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# Devon Calls

Mid 2020

## Young Devon Ringer - Ewan Kaczanow

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I was aware, and had seen on local television, that a young lad called Ewan was learning to ring at North Tawton. I was curious to find out more. A telephone call to Brian Drake, North Tawton's long standing Tower Captain who was first appointed back in in 1965, confirmed that Ewan is being taught to ring at the church by Mervyn Way. As most people know Mervyn is also a long standing member of North Tawton's team of ringers. After several telephone calls, which included one to Ewan's mother Teresa, arrangements were made for us all to meet. A small contingency consisting of ringers from Bow (Jamie Steer and his wife Linda) and Exminster (Colin & Michael Adams,



Ewan with his teacher, Mervyn Way.

Cliff Wilson and Pauline Ward) met at the church on the morning of Saturday 7 March 2020, before the lockdown due to the Covid 19 virus.

At the church Ewan was sitting patiently waiting in the corner of the ringing chamber next to his mother Teresa. Brian, who was sitting opposite, did the introductions. Mervyn duly arrived followed by Jamie and Linda Steer.

It is always a pleasure to meet someone who is learning to ring, even more so when the learner is an 11 year old lad. Ewan was as keen and eager to start as we were to watch him in action as he carefully positioned himself on a small box ready to ring the second bell. Mervyn took the treble and we rang rounds and short peals of call-changes and it was amazing to see

**COPY for "DEVON CALLS" is always welcome and we rely on you to submit articles**  
**Deadline for next edition - 20th September 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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## ***Ewan Kaczanow - continued from page 1***

how calm and controlled he was. He handled the bell confidently and rang with ease, timing each change precisely whilst maintaining a consistent rhythm. At the same time he appeared totally unfazed by the fact that he was ringing with complete strangers. It was fascinating to see him in action, so much so that I felt the need to remain focussed and not

become distracted myself as it would have been so easy to miss a change, or even worse miss the rope! It is often the case when we watch someone performing a skill, particularly a complex skill like ringing a bell, and doing so with consummate ease, that it brings a smile to the faces of those observing. And so it was when we finished ringing, everyone was smiling in amazement. Of course it is easy to overlook the time and effort that has been spent on acquiring the skill in the first place. As for Ewan who was the star of the show he remained calm throughout and was quite modest about his performance.

According to mum Teresa, Ewan's curiosity for bells first became apparent when he was three years old. He liked to listen to clocks which chimed and one day he heard Okehampton's bells being rung and according to mum, "he was hooked." He was initially introduced to bellringing by Tom and Alison Waterson at Inwardleigh and had his first lessons with them when he was six years old. The family actually live at North Tawton and when aged nine he heard the bells being rung at St. Peter's he persuaded his mum to take him along. Arriving at the church they asked if they could go up into the ringing chamber and watch the ringers in action. They were warmly welcomed and soon after went along on Sunday mornings to observe. Sensing how interested in ringing Ewan appeared to be Mervyn offered to provide coaching sessions for him during North Tawton's practice nights. He was taught on the second bell with the bell up (resting on the stay). The earlier rope handling skills to which he had been introduced at Inwardleigh were reinforced and



*The band assembled at North Tawton*

*L-R Mike Adams, Cliff Wilson, Pauline Ward, Linda Steer, James Steer, Ewan Kaczanow, Brian Drake, Mervyn Way, Colin Adams*

further refined. It wasn't long before he was able to pull the bell off the stay, ring unaided and set the bell. From there he was taught to follow one bell, strike evenly and listen. His motivation was such that he quickly mastered ringing and started to ring with the team, being able to place his bell correctly during changes. He is now able to rise and lower in peal which

is amazing considering he is only eleven years old! This says an awful lot about his determination to succeed as well as the patience and commitment of his coach Mervyn. The relationship which they have developed together and the respect which they have for each other, is as unique as the age difference between them.

It is often the case that people are introduced to ringing through a family member or a friend. In my experience people who come into ringing today tend to be middle aged or older. Attracting young people into ringing is quite a challenge. Therefore when someone young like Ewan comes along, who incidentally is not from a ringing family, it is a pleasant surprise. I learnt from Teresa that apart from ringing Ewan has an interest in: trains, level crossings and he likes wiring up lights. I was also told that he has a school friend called Amy who is learning to ring at Chagford.

On the walls of the ringing chamber at North Tawton hang many old Devon Association ringing certificates, some going back to the 1930s. Interspersed with these are group photographs of teams that once rang there as well as some individual photos, all valuable reminders of a bygone age. A casual glance around the walls conveys just how active and successful the ringers were in those days. If those walls could only talk what interesting stories they would tell.

How nice it would be if the arrival of Ewan to the tower brought about the formation of a new team, a team keen and able to carry on the tradition of ringing at North Tawton for many years to come.

