

**The Parish Church**

**St. Mary the Virgin**

**Denbury, Devon, England**

# **Bell Restoration Appeal**

## **'Can you help?'**



**St. Mary the Virgin PCC has launched a 'Bell Restoration Appeal' to seek volunteers and raise funds to carry out the works described below. We will be approaching businesses and organisations as well as charitable trusts that aid church and bell refurbishment projects. To succeed with grant giving bodies we need to demonstrate that we are raising a substantial portion of the money through our own enterprises within the parish. To aid us in this process the PCC have appointed a small committee of local business people, who are experienced in fund raising, and church representatives to assist in the appeal.**

**Donors if they wish, will have their names recorded in the 'Book of Benefactors'. We will be pleased to discuss commemorative inscriptions on headstocks, new bells or bells frames with major contributors.**

**We hope that you share our desire to maintain the heritage we have received in our church and its bells and will support us by contributing to the St. Mary the Virgin Church 'Bell Restoration Appeal'.**

## The Church of St Mary the Virgin Debury, Devon Bell Restoration Appeal

The bells of Denbury Church have rung out for many centuries, calling parishioners to worship, marking national occasions and personal milestones such as christenings, weddings and funerals. The Church Tower is 62 feet high and carries a peel of five bells. Two bells were cast in the reign of Charles I (1631 and 1633). The Tenor bell, on which the clock strikes the hour, was cast in the reign of George IV (1829). Then during the reign of Queen Victoria the Treble bell was cast (1846). Public subscription paid for the fifth bell cast during the reign of Edward VII (1907). It is now more than 100 years since their last full renovation, they now need a major overhaul, which will cost between one hundred and five thousand and one hundred and twenty thousand pounds. Which includes the introduction of a 6th bell.

The bells are part of the rich heritage we have in our parish church, which has served the community for nearly 800 years by providing education, shelter, religious and social care and a place in which to worship. It is important that it is looked after and handed on to future generations.

### **We would like you to help in the restoration of the bells.**

This leaflet describes the work that is planned and the enclosed form enables you to contribute if you wish.

If you would like more information, please get in touch with us using the contact details at the back.



## The Bells

The bells are some of the oldest fixtures in our church.

Bell	Founder	Date	Diameter (cm)	Weight (kg)	Note
Tenor	William Hambling, Blackawton	1829	88.9	406.4	A
Fourth	(Possibly)Anthony Pennington, Exeter	1631	83.18	304.8	B
Third	Mears & Stainbank Whitechapel	1907	74.29	228.6	C#
Second	Robert Pennington	1633	68.58	203.2	D#
Treble	William & Charles Pannell Cullompton	1846	64.9	190.5	F

**The bell frame and ringing fittings were built and installed by Aggett's of Chagford when the bells were rehung in 1906/7 to accommodate the new 'third' bell. After over 100 years the gudgeon and bearing are well worn and dirty and, all the bearings demonstrate excessive endfloat. Since 1906 the bells have been in constant service, with routine maintenance being carried out by successive tower captains and ringers. The time has now come for a major overhaul to ensure that the ring of bells remains serviceable, safe and up to date.**

**The Tenor, Fourth and Second Bells are 'listed' by the Church Buildings Council as being of historic interest and therefore worthy of preservation.**

### What work is proposed?

- . Dismantle the bells and ringing fittings and remove to Nicholson's works at Bridport, Dorset
- . Transport fourth, third and treble to the London bell foundry
- . Carry out works to reduce the chances that bells could crack
- . Have new tenor and second bells cast
- . Provide an additional 6th bell
- . Tune treble, third and two new bells to the fourth bell
- . Deal with accumulated wear and tear and ensure the bells are safe to ring
- . Produce new ringing fittings including 6th place
- . Re-hang bells
- . Carry out related building works

## **Who will do it?**

The main contractor will be the specialists, Nicholson Engineering Ltd.



Barrow bells at the London Foundry awaiting shipment to Nicholson

## **When will it be done?**

First we have to raise the money! Our timetable is for a period of intensive fundraising, locally in the parish and applying for grants both regionally and nationally. A Fund Raising Team has been established with both PCC and local resident representation. We hope to be able to start work during 2016.

## **Volunteers!**

We also have the option of reducing the overall cost by about £9,000 if we are able to provide two fit and able-bodied assistants to help with the site work which would involve a degree of heavy lifting, working from heights and is dirty work. You would be covered under Nicholson's Employer Liability Insurance. Other volunteers are also welcome to assist in some of the less physical tasks. If you are interested please contact:  
Steve Bassett by phone on 01803 812537

## **Further Information**

If you would like to know more about this appeal, please contact:  
Steve Bassett 01803 812537 or Mike Bray 01803 812941

Members of the Fund Raising Committee:  
Steve Bassett, Mike Bray, Tessa Amies, Tim Howe, Paul Austin and Paul Bishop

We will keep you up to date on our website  
[www.missioncommunity.org.uk](http://www.missioncommunity.org.uk)  
and in The Denbury Diary and also at [www.denbury.net](http://www.denbury.net)