RINGING ROUND DEVON

Newsletter 142 June 2026



View of Exeter Quay – you can just make out the spire of St Michael's, Mount Dinham (see article)
Photo by Sarah Cooney from her new house!

Bell Sunday around the county

Bell Sunday at Exeter Cathedral

On Sunday 10 May (a week earlier than usual because of other commitments) Exeter Cathedral celebrated 'Bell Sunday'. This is a wonderful opportunity to recognise the contribution of bells and bell ringers to church life and the community - and the Cathedral is no different. Though to avoid a clash with confirmations, this bell-themed service was a week earlier than at most churches.

Prior to the Choral Eucharist service, a good quarter peal of 1263 Stedman Caters was rung on the front ten (extra treble to 9th, using the flat 6th instead of the ordinary 6th to form a proper diatonic scale). Even though this doesn't include the heaviest bells at the Cathedral it still takes nearly an hour and therefore means arriving just after 8.30am. Quite early enough for a Sunday morning! And some of our ringers travel a long way – so a really early start for them. The ringers then rushed down the tower and to our reserved seats at the front. Additionally, we had setup our 2m high information screen, flags and model bell.

During the service, the sermon given by the Precentor talked about the naming of bells and especially the names of the Cathedral bells which he read out a couple of times. In particular, the flat 6th, called 'Pongamouth' generated some smiles though its name may tell you something about the quality of its tuning!



Handbell ringers, clockwise from left:
Steph Hills, Oliver Coldrick, Matthew Hilling, Andrew Digby

'Ring out, ye bells below' was sung with the organ played marvellously by our organ scholar Michael D'Avanzo who is also a ringer. And the collection was taken in aid of the DCBRF.

As the choir took Communion, three leads of Kent TB Major were rung on handbells which featured prominently in the YouTube live feed from which this image is taken.

After the service, whilst chatting over coffee, many of the congregation gathered around our display which included a two metre high information screen, 'come and try it', bellringing flags and a handheld model bell so we could explain what happens when we pull the rope. Many questions were asked and a lot of interest generated.

Matthew Hilling

Bell Sunday in Membury

A couple of months ago I received an email from Trish Slade about Bell Sunday and started to put out some feelers about how we could celebrate it in Membury.

We have two handbell groups as well as the tower bells and it seemed a good idea to combine all aspects of ringing.

Luckily Ceri Dash, the conductor of the big handbell group (the one that plays tunes) was very supportive, as was our Vicar Sarah Godfrey.

A couple of meetings (and a whole load of WhatsApp messages) later a plan had been formulated!

The entire service was dedicated to the bells in our community:

- The tower bells were rung as usual prior to the service. As is often the case we were short of ringers due to a charity bike ride and a Eurovision party (!) but were helped out by neighbouring towers. Another example of great community cohesion.
- Two ringers spoke: the first about the history of our handbells and the second about how they began their journey to learn to ring tower bells.
- The hymns were all about bells too including one specially written for Bell Sunday by Clare le Mare.
- Both handbell groups played.

I should probably say a little about how the handbell groups were formed for perspective. We discovered six handbells in our vestry in November 2025 which were in a very poor state but when put together with some bell plates owned by Ceri were enough for us to play a tune. It was then that I discovered 25 beautiful handbells at Uplyme and the Vicar there was generous enough to lend them to us. Since then we have grown in strength, now numbering about 15 people of all abilities including elderly members of our community, those who are less mobile and some who have been diagnosed with dementia but who love the society and fun of handbell ringing. Ceri has to put in a great deal of work to make the music accessible to all but it is a superb example of how bells can bring the community together.

Various village groups have supported us and a generous donation from the History Society enabled us to have the six Membury handbells restored by Geoff Hill in Tavistock. It is these bells the church handbell group use. Only two of us ring tower bells so learning Plain Hunt has been a challenge but we were able to do so (only one bell each) on Sunday as the clergy entered and left.

The larger handbell group played short pieces from hymns including 'Oh WhenThe Saints' and 'All Things Bright and Beautiful' and interspersed the prayers with refrains of 'Kum-Ba-Ya'.

We have a rather superb working model of a tower bell which we decorated with campanula and displayed in the Choir.

The PCC served tea and biscuits after the service and most stayed for a chat and to 'have a go' at the handbells.

I would like to thank all those involved in organising the event, those who rang, those who enjoyed the service and especially Uplyme church for the continued use of their handbells.

Janice Hodge

Bell Sunday at Stokeinteignhead

For the Stokeinteignhead ringers Bell Sunday started on Saturday! Several posters and other advertising had been used around the village and this paid off well. The church was open from 10.30am with various displays about bells and ringing. These included Martin Mansley's bell simulator which was used to good effect to demonstrate both the ringing action and the bell striking. In the tower the bells were used to demonstrate method ringing, mainly with Grandsire Doubles. Anyone who wished could then have a go at backstrokes but two of the visitors were returning ringers who were able to join in some rounds. It would be great if they could join the band permanently.



Back in the church handbells were used to 'walk' plain hunting on six. This was very much enjoyed, particularly by one six year old from the local school.

This was Stokeinteignhead so the refreshments flowed continuously with coffee, tea and the usual delicious cakes.

A very successful and enjoyable morning. We look forward to seeing some new ringers as a gratifying result.

The next event was on the Sunday when the Sunday service was led by ringer, Hugh (Mac) McCormick, and included two ringers' hymns and some ringing in the service. The whole was a very good opportunity to educate the congregation about ringing. Many thanks to everyone for their hard work.

Martin Mansley

Bell Sunday at Sidmouth



Part of the display at Sidmouth

Sunday 17 May was Bell Sunday – being the nearest date to 19 May which is St Dunstan's Day – the Patron Saint of Bellringers (amongst other things). The key purpose behind Bell Sunday is to give thanks intentionally to ringers for the service they give in bringing the public voice of the church to the local community.

We're so fortunate to have a supportive Rector who was happy to include references to bells and bellringers in the morning services. A board inside the church explained the meaning of Bell Sunday and included photos of our ringers in action – from some unusual angles and taken during a recent practice night by Bob Reynolds, a photographer of some note. One of our talented ringers had knitted a selection of different sized bells which we were allowed to drape around the lectern as a reminder that Sidmouth has a lovely ring of 10 bells – plus a mediæval bell which is used as a Sanctus, or 5 minute bell. During the services prayers were included for the bells and bellringers, a bellringer read the lesson at the 10am service, and our Director of Music managed to find a suitable 'bell' hymn. Bell shaped biscuits were also served with coffee after the service.

With grateful thanks for Jon Rose for his input.



Knitted bells draped over the lectern

Anne Bailey

Bell Sunday at Littlehempston

This is the only ring of five bells in the Mid-Devon branch area now that East Ogwell and Denbury have been augmented to six. A band is being taught for them and ringers regularly attend Berry Pomeroy practices. Hence when ringer Mike Thomas requested help for Bell Sunday three Berry Pomeroy ringers answered the call. We understand that the monthly service there was strongly bell themed with the vicar admitting that she used to ring herself. Several of the parishes in her care have rings of bells so perhaps she will be tempted back.

Bell Sunday at Cockington

This church is in the middle of a very popular park and visitor attraction. The church and tower were open for the afternoon of Bell Sunday. An exhibition was organised by Nicola Jones and around 30 of the visitors had a try at ringing for the first time.

With the national thrust to get more ringers by 2030 this was another excellent event; hopefully, some of those will come forward to be trained for the future.



Martin Mansley

Bell Sunday at St Peter's, Tiverton



Members of St Peter's band took leading roles in the morning service to mark Bell Sunday on 17 May. Ringers were involved in reading a lesson, leading the intercessions, administering the chalice at the communion and serving refreshments.

After the refreshments we led a party of visitors up the tower for a demonstration ring and visits to the clock, bells and the roof. We are hopeful that a couple of people may be interested in learning to ring.

In the afternoon, a St Peter's band rang for the Flower Festival at Cheriton Fitzpaine and helped to demolish the cake mountain there!

Les Boyce

2025 Guild Report

I am pleased to be able to tell you the 2025 Guild report is now available for download from the Guild membership system and can be accessed from the members' home page:
https://membermojo.co.uk/devonringers/membershome

Printed copies are available and being distributed to all affiliated towers and to members who requested them when renewing their membership on the membermojo system.

John Martin

Guild Master meets TDGR President



Madron church tower with the clock advising 'Watch and pray, time hastes away'

During this special year of being Guild Master I have reflected many times on my ringing over the years.

I learnt to ring at Madron near Penzance in the early 1970s and stopped when I started my nurse training in November 1977.