***Colin Adams***

## ***On behalf of the Devon Association of Ringers belated Congratulations to:***

***Brian and Maureen Drake.*** The couple celebrated their 65<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2020. They were married at St. Peter's Church, North Tawton on 19<sup>th</sup> February 1955.

***Cedric and Irene Hocking.*** The couple celebrated their 70<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2020. The couple were married at the Church of St. Gregory the Great, Dawlish, on 10<sup>th</sup> April 1950.

The bells were rung for both couples on their respective wedding days.

# Editorial

With no ringing and no Wimbledon this year because of the Coronavirus at least we have test cricket to look forward to (assuming you are interested) when England takes on the West Indies in July. Summer, though, without ringing and ringing competitions to compete in just isn't the same. Of course this is a small price to pay by comparison with the impact which this pandemic has had, and is having, on some poor people.

Welcome to this edition. You may have noticed a slight change on the front cover in that this is a "Mid 2020" edition. A "Late 2020" edition will be circulated in the autumn and next spring an "Early 2021" edition will, hopefully, appear. Previous copies spanned two months. This stemmed from when the magazine was largely distributed by hand and was done to allow for potential delays through using such an informal process; an approach designed to lessen the heavy postal charges.

Interestingly in the run up to the copy deadline on 14 June it looked as though we would be lucky to fill 8 pages. Not too surprising considering the effects of lockdown with many people having other more important things to contend with. Suddenly we received a large influx of material, enough to fill 12 pages! Even if towers are silent it didn't prevent ringers from using their time, talent and imagination and submitting what they had put together. Thank you all.

The front page contains an account of a young lad called Ewan who, from a very early age, became fascinated by the sound of church bells. At 11 years old Ewan must be one of the youngest ringers in Devon, if not the youngest. By contrast the magazine contains an account of probably one of the oldest ringers in Devon. Ninety year old Reg Yeo from Barnstaple has been a ringer for almost 80 years! *Welcome Ewan* as a new ringer and *CONGRATULATIONS Reg* one of our oldest and belated *Happy Birthday* from us all.

Congratulations also to Geoff Hill from Lamerton. Geoff, who is well known within ringing circles, both as long standing

Guild as well as Association member, recently received The Royal Maundy Money. The ceremony was planned to take place in St. George's Chapel at Windsor. Prior to the actual ceremony arrangements had been made for Geoff, along with daughter Shirley, to ring the bells in the Curfew Tower which is situated next to St. George's Chapel. Presentation of The Royal Maundy by H.M. The Queen would then have taken place. Sadly due to the outbreak of the Coronavirus the event had to be cancelled. Geoff did however receive the money in two pouches on Maundy Thursday unfortunately not directly by H. M. The Queen but instead by Royal Mail. Undiminished the family did manage to hold their own celebrations at home in Newcourt Farm, Lamerton.

This was a great honour for Geoff and although the ceremony did not go as planned, which must have been a great disappointment, we send him our heartfelt *CONGRATULATIONS*.

For the first time since World War Two, across the land church bells are silent. Key to being able to return to ringing again must be the development of an effective vaccine, in this respect the scientists are working very hard. Meanwhile, let's do our best to keep healthy and stay safe and keep together. Let's also hope for a return to "normal" as soon as possible and that those who either own or work for any businesses, particularly those that advertise here will survive and eventually prosper.

Once again my grateful thanks to those who have taken the trouble to submit articles for this edition. Thanks also to Elinor and Colin, our two proof readers, for the way in which they willingly scrutinise, comment and offer advice; and to James, our Technical Editor for the careful way in which he sets out the pages and helps to make the magazine appealing.

I have a plea to make. Given that we are currently unable to meet regularly please, within reason given the current circumstances, make the effort to pass the magazine on to your fellow ringers

*Colin Adams*

## Saturday Morning at Sainsbury's – with virious additions!

Fetch a trolley, take your tray  
Pay the lottery on the way.  
Use the hand wash, germ-resistant,  
Do your best to keep your distance.  
Pick up paper, Daily Mail,  
Sprouts and cauli, curly kale,  
Carrots, onions, small potatoes,  
Lettuce, beetroot, and tomatoes,  
Milk and cream and twelve large eggs,  
Leg of lamb and chicken legs.  
For supper you can get some salmon  
Or some thick-sliced Danish gammon.  
Pot of jam and Marmite spread,  
Six cheese scones, a loaf of bread,  
Butter, margarine, and lard,  
And have you got your Nectar card?  
Heinz baked beans, spaghetti hoops,

Small rice puddings, Cuppa Soups,  
Yorkshire tea and instant coffee,  
Chocolate rolls and Werther's toffees,  
Sainsbury's muesli, Frostie's cereal,  
And some little mint Imperials, Liquorice Allsorts,  
Cadbury's Roses, Orange squash and J2Ozes,  
Mars ice lollies, ice cream cups,  
And have you got your flies done up?  
Yellow Jif for cleaning bowls,  
And don't forget the toilet rolls.  
Washing powder, fabric softener,  
Soap to wash your hands more oftener,  
Fairy Liquid, shaving foam,  
Pick up tablets, head for home.  
Go to checkout till and pay,  
Home to Hilary, Shoreland's Way.

