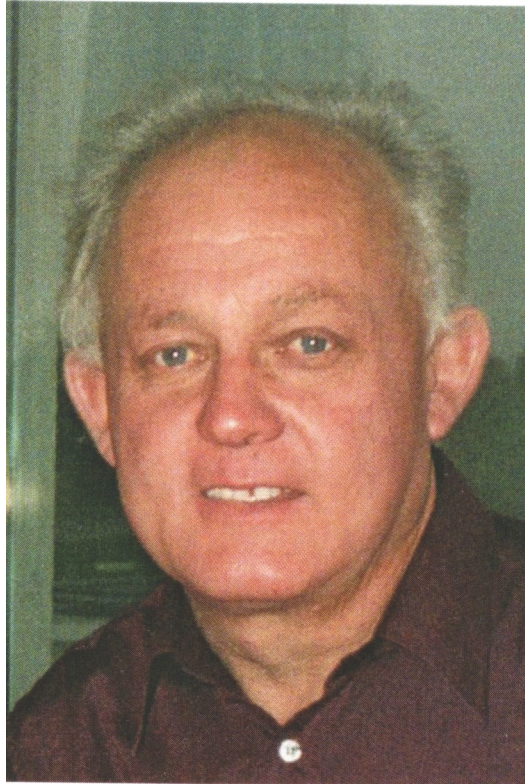
The humorous side of Monty's character was touched on by The Reverend Dr. Michael Grandey who conducted the funeral service. During his address he informed the mourners that Monty wasn't particularly fond of school, he much preferred football instead, and could regularly be seen playing football in and around South Molton.

When he first met his wife, Rose, Monty insisted that it was Rose who went down on one knee and proposed to him, not the other way round! The couple were married at South Molton Church in 1969 and had been married for 50 years.

He was an avid supporter of Aston Villa FC and would often speak about the time when the team won the FA cup back in 1957 by beating Manchester United 2-1 at Wembley, and when both goals were scored by Monty's star player Peter McParland.

He was such a keen supporter of Aston Villa that when one of his sons arrived home wearing a Liverpool shirt Monty immediately went out and bought his son a tent!

Although apparently not keen on school he did, none the less, did have an aptitude for mathematics. He was a builder by trade and ran his own business. He taught mathematics to



apprentices within the building trade, and was even offered a full time post teaching maths at Somerset College of Art and Technology, an offer which he declined.

For the entrance music at his funeral service Monty chose 'Stranger on the Shore', by Acker Bilk. He was very fond of Acker Bilk and quite by chance he and Rose met him on a train journey. It seems they had reserved seats on the train, but on entering the carriage discovered a man already sitting in one of the seats. Rose explained to the man that the seats were reserved for her and Monty, and she promptly produced the tickets. The man duly got up and apologised. Monty, having realised who the man was, said, "You can't do that, don't you realise who he is? This is Acker Bilk!" The three then journeyed on together with Monty enthusiastically talking to Acker all the way, even walking to the end of the platform with him when they arrived at their destination.

Not surprisingly the church at South Molton was packed full of mourners, and St. Mary Magdalene's is a large church to fill, testament to Monty's popularity. It was a hot August afternoon, and the majestic sound of the bells, pealing out over the town from the equally majestic tall tower, conveyed a message of thanksgiving for Monty's devoted and loyal service to his wife and family, his business, his numerous friends and of course bellringing. South Molton's ringers held bell ropes to form a guard of honour as the coffin was carried into the church and by Chittlehampton ringers as it left.

During the service two hymns were sung: "The Ringer's Hymn" followed by "Angel Voices Ever Singing". The exit music was "The Last Farewell", sung by Roger Whittaker. The music was well chosen, and befitting of a man who was himself a star player.

*And when life's peal we cease  
And come at last to rest,  
May heavenly bells of peace,  
Acclaim us with the blest.  
Each part rung true,  
Ours now the prize;  
In Christ, to rise  
And ring anew.*

*From "The Ringers' Hymn".*

*By George Campbell-Grills.*

**Colin Adams**



# South Devon Ringers—The Beric Bartlett Festival in aid of Devon Historic Churches Trust.

After a break of five years the festival was reinstated and took place on a very hot and sunny afternoon at Stokenham, Nr. Kingsbridge on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2019. The event last took place at St. Budeaux, Plymouth on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> August 2014.

On this 15cwt peal of six bells eight teams competed, six in the Senior Section and two in the Intermediate. Interestingly enough only two marks separated the winners from the runners up in both sections.

Although the number of teams taking part was slightly down on previous years people were nonetheless very generous. The festival raised £102.60 for Devon Historic Churches Trust.

Thanks go to Jereme Darke for all that he did towards organising the event and being on hand during the afternoon and for providing teas (it was so nice to see Jereme participating in a ringing event once more). Thanks are also due to Father Michael Berrett, as well as Tower Captain Howard Perkins for kindly agreeing to host the event. Thanks also to John Cole of Malborough and Cliff Wilson of Exminster for giving their time so freely to act as judges.

The results were.

Intermediate section:

1. Sherford 48.
2. South Pool 50.

Senior section:

1. Kingsteignton 16 ½ (George Middleton Shield).
2. South Brent 18 ½ (Arthur Tapper Memorial Shield).
3. Stokenham 'B' 39.
4. Stokenham 'A' 40 ½.
5. Alphington 52 ¼.
6. Stoke Gabriel 56.

The event was last held at Stokenham on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> September 1987. Seventeen teams took part and the winners were Eggbuckland with 19 2/3 marks. In second place came South Brent with 40. Buckland-in-the-Moor were third with 40 1/3.

The judges were: Harry Heathman and Norman Fry from Lydford and Brian Drake from North Tawton.

*Colin Adams*



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