I returned to ringing literally 30 years later when I attended the dedication service for the augmentation of the bells at St Mark's, Exeter in April 2007 and wondered why I had stopped ringing.

I had the opportunity in April to attend a Truro Diocesan Guild of Ringers Western meeting to be held at Madron and St Buryan and thought how lovely it would be to return to my old tower.

As I crossed the car park who should I meet but Owen Borlase, President of the TDGR!



Owen and Wendy, with both of us wearing our badges of office

I had a really lovely afternoon with special memories. A small footnote – the delicious ringers' tea included scones made correctly…jam first!!!!

Wendy Gill

Obituary

Mary White RIP

In the mid 1990s Basil and Mary White moved to live in Paignton and joined the band at St Marychurch where they rang in several quarter peals and were very regular Sunday service and practice ringers. They eventually became ringers at Stokeinteignhead when Basil played the organ there in the days of Revd Robert Southwood. In the early 2000s they moved to Hampshire to be near their daughter. Basil died some years ago. From *The Ringing World* we learn that Mary has now passed away at the age of 92. We remember them both with affection and send our condolences to Mary's family.

Martin Mansley

Aylesbeare Branch

Branch Outing



Just a little introductory: if you ever want to find yourself in places where you have never been before then I would recommend going on a branch outing. For me, the recent Aylesbeare Branch outing on 18 April was filled with: three unknown churches and their bell ringing chambers; a magnificent carved oak tree from the reformation period; a puzzling detective conundrum of many slippers and a bottle of port; miniature bells, hung from the roof of a spacious garage.

About twenty-five ringers from Woodbury, Topsham, Lympstone, Sowton and Withycombe Raleigh (and one from Wimborne) began the day at St Andrew's, Cullompton. We found this ring of 10 quite a challenge but rose to it, thanks to a recent branch practice at Withycombe. Inside the church, with its magnificent fan-vaulted stone ceiling and incredible intricate wooden panelling, is where you will see, lying on its side, the large carved trunk of an oak tree from the Reformation period. Known as Golgotha, it was originally the central support for the medieval rood screen, one of the longest such screens in Devon.

St Mary's, Kentisbeare, was the next stop and where, unbeknown to me, you might need to take your shoes off before ringing! We did not, as it was not until we were about to leave that we noticed the pile of slippers and bottle of port hidden under a bench. I think we were grateful that it was a lovely dry sunny day, which meant our shoes were leaving no marks on their light cream carpet. Again, a good tower with lovely bells. I have to add here that all new bells that I come in contact with seem great to me, but then my home tower is Lympstone and I'm told if you can ring at Lympstone you can ring anywhere.

Lunch was at the Waterloo Cross Inn, on a lovely long table which seated us all comfortably. I very much enjoyed my chat with a fellow ringer and the discovery of a shared love of drama. After that, it was off to St Mary's, Uffculme, with no stairs to climb! We all had plenty of opportunities to ring on these lovely-sounding bells.

The last stop of the day was a real novelty and within walking distance. Piglet bells are a mini-ring of 8, the tenor weighing 20lbs 10oz, hung in a spacious double garage. They have an illustrious history, having originally hung in Marston Bigot, Somerset, in a location known as Pig-le-Tower. Many notable peals and long lengths have been achieved on these bells over the years. Amongst those who had not rung mini bells before it was noticeable that the younger ringers mastered them more quickly than their seniors but by the end of the session we were all able to take part in some decent ringing.

I know I might have missed so much out, but as branch representative I encourage you all to get out there and support these branch events as you never know what you are going to find. Ringing on new bells is also a great way to improve skills. Thank you to Margot for organising the day, to the locals who gave up their time to let us in, to Charlotte for hosting us at Piglet and to those kind experts that help us all to become better ringers.

Wendy Launder-Smith

East Devon Branch

New members elected



Two new members were welcomed at the East Devon branch meeting, Tomie from St Andrew, Feniton and James from St Mary, Whimple. Lovely to see such young and enthusiastic ringers joining the Guild.

Rose Lynn

East Devon General Meeting

We had a very successful Spring meeting at Honiton on Saturday May 9, with ringing ranging from rounds and call changes to Stedman Triples and Little Bob Major.

At the short meeting after tea, there were some finance matters discussed:

- The Branch will decide annually on a donation to the Devon Church Bell Restoration Fund with £500 agreed to be donated this year.
- £400 will be ring-fenced for members undertaking residential training outside the Guild with an amount of up to £100 per person.
- The rope fee costs of branch training, outings and practices will be paid for out of the 30% branch share of members' Guild subscriptions

Ian Rees

Antics at Honiton

Honiton tower 'poured themselves' out of the tower after a cider-fuelled practice! This was courtesy of home-made cider from Simon, from Gittisham tower and was purely to cool everybody down. Visitors Rosie and Barry helped make up the band of Wurzels – I mean ringers.



Pictured l to r: Margot, Sue, Simon, Mike, Barry, Rosie, Alex, Huw (+ Rosie and Barry's daughter, centre front).

Sue King

Monday Ringers – First outing of the Year



The ringers at Coffinswell

It was a really enjoyable day's ringing on Monday 16 March at Abbotskerswell, Ipplepen, Marldon and finally at Coffinswell. The Guild was well represented. Among the ringers (pictured) were members from Aylesbeare, East, Exeter, N/NW and SW Branches. Others came from Somerset and there was even a visiting ringer all the way from Cumbria.

The day was very well organised and run by East Devon's Ringing Master, Ian Rees. Methods rang included Plain Bob Major, Triples (Grandsire, Plain and Stedman), Doubles (Plain, Stedman and Grandsire), Plain Bob Minor, Kent TB Minor and Norwich S Minor. Plus some awesome, and nicely paced, Devon call changes. What a great variety of ringing!

A lovely lunch at the Two Mile Oak Inn, near Ipplepen was the icing on the cake. The whole day lived up to the ethos of this group: Monday Ringers – good ringing, good company. I will always by grateful to Kathie for introducing me to this great and very friendly group!

Sue King

Exeter Branch

Skittles Evening – March 7



Michael Cannon was the proud winner at the Exeter Branch Skittles evening

Photo by Kathy Gray

Branch train outing – May 4



Waiting at Honiton – note St Paul's tower in the background

The Exeter Branch bank holiday train outing was held on May 4. Starting at Exeter and picking up ringers on the way the first stop was Whimple (6, 12-2-15), where after ringing we were unexpectedly treated to hot drinks and cake, provided by the local ringers and members of the church.



Coffee and cake at Whimple

From there the train took us to Axminster, where we descended on the town for lunch, some of us getting it from the station cafe and eating it on the tables provided on the platform, in the unexpected heat of the sun.

Following ringing on the fine (but rather heavy-going) ten at Axminster (10, 23-1-15) the train took us back to Honiton where there was time for a cup of tea before ringing on the eight at St Paul's (8, 12-2-27).

Feeling rather weary, but pleased with the day we made our way home again on the train, which stopped at various stations to drop people off.

Ian Campbell

Snap – matching shoes!



Matching shoes at Heavitree: Siân, Susan, Sarah, Wendy, Kathy

There has been a growing trend amongst the ladies of the band at Heavitree (and beyond) to own a pair of supremely comfortable Clarks leather slip-on shoes that are quite unbeatable when standing on your feet for any length of time – such as ringing quarters or peals! I believe that the design was to have been pensioned off long ago by Clarks, but there were howls of protests from nurses and others who were on their feet all day and so it had a reprieve. Available in shops to this day.

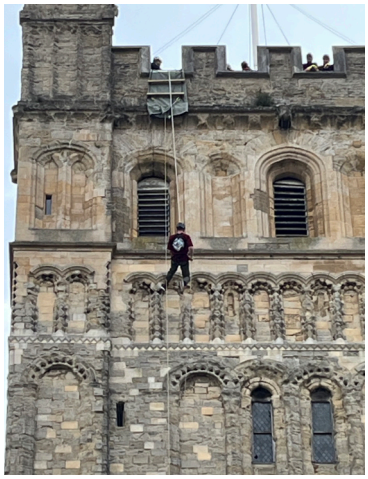
We recently realised that no fewer than six of us were the proud owners of a pair, so we managed to get five of us assembled one practice night and a picture duly taken. One gripe we have is that the shoes used to be available in a wonderful range of colours but sadly this has now been reduced to just one: black. Maybe a collective letter to Clarks might persuade them to change their minds!

Wendy Campbell

Matt Hilling abseils down the North Tower



Matt ready to descend



Over the top and down!