*F. John Conibear*

# Results from the Devon Association Novice Competition Held at High Bickington on Saturday 14th March 2020

## Rounds Section

1.	Kingsteignton 3	15 ½
2.	Swimbridge	16 ½
3.	Chagford	33 ¾

## Novice Section - Half Peal off the Stay

1.	Kingsteignton 1	30 ½
2.	Tiverton 1	51 ¼
3.	Chagford	55 ¾
4.	Swimbridge	60 ¼
5.	Goodleigh	77

## Intermediate Section - Full Peal Including Rise and Fall

1.	Kingsteignton 2	65 ½
2.	Tiverton 3	78
3.	Tiverton 2	83 ½
4.	Swimbridge	97 ¾

**Best top ringing** - Kingsteignton

**Best Lower** - Kingsteignton

**Best Rise** - Tiverton 3

**Judges** - Martin Sharland and James Steer

## From The Archives

Steven Facey has provided this photo of the Molland band who were the winners of the Devon Association Six Bell Final held at Churchstow on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2000.

The results were

1. Molland 18 ¼. Ross Shield & First Certificate.
2. Egguckland 'A' 18 ¾.
3. Egguckland 'B' 22 ¼.
4. Morteohoe 29.
5. West Down 30.
6. South Brent 32 ¼.
7. Kenn 36 ½.
8. Littleham 41 ¾.
9. Stoke Gabriel 43 ½.
10. Burrington 64 ¼.



Back row L-R John Warne, Steven Facey, Keith Bavin  
Front row L-R John Conibeare, Rita Western, John Pugsley

## The Woodleigh Deanery Ringers Association

Currently, as the Chairman of the Association, I am honoured to have been elected last autumn, proud to be in office and to follow in the footsteps of commendable previous Chairpersons.

First of all where is the Woodleigh Deanery? It is based wholly in South Devon and is bordered by the Totnes, Plymouth and Ivybridge Deaneries. The Association was established many years ago with member towers comprising eight and six bell peals and one five bell peal.

The deanery has many active members with the AGM normally being held in November. At the AGM arrangements are made for the annual striking festival that caters for ringers with various capabilities. Teams compete for the senior and

junior shields. The deanery holds a monthly ringing evening which is generally well supported by ringers across the deanery.

Overall, I think the Woodleigh Deanery is lucky to have many capable ringers who keenly support the Association and its events.

As Chairperson I feel we must always show our appreciation for the contribution made by past members who are no longer around. As we all know you cannot take the memories away. Many great characters have been involved in the past, but let's not forget the current ones too!

*Jereme Darke*

## Reg Yeo - Ninety not out!

Reg Yeo of North Devon celebrated his ninetieth birthday on the evening of 21<sup>st</sup> January this year at his regular Tuesday night practice at Pilton Church. He thought there might be some kind of cake to mark the occasion and that perhaps he'd have to sit through the full rendition of Happy Birthday – what he didn't expect was a tower full of ringing friends and then a proper gathering of more friends and his very proud family in the church after the practice. Thankfully, although surprised, he was also pleased and reports enjoying his party very much.



*Back row L-R Chris Ley, Michael Snell, Bev Gould  
Middle row L-R Andrew Snell, Ron Kenwood, Alan Watts, Tony Feathersone, Colin Avery, Ian Avery  
Front row L-R Sarah Amery, Andy Cleave, Alan Cook, Joanne Tucker, Adrian Pope, Alf Roberts  
Very front - Reg Yeo*

The Association's current Chair presented Reg with a very well-deserved long service award. Readers may well be thinking 'that's a long way to travel on a cold and dark winter's night', but there is a special connection between Pilton and Kingsteignton towers in that Ian Avery's father used to ring at Pilton, and Reg spent some years ringing at Kingsteignton .

Born in 1930 and raised in Loxhore where his father was the village blacksmith Reg has rung bells for much of the last eighty plus years, a milestone few of us could even imagine attaining. He isn't able to claim to have rung constantly throughout life – there was after all National Service to be done so that stopped him for two years!

Back in the day when people attended church twice on Sundays and then, of course, Sunday school in the afternoons, and with both his father and brother ringers, it wasn't long before he would join them at the tower on practice nights. Because there was one farming ringer who was invariably late, he got to 'have a pull' until said ringer turned up. Taylor Barrow was the captain then and it was he who taught Reg to ring.

Between leaving school and National Service and for five years after Reg worked for S Vanstone & Son at Buller Road in Barnstaple. The company mended wooden horse carts and milk floats alongside cattle lorry beds. During this time, he rang regularly at both Loxhore and on Sunday's at Barnstaple Parish Church too, cycling there alongside Loxhore Captain Taylor Barrow who was also Captain at St Peter's although there was no practice there.

He found himself, along with his wife Sheila, in Kingsteignton when he went there to work, as you do, having been made

redundant from Vanstones. One day as he was walking to work he was hailed by Bill Avery who, having heard about this young chap from Barnstaple who was a ringer, invited him along to the local tower – Reg rang with the Kingsteignton ringers for the five years he lived there.

There was another two year gap in his ringing after he returned to North Devon to work for J Watts (still repairing lorry bases) but

when he went to live in Bishop's Tawton it was the late Michael Beer's turn to head hunt the talented ringer, inviting him to come along to the tower during a chat over the garden fence.

More latterly it's the eight-bell tower at Pilton which he calls his home tower and very glad they are to have him among their number.

Though he could never persuade his wife to learn to ring he has taught numerous learners over the years, including one of his daughters. When retirement meant Reg had time on his hands, he put it to very good use giving some much needed TLC to towers around his home town. Starting with Loxhore where he'd heard the Treble wouldn't stay up, through to Arlington which hadn't been rung for so long the tower was full of bits of twig bought in by the jackdaws – literally from the bottom to the top, and onto Kentsisbury, replacing wheels, rims, ropes, cleaning and removing rust as he went. (NB I would like to say a special thank you, to you Reg, for the work you did at Arlington. I truly believe that if you hadn't we wouldn't be ringing them today (and yes, I can hear the naysayers thinking 'And why would you want to')

When asked what's it like to be 90 he just laughed and said 'No different to being 80' and his reply to the question 'What do you love about ringing?' was 'Why does anyone?'

I'm sure I'm not alone when I say I sincerely hope the current Covid-19 Pandemic doesn't spell the end of Reg's ringing career and cause him to hang up his ropes. His contribution to the ringing community in North Devon has been considerable and much appreciated by many. Thank you Reg and hope to see you soon.

*Joanne Tucker and Christine Ley*

# Devon Ringkly Ringers

Why the "Devon" Ringkly Ringers ??? While there may be other groups of ringers with members of a similar age around the UK none can claim as we can, to be "Dedicated to Devon Call Change Ringing".

The group was started on the 11<sup>th</sup> March 1997 at Churston Church, by Pat Johnstone and Bernard Miners to meet with a few of their friends, to have a ring and then socialise in a pub nearby for lunch, and, of course, enjoy a drink or two. There were 16 who attended that day, though 4 were non-ringers, later being referred to as our "Ringing Groupies". An attendance book was also started and continues to this day.

Luckily in June that year, I, Alan Beer and Lewis Withecombe were invited to join the group when we rang at Buckfastleigh. While all others were claiming retirement, Scott Adams, still a very young man, came and rang on several occasions during the year.

By December of 1997 the group had become so popular, and although by invitation only, 37 attended at Exminster with a Christmas lunch at the Stowey Arms. We all sang carols accompanied by Cathy and her friend on "squeeze boxes". Photos were added to the attendance book each month.



*Ringkly Ringers Group Photo in Birmingham*

## **From Left to right along back**

Michael Poole [ far left ] . John Orchard, Bill Rockey, Jean Morley, Christine Rockey, Chris Clayton, Janet Poole, Joyce Nicholls, Bob Pengelly, Roy Berry, Roger Morley, Mike Webster, John Moody, Claude Nicholls, Muriel Pengelly, Pam Clayton, Bernard Miners, Norman Mortimore, Pat Wyatt, Ray Mugridge, Peter Wyatt[ far right]

## **From Jean Morley's right**

Ellen Bardens, Sue Wildig, Sylvia Mortimore, Arthur Fidler [ on crutches ], Pat Johnstone, Robin Burnham, Jean Fidler.

## **Sitting**

John & Linda Staddon, Bill Blake, Henry Trewin, Harry Bardens , Ken Rowe

*Sadly 15, underlined, are no longer with us .*

## ***Ringkly Ringers - Continued from page 6***

Lots of other changes have happened over the years.

In April 1999, for the first time, two towers were rung, one before and then another after lunch.

The group continued to meet monthly during the year, except January and February, until 2011, when we met for the first time in February at Rewe to celebrate Bill Blake's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. At that time he was by far the eldest Ringkly. We have continued to meet for 11 months each year until unfortunately now, 2020.