On Saturday 9 May, 46 brave individuals, including the Bishop of Exeter, abseiled down the 140-foot Norman North Tower of Exeter Cathedral to raise funds for its continued conservation for generations to come. In total they reached the milestone of £56,000 in donations.

Matthew Hilling (ringing master at the Cathedral) bravely took part to represent the ringers as seen in these photos, as did one of the Silverton ringers (see later).

Ian Campbell

Clapper problems at Exeter Cathedral

Every time there is a fifth Sunday in the month, the afternoon ringing at the Cathedral is passed over to a top Devon Association call-change band, under the auspices of Ian Avery. Wendy and I felt privileged to be invited to join such first-rate call-change ringing. However it is not clear that the bells on Palm Sunday (March 29) were quite so happy with the ringing.

Almost as soon as we had started ringing on the light ten there was a thump and the 9th (acting as the tenor) stopped striking. The remains of the wooden-shafted clapper were retrieved which indicated that part of the metal shaft had broken where it joins the wood. Excellent ringing on the light six followed, and then the back eight were tried (albeit with the 9th missing, which would be the 5th of the back eight). Following a few call-changes on this interesting set of bells another thump indicated that the clapper from the 10th had fallen to the same fate. Clearly the bells did not like call-changes, being accustomed mainly to method ringing! A message sent out to all members on 1 April (!) stated that:

Exeter Cathedral has banned call-change ringing for the foreseeable future. This was brought about after a call-change band was ringing for the 4pm service on Sunday and broke two clappers within 15 minutes. When the clappers have been repaired or replaced, call-changes will have to be subject to stringent tests to ensure the same cannot happen in future.



The broken clappers awaiting removal on the hoist down the tower



The repaired clappers awaiting installation

The old SG steel clappers were reinstated in time for ringing on Easter Sunday until new ones were delivered and could be fitted.

Ian Campbell

Congratulations to the Hilling family



As a part of the celebrations for David Hilling's 80th birthday the Hilling family rang 80 rounds at St Mark's, Exeter.

Exeter, Devon, St Mark
Saturday, 21 March 2026 in 3m
80 Rounds

1	Toby Hilling (C)	4	Emma Stander (nee Hilling)
2	Alice Hilling	5	Rosie Hilling
3	Matthew Hilling	6	David Hilling

For the 80th birthday of David Hilling.



Emma, Rosie, Alice, David, Matthew, Toby

Matt Hilling

Disappointment at the National 12-bell competition

The qualifiers for the National 12-bell competition took place on Saturday 28 March, at four venues: Bow, Cornhill, Leicester and Nottingham. We were drawn to ring at Leicester (St Margaret) along with six other teams. The teams placed first and second from each qualifier progress to the final, at York, on June 20. The method this year is Stedman Cinques.

More information can be found here: https://www.12bell.org.uk/

The Exeter band put a lot of effort into practices over a couple of months, kindly supported by David Hird and Sue Sparling but sadly our ringing didn't go to plan. Unfortunately, one member of the band was suffering from pins and needles in both hands and arms and couldn't feel the rope or control the bell. We struggled on through the test piece but, inevitably, were placed low down the result table. The full results for all the qualifiers are on the 12 bell website.

I'm sure we will pick ourselves up and be fully ready for the 2027 competition.

Matt Hilling

Walking Tour of Exeter

Exeter Branch Ring the Unringable

On Saturday 6 June, over 30 members of the Exeter Branch took part in a walking ringing tour around Exeter city centre — with a difference. Inspired by Lester Yeo's tours of the 1990s, the day focused on exploring rarely rung or 'unringable' towers.

St Stephen (1 bell, 3 cwt)

We began at St Stephen's on the High Street, where caretaker Jim Pilkington welcomed us. The single bell, cast by Taylors in 1947 from metal salvaged after the 1942 bombing, hangs dead from girders. Members chimed it from the vestry platform, while some climbed to inspect the dark and little-used upper chambers.



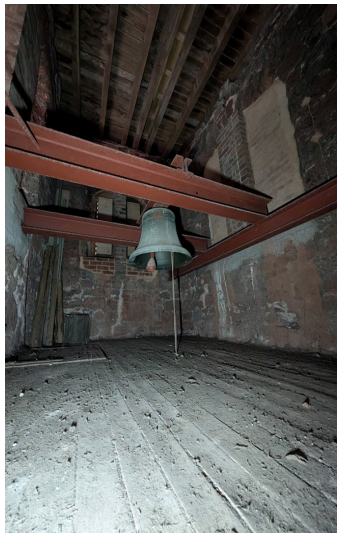
St Stephen's, High Street



Kathy, our Deputy Ringing Master, chiming the bell from the platform above the vestry.



The empty clock room above the vestry



The single bell, hung dead from metal girders

St Pancras (1 bell)

Next was St Pancras in the Guildhall precinct, where Jim was also available to let us in. Its small bell swings in a bellcote and was rung via a rope into a kitchen area — an unusual and memorable experience, with the sound echoing around the surrounding buildings.



St Pancras, with bellcote



Branch members congregating inside St Pancras



Mark chiming the bell



Maff chiming the bell

St Petrock (6 bells, 5 cwt)

After coffee, we visited St Petrock's, the only fully ringable tower of the day. Mark Bertram let us in, and ringing was led by Ian Campbell. We rang rounds, call changes, Grandsire and Stedman Doubles, and Cambridge on this light and well-tuned six. The George Tribe mini-ring also proved popular, especially with younger visitors. Mark then led tours up the belfry providing a rare opportunity to view the well maintained bells.



St Petrock's, High Street



The George Tribe micro ring



Ringing the bells



Neil and Mark viewing the bells

St Mary Steps (4 bells, 6 cwt)

Following lunch, we explored the atmospheric tower of St Mary Steps, where we were let in by Susan Illing. The four bells, cast in 1656, hang in a striking but deteriorating frame. After climbing through the dark tower past the historic clock mechanism, we chimed the bells using an Ellacombe apparatus. The bells sounded like the front four of a ring of five.



St Mary Steps, West Street



The mechanism for the early-17th century clock with automatons which sits high up on the southern face of the bell tower



The view of the run down bell chamber



Jimi, Alice, Sara, and Michael, waiting in turn to chime the bells from the Ellacombe on the ground floor

St Michael and All Angels (1 bell, 26 cwt)

Our final stop was the impressive St Michael and All Angels (Mount Dinham), where we were met by Richard Parker, the church warden. A single large bell, intended as the tenor of an unfulfilled ring of eight, dominates a vast ringing chamber. Despite local opposition in the 19th century preventing a full peal, the remaining bell can still be rung, albeit with effort. Members also climbed to view the bell and the impressive interior of the spire. Following the ring, Richard kindly provided us with tea back down in the main church, where some members chimed the bell and played the piano, before some retired to the Turks Head.



Members of the Exeter Branch outside St Michael and All Angels, Mount Dinham, ahead of climbing the many stairs up to the vast ringing chamber.



Mount Dinham from outside



All 30 of us fitted inside the vast ringing chamber. The rope to the bell can be seen on the left, with a new wooden staircase up to the platform above the chamber housing the bell.



Steph and Alice ringing the bell



The bell, which is accessible from the platform above the vast ringing chamber, with a view straight up the spire



The impressive view up the inside of the spire, as seen from the platform above the ringing chamber



Henry having a go at chiming the bell from inside the main church

Thank you to everyone who opened up towers for us, led some of the ringing, and supported the event. It was a well-attended and thoroughly enjoyable day, demonstrating once again the enthusiasm for even the most unusual ringing opportunities.

Other 'unringable' towers were also approached in organising this event, including St Martin's (1 bell), St Olave's (2 bells), St Mary Arches (4 bells), and The Sacred Heart (1 bell). However, access was not permitted. As a result, future tours in the immediate City Centre are unlikely. Further afield, there remains potential to approach St Leonard's (1 bell), St Matt's (1 bell), St Clare's Chapel (1 bell in a bellcote with permission already granted via our Heavitree contacts), Blessed Sacrament (1 bell), and St Luke's Chapel (1 bell).

Rob Neal, Exeter Branch Secretary

Mid Devon Branch

Extracts from Mid Devon Branch Tower Talk

Advanced practice Bishopsteignton

These practices really have proved very popular and useful. A full range of methods was rung and good progress made, This included useful practice on the treble for treble bobbing and a variety of Surprise Minor methods, Cambridge (of course) several times, as well as London and Wells. As usual, Nigel kept our fluid levels well supplied with coffee and tea halfway through the morning. Speaking personally, I was very moved to receive a round of applause as I entered the ringing room – my first ringing since the accident. Altogether a very enjoyable morning.