The group were, in 1997, known as the Midday Retired Ringers [MRR]. Someone thought we should challenge the MCC!! However after the first article appeared in print about the group in 2001 when much indignation occurred, as the author referred to "The Wrinkly Ringers". This was not appreciated by many and although some suspected who the author was no one owned up. We became "The Devon Ringkly Ringers" in 2001. This was as the result of a suggestion by Bernard, to have an annual "holiday" tour and visit another part of the UK for a week of ringing. It was suggested that in May 2002 we went to the Lake District and for my sins, I volunteered to visit all the towers that could be rung, and as nearly 40 were expressing interest, arranged the hotel and coach. In the end 48 went on the trip. The journey on both Monday and Friday was almost 500 miles with 3 pick-up points around Devon by Hookways Coaches, starting at 6 am. So, to save anymore animosity over the "Wrinkly Ringers" name, I opened a bank account in the name of "the Devon Ringkly Ringers". All monies for this, and the subsequent 26 tours organised since 2002 would be paid through it.

Arthur and Jean Fidler had for many years been organising similar regular weekly ringing trips in October. When Arthur reached 80 in 2009, with some arm twisting, I agreed to take over and have been arranging 2 tours each year, until 2019 when we reduced to only one.

Almost 500 towers have been rung on these tours. The most popular was to the Isle of Wight in 2013, when 57 of us were able to enjoy all the towers on the island. This was followed a year later by our most "interesting" hotel as the accommodation at Weston Super Mare in the Sand Bay Resort was in "Hi- De- Hi" style huts. Not to everyone's liking, though the food was good and the evening entertainment providing dancing and bingo was enjoyed by most. In 2005 we were fortunate to ring in Canterbury Cathedral.

In all this time we have only suffered two lockouts. We had to give up ringing on only two occasions. In 2010, in Leamington Spa, the brick built Bell tower being separate from St Peter's Roman Catholic Church was quite a H & S risk. While ringing we felt like we were standing on a water bed. Everyone had a go but only rang a few rounds. In Bristol in 2014 we failed to get all the bells up at St Thomas and had to give up beaten. The annual tours now function in a 17 seater minibus.

Each month there are still over 60 in the "Ringkly family" who receive details of the monthly meets and generally over 30 are able to attend. One of the other favourites, besides the ringing, eating and drinking, are Harry Barden's "little" stories, enjoyed by all though, not quite so risqué as those told during Arthur's and Jean's trips by Barbara.

Each month is organised by a different Ringkly Ringer. Since 1997 about 450 towers have been rung, mostly in Devon, but we have on occasions gone into Cornwall and even Dorset. Some have become more popular and have been visited 2 or 3 times over the years. We have enjoyed Christmas Dinner celebrations at the Crealock Arms at Littleham and the Dartmoor Lodge as well as many other venues, ringing in two towers before lunch and enjoying several hours together during and after the meal.

Well over 110 ringers and ringing groupies have enjoyed the tours over the years, but sadly over 20 have now passed away. Like all of us those who remain have become elderly. We still have some who continue to ring at over 90, Claude Nicholls, John Conibear and Horace Clements. Horace and his wife Eileen also celebrated 70 years of marriage last year, as did Claude & Joyce Nicholls earlier this year. Great achievements. By the time you read this article Harry Bardens will also have celebrated his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday in July.

However, for many years, while no longer being regarded as "wrinkly" but dedicated Devon Call Change Ringkly Ringers, we have welcomed all whatever their ability and experience or years to join both the monthly meetings and tours. It has encouraged many to ring more, to become more expert and competent and helps keep our art alive and support our churches and their congregations all around Devon and beyond.

***John Staddon***

## **Chardstock Remembers**

On a beautiful sunny, quiet, still evening of Friday 8th May 2020, Derrick Goff (Tower Captain) and Susan Bray remembered the 75th Anniversary of V E Day. At 7pm we

played pre recordings of Chardstock church bells from our respective gardens, due to the lockdown of covid 19.

***Susan Bray***

# Smile (.Amazon) and Give to the Devon Bell Restoration Fund

Like all Charities big and small, we face a significant decrease in income during 2020, and potentially beyond, whilst Church Bell Ringing isn't allowed. Last year the Fund received income of £3,500 from the Guild and its Branches, a similar amount from the Association (received in early 2020) and over £5,000 from individual towers, inspections, talks and other ringing activities. That's a total of £12,000 which is about half the income the Fund received in 2019. All of this income was dependent on us being out and about and going ringing, something we all know is unlikely to be the case for quite some time to come.

With the prospect of no peals, quarter peals, visiting bands, meetings, striking competitions, the Association Draw being cancelled, even when we do go back ringing (see latest guidance from the Central Council) it is hard to see where a large percentage of our normal income will come from.

The other half of the Fund's income is from the Smale Bequest but, as with all investments, their value has fallen due to stock markets crashing worldwide. Continuing financial uncertainty will inevitably have a knock-on effect to that income too and this will almost certainly be impacted for several years.

You may think, well the bells aren't being rung so why do they need restoration, which is a good question. However, for those who have been around ringing for any length of time know that bells need to be rung regularly. Leaving them idle for some time could find us with all sorts of issues when that great day arrives and we are allowed back in the tower.

So, what's the solution? One very simple and quick way to "give" to the DCBRF without it costing you anything is to sign up to Smile.Amazon. In their own words, AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon that lets customers enjoy the same wide selection of products, low prices, and convenient shopping features as on amazon.co.uk. The difference is that when customers shop through the website [smile.amazon.co.uk](https://www.smile.amazon.co.uk) Amazon will donate 0.5% of the net purchase price (excluding VAT, returns and shipping fees) to the charity of your choice, in this case the Devon Church Bell Restoration Fund.

I have to be honest that it's very difficult to sit here and ask for your money at this time. However, if internet shopping isn't your thing and you have no desire to start now, then maybe think about the money you have saved by not being able to go ringing. Perhaps your fuel costs, the price of your weekly pint, the ringing fees for peals, quarters and competition entries. The Trustees all appreciate that everyone has been affected by this pandemic in some way but if you feel you can give even a very small amount then we will be extremely grateful. At present, using internet banking is the best way to make donations and Mary Mears, The Fund's Treasurer, will be very happy to provide the DCBRF account details needed to donate online. Depositing cheques will hopefully become easier in the months ahead. Mary's email address is [general@1applegarth.co.uk](mailto:general@1applegarth.co.uk).

Grants paid in 2019 - £21,000 (6 projects)

*Income received in 2019 - £22,800*

Grants paid to date in 2020 - £6,900 (2 projects)

*Income received in 2020 to 1<sup>st</sup> April - £6,800*

Grants agreed but not paid at 06/04/20 - £32,000 (9 projects)

*Janet Deem*

## Shaugh Prior Bells

There has been very little work to the bell installation at St Edward's over the years, the most recent being new wheels after William Aggett's hoisting beam came down in a storm in the autumn of 1991. Previous to this was the full restoration by John Taylor and Co of Loughborough in the summer of 1937 when the bells were re-hung in a new cast-iron frame for eight with all new fittings and re-tuned.

So it was in May 2019 after an inspection by Owen and Kevin Borlase that it was found there was a number of issues. The main issue, the start of corrosion to the sub frame due to water ingress, could be rectified if treated sooner rather than later. It was also noted that a number of the wheels were loose, bell seating pads cracked or had worm in them, and the clapper balls needed re-profiling. We then had the Diocesan bell advisors' visit who gave a comprehensive report on the whole installation



*Photo - Keltek Trust*

recommending that action be taken to stop further deterioration.

At this point I sought help from the churchwardens at Shaugh who asked that I get quotes for the work. I contacted John Taylor and Co who provided a no obligation free quotation. Simon Adams from Taylors did the inspection in July 2019 and then gave me a report and a quote for all works to the bells and frame. He noted in the report that there were also a number of faults with the feet of the main frame because of rusting due to water ingress and that the west end of the frame, in particular, should be removed for galvanising. They also quoted to strip down and re-paint the frame and treat with a rust inhibitor. During the inspection Simon had noted some missing bolts from one of the frame sides and from one of the wheels which he replaced with no fee. After this inspection it was made quite clear that the bells

## ***Shaugh Prior - continued from page 8***

should be rung less due to the state of the frame, so it was with heavy hearts that since then we have only rung them for special services or weddings.

We have started to do some fund raising and looking for grants and have recently (April 2020) been awarded £900 from the Devon Church Bell Restoration Fund. We have received several private donations but are still looking to raise more. After ratification by the PCC in September 2019 Taylor's were awarded the job and a deposit was paid in March 2020. Simon Adams has now been in contact to advise that work may be completed in two phases, with the mechanical work taking place first and the re-painting of the frame at a later date, this taking into account the current Covid-19 pandemic.

We are still in a lengthy process of arranging for the bells to be rung from a gallery ringing room. This is a project that our churchwardens are thoroughly behind, but it is taking some time to get the correct outcome for all parties involved. It was a project that started when Neil Trout was Tower Captain and one that I feel should remain one of our biggest projects. It will not only be significant to the way the bells handle but will make it a much easier place to teach and retain new ringers. To quote many a past ringer "them is men's bells". I would say they are experienced ringers' bells, certainly not for the novice but I hope that can change in the future.

Once the bells are in first class order I can then start welcoming visiting teams back to Shaugh Prior.

***Ryan Trout***

## **Edward Fishwick, 30<sup>th</sup> October 1950 – 29<sup>th</sup> April 2020**

With great sadness, we have to report the passing of Edward Fishwick, at the age of 69 years, on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2020.