Breaking in to method ringing – a two day course

This was quite a departure for the Branch. Two sessions about two hours or so each between Friday evening and Saturday morning.

Friday was at Bishopsteignton, a new tower to some but no stranger to branch activities. Six students had enrolled, although Malcolm was unable to join us on the Friday. Experience in the group varied from first steps at plain hunting to starting Plain Bob (mainly Doubles) inside. Most of the learners had taken part in theory training during the previous weeks and some revision was held whilst the rest of the ringers got down to the practical side. Our Education Officer, Gerraint, was in charge and kept the ringing moving quickly with very willing helpers and mentors doing sterling work. We had a quick break for coffee and then back to work. Less than 24 hours later we were back on the end of the ropes, this time at Stokeinteignhead. Immediately it was obvious that the two day approach was paying off. There was much more confidence evident, and it was clear that a good night's sleep had done wonders, both for the 'trainees' and the helpers!

As usual, the Stokeinteignhead ringers made us very welcome and there was a table heaving with delicious cakes to greet us during breaks from ringing. Several of the ringers went home with cake to eat later. Sheila and Jenny did a great job.

This was a very well received event with much positive feedback and the learners vowing to continue the good work at their tower practices. Very many thanks to the host towers and to all the helpers and participants who worked so hard to make the two days worthwhile.



The Steam Paddle ship *Waverley* visits Dartmouth

The is the last remaining sea-going paddle steamer. It has embarked on a season of sailings from over 70 ports and piers round the UK coastline. For its visit to Dartmouth Henry Grice arranged ringing at Kingswear to commence as she sailed into the Dart for her day in the port. A quarter peal attempt was planned but at about the halfway point it came to grief. A short touch of Plain Bob Minor was added to make sure the event was well marked. We understand from various sources that the bells sounded really well across the water. Thank you Henry for excellent organisation. Apologies that the quarter was not successful.



The Waverley at Dartmouth

6- bell advanced practice Kingskerswell – April

Following the first (very successful) 8 bell advanced practice a second one was arranged. For various reasons attendance was not so great. Having said that, those who attended had a useful morning with Cambridge Major rung several times, a touch of Stedman Triples and a very well struck touch of 196 Grandsire Triples composed and conducted by Don Roberts in his 96th year. Recent publication of an extraordinarily complex peal (at the ninth attempt!) prompted several courses of Titanic Triples. There was general amusement when it was explained that this method was first pealed on 11 bells – hence Titanic Cinques.



l-r; Phil Stevens, Mike Wigney, Wena Mansley, Wendy Gill, Martin Mansley, Don Roberts, Mick Wallis, Nigel Birt

Very many congratulations to Don for an enjoyable touch and to Don and June for their (quite rare) Platinum Wedding anniversary. Again, many thanks for the warm welcome from Kingskerswell.

6 bell practice Ideford

The Branch is not always able to keep to the programme proposed at the AGM and that was the case with this practice as Dean Prior were not available. Ideford was chosen as a substitute. Ideford is very much on the edge of our Branch and that might have been the reason that attendance was not quite so good. Having said that, the ringers who did attend had a very useful and sociable afternoon. It was good to meet one of the local ringers who told us she learned to ring at Dawlish during Lynne Hughes' time as captain.

During a break in proceedings we took the opportunity to elect Emma Harris from Dawlish as a new member of the Branch. We send our very best wishes to her and hope to see her at a branch event very soon. We were also able to present a Guild certificate to Henry Grice. Well done, Henry! It really is great to see how you are progressing.



Martin Mansley presenting Henry Grice with his Guild certificate

Practice gained included hunting the treble, touches of Bob Doubles (including singles for one touch), Plain Bob Minor, London Surprise and Stedman Doubles. We also included two touches of 100 Grandsire Doubles to mark Sir David Attenborough's 100th birthday.

Martin Mansley– health update

Thank you so much to everyone who has enquired after my accident. It turns out I ruptured a tendon in my right knee. This required surgery which was carried out in Torbay Hospital. A variable splint then had to be worn. This was fixed straight for two weeks, 30 degrees and then 60 degrees for two weeks each. This has now been ceremonially thrown away! Exercises have increased the movement, and I can now move it to 90 degrees. This means that I can get into a car but not the driving seat. Being married to a very experienced Occupational Therapist has helped tremendously and I cannot thank her enough. Tower steps have to be taken slowly but are now possible! Many thanks again for all the good wishes.

6 bell advanced practice, May – Bishopsteignton

Numbers were slightly down for this one, but good use was made of these lovely bells, and some very creditable ringing took place in most of the suggested methods. These were Cambridge (two touches), York (2 plain courses), Ipswich (2 courses), London (2 courses), coffee break (several courses!!). Altogether it was a very useful and enjoyable morning. Again, very many thanks to Roger for welcoming us so readily.

Martin Mansley

North-East Branch

Extracts from *Branch Lines* – the NE Branch Newsletter

Two towers – one tradition



The Uffculme ringers at Hemyock



The Silverton ringers in Exeter

Both the Uffculme and Silverton ringers chose to hold a group dinner during Holy Week in place of their regular practice.

This year the venues were the Catherine Wheel at Hemyock for the Uffculme ringers and the Turk's Head in Exeter for the Silverton ringers.

An excellent tradition.

John Martin and Mike Shipton

Ringing and Social at Thorverton (11 April)



Socialising at the Exeter Inn

Branch members enjoyed 6, 8 and 10 bell ringing at Thorverton. We rang call changes, Mexican Wave, Plain Hunt and Bob Doubles.

After two hours of ringing we retired to the Exeter Inn, where splendid meals, specially prepared for us, were served and some excellent ales were enjoyed.

Mike Shipton

John achieves Level 1



Congratulations to John Truswell who received his Level 1 certificate at Tiverton St Peter on Tuesday 21 April.

Mike Shipton

St Peter's on Safari



Members of St Peter's, Tiverton were joined by friends from other towers for an afternoon outing on Saturday 9 May.

We went into classic call change country, visiting Zeal Monarchorum (the birthplace of the Association), Down St Mary and Lapford. Down St Mary church boasts a magnificent collection of cups and shields from ringing competitions past and present.

The day ended with an excellent meal at the Old Malt Scoop Inn at Lapford.

Les Boyce

A Silverton ringer has an adventure!



I stupidly signed up to take part in the Exeter Cathedral abseil, just five days before the event. The deal was we had to sign up, descend the 150ft of the North Tower and raise at least £500 for the fabric of Exeter Cathedral. Sounds simple at the outset!

I was supported by many very generous friends, so the sponsorship rolled in, but as the Saturday afternoon got nearer and I walked past the North Tower, I realised what a stupid decision I had made.

On the day, I began to feel sick with fear at about lunch time, but on arrival at the Cathedral we were in the hands of the wonderful team from Dave Talbot Adventure Events who strapped us into our harnesses, provided gloves and hats, told us what was going to happen and how we were going to do it, then sent us up the 177 old stone steps inside the North Tower.

A brief pause in the flag room, and then up the final steps to the roof. A clamber over the parapet on to what was called a step (in my eyes, a rather wobbly plank of wood) and then I was off – rather slowly letting out my rope to make the descent. The last words from the Bishop and the Dean were, 'Don't put your foot through the window'. The last words from my 7 year old and 5 year old grandchildren were, 'Don't do it, we don't want you to die'.

Never, ever again, I don't think I have ever been so scared. I guess next time I walk past the North Tower there might be a sense of satisfaction that I completed it, didn't die and we have all raised a substantial amount of money for the Cathedral.

Deborah Custance Baker

The Revd Dr Timothy Astin is now the Rector of Silverton, Butterleigh, Bickleigh and Cadeleigh



Local ringers turned out in force at St Mary's, Silverton for the institution and induction of Tim Astin as the new incumbent. The Bishop of Exeter, the Rt Revd Dr Mike Harrison, popped up to the tower to offer encouragement to those about to ring.

Mike Shipton

A Grand Day Out!

Twenty-four members of the Branch enjoyed a full day's outing to the Fowey area of Cornwall. The four towers we visited varied greatly in both weight and ease of ringing. The position of St Winnow on the Fowey estuary offers a glorious view down the river and seems an

unlikely location for a 3¾ cwt ring of 10. At Lanlivery we were very well catered for lunch at the Crown Inn, but the eight bells at St Brevita's provided a challenge.