Edward, known to his many friends as Eddie, was a ringer at Appledore for over 50 years.

An Appledore boy born and bred, he attended the Church Primary School at which time the Headmaster, Mr. Dryer, was the Church Choir master and also member of the Bell ringing team.

It wasn't long before Edward and his friends at school were drafted into the Church choir, not that any of us could sing!

At this time, around the mid 1960's, Appledore had a team of ringers under the leadership of Jack Eastman. Many were of a senior age, except for the son of the then Vicar, Roy Dixon.

So once again Edward and his school friends were drafted this time from the Church choir into the ringing chamber. For his sins Peter Dixon had the job of teaching a new, unruly, young band.

As the young Appledore team progressed, we started to enter competitions and were soon getting encouraging compliments from the likes of Tom Wright of Down St. Mary and Charlie Stevens of West Down. I remember Charlie used to travel over to Appledore on some Sundays during the summer to ring with us.

Edward worked in the building industry and was a mason by trade. He had spent time working in Germany, but his heart was always in Appledore. As well as ringing he was also involved with the Appledore Football club, where he was a Trustee and Vice President.

He also rowed in his younger days for Bideford Reds. He and his crew successfully won the Junior WEARA championship in 1969 and the Senior championship in 1971. On hearing the news of his passing, out of respect, the club's flag was flown at half-mast.

He was very generous with his time and skills, having volunteered to rebuild the wall behind the tower at Appledore and built the two gate pillars at the main entrance to the church. He was also instrumental in building the club house

for Appledore Football Club.

Until ill health forced Edward to ring a lighter bell, he was without doubt one of the best Tenor ringers around. I remember as a young team we entered the Devon 8 bell competition which was held at Pilton. Edward would never ring with a strapper. During the rise he was doing fine, then the middle bells started to fall in and above the sound of the bells we heard from the direction of the tenor "get those bl\*\*\*y middle bells up"! Unfortunately Edward's efforts were in vain as later in the competition Plympton St. Mary was ringing a cracking peal when a loud bang was heard as the tenor clapper flew out, so the competition was halted.

His daughter Sharon also learned to ring. While ringing at Northam, which is quite a tall tower, she dislocated her knee in the ringing chamber. I hurried down the tower and phoned for an ambulance; on its arrival the medic asked me where the casualty was, so I pointed to the top of the tower, he said "I think I'd better call for backup". With the help of the ringers the Ambulance crew managed to bring Sharon down the long spiral stairway on a stretcher. The incident made the papers, and I don't think Sharon ever rang at Northam again.

Marie, his wife, also learnt to ring and is a valued member of the Appledore team. We shall all miss Eddie's wicked sense of humour, most of all Marie who bore the brunt of his many tongue-in-cheek remarks.

Appledore, Northam and Abbotsham towers, where he rang regularly, will sorely miss his ringing skills. But most of all he will be missed for his great camaraderie and the light he brought into so many lives.

Unfortunately due to Covid-19 we couldn't ring the bells, or attend the funeral, but special permission was given by the Church so that Peter Dixon, who taught Edward to ring, could ring his beloved Tenor full circle for 10 minutes as the Funeral cortege passed the Church. The ringers formed a guard of honour at the Church gate; the flag on the tower was lowered to half mast.

We shall all miss you Edward, but will always remember the good times we had.

RIP

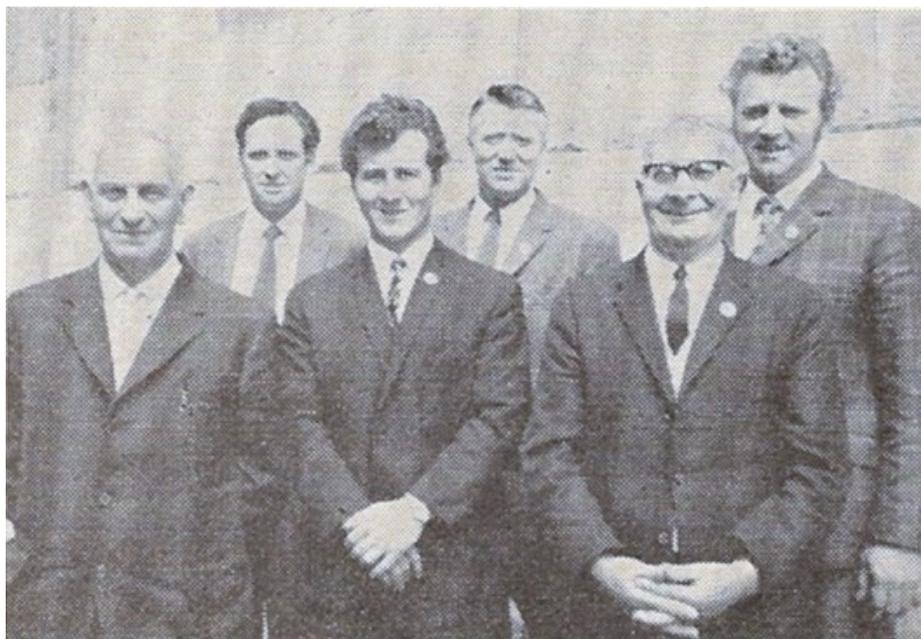
***John Ross and Peter Dixon***

# Obituary for Paul Holsgrove

Paul Holsgrove was a long standing ringer who lived and rang at West Alvington. Sadly due to ill health he recently passed away. Because of the outbreak of the Coronavirus a private cremation has been held. A memorial service will be arranged when it becomes safe to do so.

Paul rang mainly at West Alvington. He regularly supported both practice nights and Sunday Service ringing. He also provided similar support at nearby St. Edmund's Kingsbridge. At St. Edmund's, during the captaincy of the late Edward Punchard, he rang in both their six and eight-bell teams.

Focusing on West Alvington, during the captaincy of the late Jack Rhymes, who taught Paul how to ring, his position was on the fourth bell. His potential as a young ringer was soon spotted by the previous captain – George Edwards. With encouragement forthcoming from both George and Jack he was selected and rang with the team in many competitions which included the Woodleigh Deanery annual festival where the team won the senior section on many occasions. To extrapolate from these achievements the team duly qualified for the annual Inter Deanery festival. Such was the enthusiasm within the team that they also regularly competed in the Devon Association six-bell qualifier and succeeded in reaching the Major six-bell Final several times. Amongst these achievements was winning the Ross Shield in the final at Burrington in 1969 and, with some of the other top teams in Devon, competing in an invitation six-bell competition at the Church of St. Vedast Foster Lane, London in 1972. The many ringing certificates on display in the tower at



*The West Alvington team that rang at St. Vedast, Foster Lane, London in 1972.  
Back row L-R Terry Hockin, Jack Rhymes (Captain), Len Foster  
Front row L-R George Edwards, Paul Holsgrove, Jack Wills*



*The Church of St Vedast, Foster Lane, London  
Photo: Lonpicman*

West Alvington is testament to just how successful the team was.

At St. Edmund's Kingsbridge Paul also rang the fourth bell, both as a member of the six and eight bell teams. As with West Alvington ringing with Kingsbridge involved a great deal of travelling to compete in competitions all across the county. He was a regular member when they competed in the Woodleigh Deanery and Inter Deanery

annual festivals as well as the Devon Association and South Devon Ringers eight-bell festivals.

Paul could be justly proud of becoming a member of the West Alvington and Kingsbridge teams and ringing with them when the sides were producing first class striking. As with any obituary we have to be thankful to many of the ringers who rang with him at the time but sadly are not with us anymore. However, in this instance I appreciate the assistance which I have received from two well respected ringers here in South Devon, namely Harry Bardens of Bigbury and Terry Hockin of Loddiswell. I am also grateful to Paul's daughter Sally and Mrs Helen Rhymes for the information which they kindly provided.

It was a pleasure to have known Paul and to have rung with him both during six and eight bell events. He was a dedicated and highly proficient ringer who was respected by all who knew him. We all miss him and will ensure that due notice is given when a date for his memorial service is planned to take place.

**Jereme Darke**

# Success for Oakford Appeal

A whopping £1,000 was raised for the Oakford Church Bells Restoration Appeal at a fundraising event in Oakford Village Hall in February. Those who came were treated to a 'proper' English Afternoon Tea whilst being entertained by local authors, Liz Shakespeare and Chris Tull.

Organiser Mary Shere commented: "Whoever would have thought that a little afternoon tea in a remote Devon village would have raised such an astounding amount for the bells". There was such an assortment of people who came, the attraction was 3- fold. Some came to enjoy the tea and support the event, some who knew Chris from the 1960s when he was Rector in the Exe Valley and some who wanted to hear Liz Shakespeare's riveting talk about her latest book, "The Postman Poet."

The beautiful tea sets were lent for the occasion by various ladies in the village, most of which hadn't seen



Oakford Church

Photo: Keltex Trust

the light of day for many years. "As each tea set was unveiled it came with a heart-warming story and happy memories from days gone by. It was just so lovely to see them all being used and enjoyed once again", said Mary.

Various events have taken place in Oakford to raise funds over the past year and there have been some very generous donations. Up to the end of February, £8,432 had been raised towards the £60,000 that is needed and the church was then in a strong position to apply for grant funding. For more information on how you can make a donation or help in any way, please contact the PCC Secretary, Mrs Mary Shere, Oakridge, Oakford, EX16 9HH on 01398 351154 or 07803 426686, or oakridge-pork@gmail.com

Les Boyce



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