The light six at Charlestown provided a different challenge but, once we acclimatised, were a delight to ring. The final ring, the magnificent eight at St Fimbarrus in Fowey, were a joy to ring. Some members of the party stopped off at the Post Inn, Whiddon Down for an evening meal on the way home.

In summary – glorious weather, interesting bells, some good ringing, good food and good company!



Members and friends at St Winnow's

Les Boyce

South-West Branch

Mary Tavy Clangers win local quiz



The Clangers with their prizes

The Mary Tavy Clangers won the Mary Tavy quiz on March 20. The official story is that the bruises on Mrs S's face are due to a close encounter with a Tavistock pavement, but of course as we've all dutifully done our safeguarding training, there could be other explanations…

Phil Dunn

Raising and lowering in peal

Bells rung up and down in peal, for me is one of the loveliest sounds. I am very much a jerky soloist when it comes to this skill so I was delighted to hear of two morning workshops run by Phil Dunn and friends of the South West Branch.

The first was on 28 March at St Eustachius, Tavistock. Amusingly the 'what three words' to identify the place were Jumpy, Random, Dangerously. It was as if my teacher, Nick, had sent in a report on my standard of ringing! It was quite a long drive from my base in South Pool. We arrived a bit late and were perplexed that we couldn't hear any bells. I worried I'd dragged out Nick on the wrong day. For the benefit of the residents of Tavistock the bells were silenced and a computer simulator was sounding the bells to be heard in the tower only. There were a few more improvers than teachers but we had individual attention and several attempts to ring up and down on our own. At the end we all had a go at ringing up and down in peal surrounded by experts so we knew whose bell it was if it was out of time; and it wasn't theirs.

The next session was on 11 April at the beautiful and isolated tiny church of St Michael, Brentor surrounded by stunning scenery. Interestingly there were only five bells. We had several attempts to try to ring up and down in peal with four experts. Despite a lot of helpful advice from Phil, Alena and others I was disappointed that this skill is still beyond me. Others seemed to be doing very nicely.

However I feel a lot more confident and less frightened and have new tricks to practise until the workshops are hopefully repeated next year!

A grateful thanks to the ringing experts who gave up their time to help us.

Michele Lacey

Branch Outing, Spring 2026



Group photo outside Loddiswell church

It was the South Hams! and what a lovely day it turned out to be.

We enjoyed endless single lane roads of the sunken variety between steep verges brimming with spring flowers. Cow parsley was coming on, blue bells were on the way out, vibrant greens everywhere and the occasional cluster of red campion. Many lanes had proper grass in the middle, something we like, please see image. And the towers themselves:

Halwell had a community get-together with plant sale going on, a busy start. I parked rather haphazardly near the lychgate as I was late for this first tower. But for good reason, I had already scraped rust from a bell frame in Plympton for two hours. The ropes were more elastic than many people are used to, but yeah, all good.

Blackawton surprised with a completely noise free accident when the rope of the third coiled mid-ring down from the ceiling. As if a snake charmer had stopped playing their pipe. The breaking point was a splice, and the bell just stood, no clanging whatsoever. Jonathan, the luckless ringer at the time, calmly created an orderly bundle of the rope, hung it on a peg and we continued ringing on five bells.

The socialising part was very much taking place at various locations including the pub at East Allington, the next tower, which had an interesting toilet construction half out, half in. The tower, not the pub.

Following was Loddiswell, our first ground-floor ring and the place of our reduced group photo. We are missing about 5 to 10 people at that moment, but they turned up eventually.

Last, not least, the easiest ring of the day in Kingston, in the evening sun, a serene end to our outing.

Many thanks to organiser David from Bere Ferrers for a splendid day.



Barbara Hocke

Training and Education

Devon Young Ringers Call to Action

Calling all tower captains!

Do you have bellringers under the age of 18?

Are your young ringers going to the once monthly practices specifically meant for them?

Sending your young ringers to the monthly practices held at Pinhoe on the outskirts of Exeter not only gives them the chance to regularly ring and socialise with other ringers in the county that are a similar age, but also gives them great ringing opportunities they may not otherwise get.

In the last year we had a trip to Dartmouth, where we rang at Kingswear, Dartmouth town, and Dartmouth castle. However there weren't very many young ringers on the trip, and if it weren't for the adult helpers, we might not have been able to ring at all, especially at Dartmouth town. I was incredibly grateful for the chance to ring at Kingswear after its augmentation, and I enjoyed the rest of the trip a lot.

We were also invited to ring for a Sunday morning service at Exeter Cathedral just before Christmas, where we had the opportunity to ring the full 12 bells. This was the first time that the Devon young ringers had been invited and we had a great time followed by everyone going for breakfast afterwards.

Many towers across Devon have young ringers who aren't encouraged to come to the monthly practice and one of the most common reasons I've heard is because parents/guardians/tower captains are concerned that their young ringers may be forced or pressured into learning something they either don't want to learn or aren't capable of learning. This shouldn't be a concern, as what we ring is dictated by the standard of those attending. This means that if we have anyone that would like to ring just rounds or basic call changes, we ring to that standard. However if we have ringers (such as myself) who are working towards learning something harder, for example a difficult method, we'll have one or two goes at that during the afternoon, often with more adult helpers ringing, with the aim of supporting the more advanced ringers with whatever they are currently learning. The practices are very relaxed and sociable, and we often also have some handbell ringing going on at the same time in another part of the church. We always finish with a cup of tea and a chat in the church rooms after ringing: a great chance to catch up with each other!

The main issue we have is when too few young ringers regularly attend. We then all miss out on great opportunities, such as the National Youth Contest, which has sections for both call change and method ringing on 6 and 8 bells. Last year's event was held in Birmingham in the early summer, and whilst I was lucky enough to attend, I was the only ringer from Devon out of the several hundred young ringers there, meaning that I missed out on the opportunity to compete in a team against other ringers my age from all over the country. All of my friends from Young Ringers didn't even get the chance to come up to Birmingham, so I consider myself to be very lucky to have had the opportunity that I did.

In 2024, Devon entered a 6 bell call change team, part funded by both the Association and the Guild, and we had a great time in London travelling up on the Friday (yes, we were allowed the day off school as we were representing the county at a national event!) and returning on the Sunday. We stayed over in an old farmhouse converted to accommodate a large group, and during the day of the contest we rang in several City of London towers that were opened just for us – adults weren't allowed to ring! Our team had no ringers over the age of 15 in it, and some of us had never rung competitively before, so we were really happy with our final result of 6th place out of 14 teams – especially since some of the better teams had 17 and 18 year old ringers in them.

We appreciate everyone who is able to support us by encouraging their young ringers to come along to our practices. This is the future of Devon's bell ringing legacy, and we can't let it die.

Esme Kerslake

Guide Camp Epic 2026 – help needed

We have been invited to show case bell ringing to a young audience by taking part in the Girlguiding Camp Epic 2026, which will take place on 5 and 6 September at the River Dart Country Park near Ashburton. The plan at present is to run some activities like those arranged by Alena Wardle at the Scout Jamboree last year, such as the Frank Mack mini ring and handbells.

Unfortunately, Alena has another commitment that weekend, so is unable to take the lead and we are looking for someone else to take on the project. A person with links to the Guiding or Scouting world would be great, though this is not essential.

If you are interested in getting involved, and would like to find out more, please contact me (phil.dunn.3cc@btinternet.com)

Phil Dunn (Chairman, GDR Recruitment and Retention Work Group)

Guild Training Sessions

Ten Bell Starter Sessions



The assembled company at Cullompton

Three 10 bell training sessions were run on consecutive Saturday mornings in April at St Marychurch, Exeter St Mark and Cullompton. The aim was to ring good rounds and call changes, and attempt Plain Hunt Caters. The sessions proved popular with the learners and were very well supported by competent ringers who gave up their mornings.

Learner Feedback (extracts) from Guild 10 bell training 11 April, St Marychurch:

'…. Six hours later I'm still buzzing and I can't wait for the next session. Thank you very much for organising this course. It's fantastic…..'

'…. All the helpers were really helpful, friendly and gave good tips. The making places and dodging was a good exercise. I learnt something new, which was when I was ringing on number six after the treble you need to pull your hand-stroke off much closer than I thought you would…..'

'…….. the focused learning (by ringing with a band of such experienced ringers) simply condensed weeks of local practice nights down into just two hours. That there were so many knowledgeable people on hand to assist was amazing……'

'…… I enjoyed the exercises this morning and also the opportunity to practise my Plain Hunt… that was a first this morning….'

'…… I felt that having dodges and moving places explained—and an opportunity to try it out at my own pace—was the best thing about the course and something I can perhaps take back to my tower….'

'…… I was really touched by the number of experienced ringers who came from far and wide to help us learn and demonstrate best practice…..'



Pictured: learners Sarah, Jane, Rachel, Angela, Vicky and Nick with the helper band

Further comments after the final session:

'Absolutely fabulous course. I progressed so much further than I thought would be possible in three weeks. Enjoyed all the towers so a huge thank you to TCs. Teaching, leading, encouragement and guidance were exemplary. Massive thanks to organisers, teachers, and especially the generosity of helpers who gave so much help and support to us all. Brilliant, and with cake! How can that be topped?'

'Many thanks for organising the workshop AND the helpers, what a difference they made to the learning process. I had different helpers standing with me each session and all of them contributed to helping get the penny to drop.'

'Even the wonderful words of wisdom this morning from the helper who whispered, I think, to bolster me, 'you don't have to get it right every time—that is how you learn', those words definitely boosted my confidence and I felt I did a better job next turn! What I really liked was seeing how all us learners took a different bell each week helping to really make sense of 'hunting'. That takes a lot of confidence instead of trying to stick to the same bell, it just shows how everyone felt they were in safe hands….'

'…. A great course, wonderful helpers, useful tips and loads of fun.'

Clearly the learners are buzzing and have gained in confidence, as well as knowledge and understanding. Trying other bells in other towers and meeting lots of new ringers is not to be underestimated. Some of them even did their homework in between sessions including writing out plain hunt on 9!

Thanks go to all concerned, especially the long-suffering helpers.

Sue King

ART Level 1 Training Day



Alena Wardle during the practical training

Eleven participants from all over Devon, and also further afield, attended the ART Level 1 teacher training course at Pinhoe church on Saturday June 6.

The purpose was to learn and practise the ART (Association of Ringing Teachers) way of teaching bell handling. The essence of this, as I understand it, is to break down the very complex action of ringing a bell in the very earliest stages of learning this skill into small chunks. To teach, and let the learner practise, these various small elements repeatedly before putting all the chunks back together into the whole action of ringing a bell with complete control and confidence. Break it down, then build it back up again. To teach a good, safe, elegant and recommended ringing style, leading to proper rope handling, and controlled movement of the bell with the bell always under control. Any errors in handling to be corrected as soon as possible, and there to be a continuous cycle of input and learner feedback, paving the way to good striking when ringing as part of a band. Lots of teaching approaches to achieving this were discussed, demonstrated and practised.

It was also pointed out that ART teachers, once they successfully complete all elements of the training, will receive accreditation. And that this process would make the whole exercise of bell ringing, especially the teaching of bell ringing, have a more professional standing, and give it a higher profile, especially if being compared with other accredited activities.

This whole day training, led by South West ART trainer, Alena Wardle, had four practical sessions, interspersed with presentations and discussions, and morning and afternoon coffee & tea breaks. With cake!

Many participants were tower captains, and most had a lot of experience as ringers and ringing teachers. But one or two were only a few years into their own ringing journey. The training day, held at Pinhoe, was aimed at all ringers wanting to teach, or refine their existing teaching practice. Everyone took turns, in small groups, working on tied bells, at being teacher, teaching assistant/observer, and ringing learner.

It was a good day. I enjoyed observing all of the various activities, especially the practical sessions. I enjoyed the enthusiasm of the participants, and there was a lot of sharing of their own teaching knowledge and experiences.



Andrea with refreshments

Despite a broken stay at the end of the second practical session, the trainees had an enjoyable and very worthwhile day. A further session is being planned for later in the year, and Devon Guild members will be able to reclaim the cost of this course from the Education Fund. Contact the Guild Education Officers, Andrea and Sue, for more information: educationofficer@devonringers.org.uk

Sue King

South West Ringing Course 2026

Applications are invited for the 2026 South West Ringing Course. Further information and online application forms for both students and helpers are now available: https://southwest-ringing-course.org.uk/.

This will take place from Saturday 24th to Tuesday 27th October at Millfield School, Street, Somerset, BA16 0YD

Other Items

Ringing Round Devon crosses the Atlantic

Hi Ian,

I do a monthly newsletter for the Washington Ringing Society (WRS) that's mainly to provide a record of what's gone on in the past month, with occasional articles from WRS members.

If I see something fun/interesting online, I like to include it in hopes of grabbing people's attention. The two boards that the Feniton ringers came across definitely fall into this category! I would like to include them in my March newsletter, and also Charlotte Boyce's article 'Looking Around'. I hope this is OK with the authors.

Thanks!

Quilla Roth (in Washington, DC)

Were you there?



L to r: Ian Campbell, Wendy Campbell, Lesley Tucker, Elaine Grant, Lester Yeo, Alan Sinden, Paul Smith, James Kirkcaldy, Pat Yeo, Richard Shere, Robert Perry.

Seeing the report of the Exeter Branch walking tour of Exeter, I am grateful to Graham Tucker for a photo from a previous outing. He writes:

I've managed to obtain an exclusive photo of ringers outside St Pancras' church on the branch walking tour of Exeter city centre towers which could illustrate any write up of the day in RRD. It's good to see so many younger ringers on the day.

You may recognise some of those in the photo – all looking rather younger than now!

Ian Campbell

Central Council Update

THE CENTRAL COUNCIL OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS

The Central Council's first employees

We are delighted to welcome the Central Council's first employees, starting in April:



Gemma Groom as our new Marketing and Admin Officer



Josephine Leggett as our new Youth Development Officer

These two part-time, fixed-term appointments will focus on support for Ringing 2030 projects. Gemma will be focused primarily on projects around Marketing and Recruitment (including a national awareness campaign and the ringing survey), while Josephine will be focussed entirely on youth projects, including the new Youth Development Pathways project. Both appointments will last one calendar year.

Young Ringers for Ringing 2030 – Project Update

The Young Ringers for Ringing 2030 Workgroup has made great progress with the launch of the revised University Ringing Website UniversityRinging.org which is part of the new Young Ringers Hub (YRH). The team are currently working on the finalising the University Ringing content and getting the Under 18s sub site of the YRH up and running. This will be followed by Resources and Development Pathways sub sites. The development of the websites will continue as resources allow and will benefit from a sprint when the 2026 Honorariums join the team over the summer. We have also developed a suite of primary school lesson plans and Derbyshire ringers/scouts have developed a badge syllabus blueprint that we can adopt for a wider roll out. In order to move these great initiatives from development to delivery, we need leaders who are passionate about driving forward the Schools and Uniformed Groups initiatives to make these available to young people nationally and internationally.

Summer Honorariums 2026

The CCCBR will be advertising shortly for three Honorarium roles, to support the development of the Young Ringers Hub and university research into tower movement, over the summer break 2026.

There will be two roles that will focus on finalising the University Ringing content and getting the Under 18s and Resources sub sites of the YRH up and running.

They will also work with the Youth Development officer to create a sub site to support the Development Pathways work. This element of the project will be led by the youth Development Officer and is aimed at creating networks that support the development of young ringers by leveraging existing centres of ringing excellence.

A summer internship project based at the University of Birmingham will provide a Civil Engineering student with hands-on experience in structural dynamics, structural health monitoring, and digital modelling of heritage structures. Working under the supervision of Dr Reza Salami, the project will focus on applying contemporary structural engineering science to the conservation of historic church buildings. The aim is simple: to strengthen evidence-based decision-making for churches and cathedrals by better understanding how historic masonry structures actually behave.

Further details, and a call for applications for all three roles, will be issued shortly.

Annual Council Meeting

CCCBR Rugby 2026

The 2026 Central Council ACM weekend takes place at The Benn Hall, Newbold Road, Rugby CV21 2LN, hosted by the Coventry Guild, from Friday 4 to Sunday 6 September 2026 and is open to anyone wishing to attend, not just CCCBR reps.

The weekend's activities are open to all ringers and the full programme will be published in due course. Keep an eye on the CCCBR website at https://cccbr.org.uk/ and social media for updates.

Secretary of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers

Notable Ringing Performances

Peals

Platinum Wedding Anniversary for Don and June Roberts

Guild of Devonshire Ringers
Uffculme, Devon, Piglet Ring
Thursday, 2 April 2026 in 2h 2
5088 Eboracum Delight Major
Composed by D F Morrison (Op 6164 rev)

1	James Kirkcaldy	5	Robert D S Brown
2	James Grant	6	David Hird
3	Timothy M Bayton	7	John R Martin (C)
4	Michael E C Mears	8	John A Foster

Rung as a birthday compliment to the ringers of 7 and 8.
Also rung as a compliment to Don and June Roberts on the occasion of their Platinum Wedding anniversary.

You may like to know I received a call from Don Roberts (a Guild Vice President) who was delighted we had taken the trouble to dedicate this morning's peal as a Platinum Wedding anniversary compliment to them.

I checked and he did receive a card from the King (arrived two days early but they didn't open it!) and they've been out for a nice pub lunch at the Claycutters in Chudleigh Knighton with their daughter.

John Martin

Birthday compliments

Guild of Devonshire Ringers
Kingskerswell, Devon, St Mary
Monday, 27 April 2026 in 2h 46
5120 Spliced Surprise Major (4m)
1440 Lincolnshire; 1280 Cambridge, Yorkshire; 1120 Rutland;
74 changes of method; all the work)

1	Philip Stevens	5	Ian V J Smith
2	David J Garton	6	Revd Jonathan G Rose
3	James Grant	7	David Hird
4	Michael C Hansford	8	Michael E C Mears (C)

Birthday compliments to Philip Stevens (83), Mo Stevens (82), Pauline Lawrence (82), all on 24 April.
4000th peal on a tenor: 8.



L to r: Phil, Jon, David H, Mike M, Ian, Mike H, James, David G

Quarter Peals

First quarter peal for Charleen

Exeter, Devon, **St Mark**
Sunday, 8 March 2026 in 41m
1260 Plain Bob Doubles

1	Charleen Lobb	4	Sue Sparling
2	Josh Lobb	5	Ian Campbell (C)
3	Wendy Gill	6	Wendy Campbell

Rung prior to evening service.
First attempt: 1.



L to r: Charleen, Josh, Wendy G, Sue, Ian, Wendy C

Welcome to new Rector at Bampton

Troyte Ringing Centre, **Bampton**, St Michael and All Angels
Saturday, 14 March 2026 in 47m
1260 Doubles (3m)
360 St Simon, 360 St Martin, 540 Plain Bob

1	Mandy Burnett	4	Jonathan Weighell
2	Sheila Scofield	5	Leslie Boyce (C)
3	Eddie Grabke	6	Chris Bolt

Rung to welcome the Revd Charles Wheeler and his family to Bampton following his installation as Rector of the Hukeley Mission Community on Monday evening.



L to r: Chris, Jon, Les, Eddie, Sheila, Mandy

International Women's Day – Ladies Guild

Devon Guild ringers Lisa, Sue, and Andrea (East Devon Branch) and Margot (Aylesbeare Branch) were joined by Liz and Patrick (aka 'Patricia') Rendell to ring a quarter peal at Combe Raleigh in celebration of International Women's Day on March 8. The first five ladies are all members of the Western District of the Ladies' Guild of Change Ringers, so it was fitting that they should ring in support of women everywhere, and link their performance accordingly, on this day.

It was a first quarter for Andrea, Lisa and Margot (and also 'Patricia'!) for the Ladies' Guild. Methods rung were Stedman, Grandsire and Plain Bob Doubles, with Lisa conducting.

Ringers wore purple, white and green, the designated colours for International Women's Day… signifying dignity, purity and hope. 'Patricia' (hair styled by Sue) kindly stood in at short notice for Ladies' Guild member 'Tosh' - who was unfortunately unavailable at the last moment.

Ladies Guild
Combe Raleigh, Devon, St Nicholas
Sunday, 8 March 2026 in 44m
1260 Doubles (1p/2m)

1	Margot Le Vesconte	4	Liz Rendell
2	Andrea Young	5	Patrick Rendell
3	Lisa Clarke (C)	6	Susan A King

Rung by the Western District as part of Women's Day.

First quarter for the Ladies' Guild - 1, 2, 3 and 5! 5 became 'Patricia' for the evening out of necessity.

All the ladies wore purple, white and green, signifying dignity, purity and hope.



L to r: Lisa, Sue, Andrea, Margot, Liz, 'Patricia'

Sue King

first quarter peal

On 15 March we were joined by three ringers from North Devon at Uplowman to ring Christian's first quarter peal. It was a very competent first quarter. Well done, Christian!

Uplowman, Devon, St Peter
Sunday, 15 March 2026 in 43m
1260 Plain Bob Doubles

1	Christian Ong	4	John R Martin (C)
2	Sheila J Scofield	5	Kate J Wills
3	Charlotte A Boyce	6	Patrick M Wills

First quarter:1



L to r: Sheila, Charlotte, Kate, Patrick, John, Christian

John Martin

First on 8 and a working bell

Exeter, Devon, **Heavitree**, St Michael and All Angels,
Sunday, 22 March 2026 in 53m
1260 Grandsire Triples

1	Mark Eatough	5	Graham Tucker
2	Susan Sparling	6	David Hird
3	Wendy Gill	7	Ian Campbell (C)
4	Wendy Campbell	8	Susan Illing

First on 8 and on a working bell: 1. Rung for evening service.

Rutland Surprise Major at Huntsham by North East Branch



L to r: Matthew, John M, Jonathan, Richard, Les, Charlotte, John B, Sheila

A band of ringers, resident in the North East Branch, rang a quarter peal of Rutland Surprise Major at Huntsham on 19 April.

We believe this may be the first time the Branch has managed this. It was almost the first time John Buckley had rung this method, and Jon Weighell's first time in many years. Well done to all.

Huntsham, Devon, All Saints
Friday, 17 April 2026 in 43m
1280 Rutland Surprise Major

1	Sheila Scofield	5	John Buckley
2	Charlotte Boyce	6	Matthew Weighell
3	Leslie Boyce	7	Jonathan Weighell
4	Richard Shere	8	John Martin (C)

First in the method: 5. First in the method for over 30 years: 7.
First of Rutland ever by an all-North East Branch band.

Les Boyce

Three spliced for Sheila

Well done to Sheila Scofield who rang a quarter peal of three Surprise Major methods spliced (or mixed) together at Broadclyst on 10 April – her first of this since 2019.

Broadclyst, Devon, St John the Baptist
Friday, 10 April 2026 in 49m
1250 Spliced Surprise Major (3m)
418 Cambridge; 416 Lincolnshire, Yorkshire; 21 com; atw

1	John Martin	5	Charlotte Boyce
2	Wendy Campbell	6	Ian Campbell
3	Sheila Scofield	7	Fergus Kettleborough (C)
4	Jonathan Weighell	8	David Hird

First of Spliced Surprise Major as conductor: 7

John Martin

First inside and on eight bells

Pinhoe, Devon, St Michael and All Angels
Friday, 10 April 2026 in 46m
1260 Plain Bob Triples

1	Richard Shere	5	Sue Sawyer
2	Lesley Tucker	6	Ian Campbell
3	Wendy Campbell	7	Fergus Kettleborough (C)
4	Florence Cook	8	Graham Tucker

First quarter inside and on 8: 4

First inside for Rose

Combe Raleigh, St Nicholas
Wednesday, 22 April 2026 in 45m
1260 Plain Bob Doubles

1	Anne E Bailey	4	Kathie Matthews
2	Rose Lynn	5	Susan A King
3	Lisa Clarke (C)	6	Janice Hodge

First quarter peal inside:2
First quarter peal on an inside bell for me with the huge benefit of a very supportive and lovely band.



L to r: Anne, Sue, Lisa, Rose, Kathie, Janice

Rose Lynn

Birthday quarter peal

Dalwood, Devon, St Peter
Friday, 1 May 2026 in 39m
1260 May Day Doubles

1	Keith E Beale (C)	4	Sue M Sawyer
2	Susan A King	5	Kathie Matthews
3	Margaret M Furner	6	Anne E Bailey

First in variation by 2, 3 and 5.
73rd birthday quarter peal for Susan King!



NE Branch welcomes new Silverton Rector

A quarter peal was rung at Silverton to welcome the Revd Tim Astin on Sunday 31 May by a branch band drawn from four towers.

Silverton, Devon, St Mary
Sunday, 31 May 2026 in 52m
1260 Plain Bob Triples

1	Simon Trott	5	Leslie Boyce
2	Sheila Scofield	6	John Buckley
3	Jonathan Weighell	7	Matthew Weighell (C)
4	Richard Shere	8	Tony Lane

Rung to welcome the Revd Tim Astin following his installation as the Rector in the Silverton Mission Community on 18 May.
First quarter on 8: 8.



The band in ringing order from bottom right, together with the Revd Tim (centre) and Albert Campbell, tower captain (far right)

Les Boyce

In memory of Tony Appleton

Woodbury, Devon, St Swithun
Tuesday, 9 June 2026 in 52m
1260 Grandsire Triples

1	David A Wills	5	Robert Goodwin
2	Roger King	6	Oliver Coldrick
3	Peter L Bill	7	Ian L C Campbell (C)
4	P Wendy Campbell	8	David Hird

Rung immediately following the Service of Thanksgiving and interment of ashes at Holy Trinity, Woodbury Salterton for the life of Anthony W J (Tony) Appleton, formerly a ringer at Woodbury and Heavitree, Exeter.

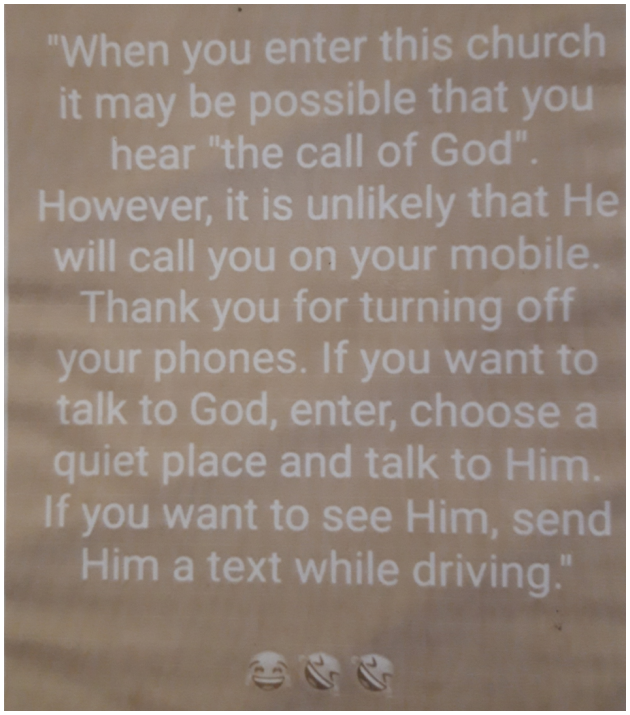
Prior to the quarter peal, there was open ringing on the bells when the above ringers were joined by Shane Yuen, Peter Grist and Debby Mullier.



The ringers in order, starting front left

Hearing the Call of God

This poster was found in the church at Pinhoe and was translated from one seen in France.



When you enter this church it may be possible that you hear 'the call of God'. However it is unlikely that He will call you on your mobile. Thank you for turning off your phones.
If you want to talk to God, enter, choose a quiet place and talk to Him.
If you want to see Him, send Him a text while driving.

Ian Campbell

Calendar

July				
Fri 3	19.15	Surprise Minor practice	Clyst St George	Aylesbeare
Sat 4		Week 1/3: Triples and Major. . To book contact Phil Dunn	Tavistock	South West
Sat 4	TBC	Half day mini outing	Hatherleigh	Mid Devon
Mon 6	19:30	Branch 10 bell practice	Axminster	East
Tue 7	19:30	Branch Triples and Plain Major practice	Tiverton St Peter's	North East
Sat 11		Week 2/3: Triples and Major. To book contact Phil Dunn.	Laira	South West
Sat 11	10:00	Joint branch outing with East Devon Branch	Tavistock area	Aylesbeare
Sat 11	tbc	Branch outing	tbc	East
Sat 18		Week 3/3: Triples and Major. To book contact Phil Dunn.	Emmanuel	South West
Fri 24	19:30	10 bell practice	Thorverton (TBC)	Exeter
Fri 24	TBC	Breaking into Methods (2)	Kingskerswell/ Wolborough	Mid Devon
Sat 25	tbc	Branch practice	tbc	N/Nth West
Mon 27	19:30	Branch Surprise Minor practice	Dalwood	East
Fri 31	10:00	Surprise Minor practice	Bishopsteignton	Mid Devon
August				
Sat 1	16:00	Branch open ringing and social	Oakford (tbc)	North East
Mon 3	19:30	Branch 10 bell practice	Axminster	East
Tue 4	19:30	Branch Triples and Plain Major practice	Tiverton St Peter's	North East
Fri 7	19:00	Branch practice	Clyst St George	Aylesbeare
Sat 15	14:00	Joint 10 bell practice with Mid Devon Branch	Buckfast Abbey	South West
Sat 15	15:00	Guild Library opens	St Petrock, Exeter	Guild
Fri 21	10:00	Advanced 8 bell practice	Kingskerswell	Mid Devon
Sat 22		Quarter peal day—cancelled	Exeter	Exeter
Sat 22	tbc	Branch practice	tbc	N/Nth West
Mon 24	19:30	Branch Surprise Minor practice	Dalwood	East
September				
Tue 1	19:30	Branch Triples and Plain Major practice	Tiverton St Peter	North East
Fri 4	19:15	Surprise Minor practice	Clyst StGeorge	Aylesbeare
Sat 5	14:30	Branch practice	Kingsteignton	Mid Devon
Mon 7	19:30	Branch 10 bell practice	Axminster	East
Tue 8	19:30	Branch practice	Littleham	Aylesbeare
Sat 12		Autumn outing	TBC	South West
Sat 19	15:00	Guild Library opens	St Petrock, Exeter	Guild
Thu 24	19:30	10 bell practice	Crediton	Exeter
Fri 25	10:00	Surprise Minor practice	Bishopsteignton	Mid Devon
Sat 26	tbc	Branch practice	tbc	N/Nth West
Mon 28	19:30	Branch Surprise Minor practice	Dalwood	East

Editorial

The boards observed by the Feniton band caused a little interest – at least from across the ocean! We decided that they showed the work of a well-known touch of Grandsire Doubles from the fourth bell. It gives the number of the bell to follow for each stroke, with 'T' for 'Tenor' indicating leading off the tenor. In addition the dot to the right of each number shows the speed to ring – in the middle is at normal speed, while at the top means hold up, and at the bottom means to go faster. See if you can spot the bobs and singles!

Apologies for a couple of mixed up captions in the previous issue in the article about bell bearings, which appeared during the page make-up process. I am sure that you will be able to tell the difference between the different types. It was pointed out to me by their author, Ian Smith, who wrote:

> *Lost your bearings? I note you have transposed the captions of the Taylor's Modified Plain Bearing and the Aggett Self-aligning Plain Bearing in my Bell Bearings article in RRD. Perhaps you should clarify this in the next edition.*

Congratulations go to Oliver Bates on completing his degree in medicine at Birmingham University – and celebrated by calling a peal of Phobos, Bristol, Orion and Zanussi Surprise Maximus at St Martin's, Birmingham. Having helped to teach him to ring while a pupil at the Exeter Cathedral School I feel slightly responsible for his stratospheric ringing performances – while still training to be a doctor. He has far surpassed my ringing abilities!

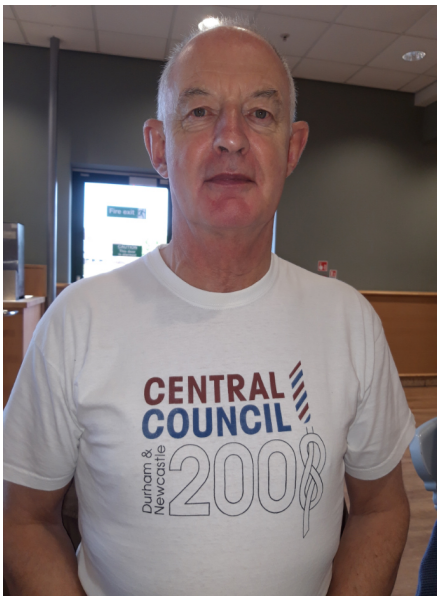
This issue has been caught with holidays and other ringing events so is inevitably rather late. It is hoped that it can be distributed at the Guild AGM and that we can have details of that day in the September edition.

If you would like to send in any items of interest we welcome anything from anyone – but prefer it to be ringing related! To be sure of it getting included in the next issue it needs to be with me by the end of the preceding month. Please send to: newsletter@devonringers.org.uk. Many thanks go to all those who have contributed to this edition.

Ian Campbell

To knot or not to knot

When ringing with abnormally long ropes it is a fairly common practice in Devon to tie a knot to reduce the length. Not all towers are happy with this, complaining that it weakens the ropes. However this effect is minimal if a correct figure-of-eight knot is used. It is clear that the Central Council endorses this as can be seen in the picture above where the tee-shirt modelled by David Hird shows a bell rope clearly knotted into a figure-of-eight.



It is rare for ringers who are less height endowed to need a knot, which is why this photo of Wendy Gill (our outgoing Guild Master) taken recently is particularly unusual.



Wendy Gill ringing at Clyst Hydon – with a knot!

Ian Campbell



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