

Celebrating and Remembering with Hampshire's Oldest Bells

Intro: Welcome to Hampshire HistBites. Join us as we delve into the past and go on a journey to discover some of the county's best and occasionally unknown history. We'll be speaking to experts and enthusiasts, asking them to reveal some of our hidden heritage, as well as share with you a few fascinating untold stories.

Cathy: My guest is Phil Watts the Bells advisor for the Winchester Diocese. Phil, can you tell me a little bit about your role?

Phil: Yes, indeed! I'm a member of a committee called the Diocesan Advisory Committee. Every church of England diocese has such a committee that provides advice to the diocesan authorities and to the parishes in the diocese on the merits of schemes of restoration, refurbishment and enhancement of churches, particularly listed churches so that the necessary approvals can be given by the diocese for those processes, under an arrangement called faculty jurisdiction. And also, so that parishes get the best advice to make the best use of what they're trying to achieve and to make the best use of the funds they have available.

Committees consist of a number of specialists in fabric and in the fittings and fixtures of churches. And I happen to be the bells advisor, the person with information and advice on bells to the diocese of Winchester.

Cathy: How long have we had bells in Hampshire?

Phil: We think we've had bells in Hampshire since Saxon times. Saxon law seems to have encouraged churches to have bells and in fact, there is evidence that if you were a Churl in Saxon times, you could be promoted by the King to become a Thegn if your estate was more than 500 acres, but more importantly, if your church had four or more bells. So the logic of bells being in Saxon churches seems quite well established and we certainly know that there is documentary evidence that in the early 1000s King Cnut gave two bells to the church in Winchester, and we believe that was the 'New Minster' that the Saxons built in the early 1000s.

Cathy: And what would the bells have been used for over time?

Phil: They would have been used for a variety of purposes. Originally, unlike today, when we tend to ring all the church bells together, in those days, each bell that the church had would have been used for a different purpose. So there would have been a bell used to sound the curfew, to make sure that each house and each establishment covered its fires overnight for safety. Another bell, often called a Sanctus, was used to tell the community that the communion service was progressing and that the priest had got to the point of blessing the communion elements but on the many festivals that were common in early medieval times, then they may well have been jangled together in a joyful noise.

Cathy: And what records do we have of the bells in Hampshire?

Phil: We've got a number of sources. There are various historical records in churches which include information on bells. There's also some archaeological evidence, often it's possible to discover the remains of bell molds, and that's often discovered along with evidence of fires and firing in the bottom of pits that are excavated at those sort of early medieval levels of archaeology. But obviously one of the principal evidences is bells themselves, and we still have bells in Hampshire dating back a thousand years, those themselves obviously provide a superb record that carries us forward over that period of time.

Cathy: How have bell shapes changed over the years?

Phil: The very earliest bells that we have, based on evidence in church towers, is of bells that were really quite conical in shape, with quite a flat flange at the mouth and tapering and in a fairly conical sort of way up to a point where a simple domed crown was present and then some fairly slender hanging loops called cannons, which were molded onto the top of the bell. But going through the 1200s in the 1300s and particularly into the 1400s, we see bells evolving to much more the shape that we think of as a bell today. The earliest bells were quite long waisted, so they were quite tall in proportion to their diameter, but gradually over time, those proportions reduced, so that today we have bells that are about as tall as they are wide. So that's the sort of bell shape that we rather expect to find, if we look up at a little church perhaps, and we see a bell hanging in it.

Cathy: And then they were hung differently weren't they, over time?

Phil: They were indeed, we believe that the very earliest bells were just simply roped to a beam or a rafter, perhaps in the roof of the church or some sort of timber fitted into an opening in maybe the West wall of the church. And they would have just simply been roped onto that beam in some way or other. But it seems that bells sounded that way didn't necessarily last very long, the clapper being held against the bell affected the way that the bell reverberated, and bells could quite easily crack. And so they discovered fairly early on if the bell were moving when the clappers struck it so that the two could rebound, one away from the other, then the bells lasted a lot longer and sounded more musical. So it wasn't long before bells were hung on an axle or a short beam, which we call a headstock, which would have been pivoted probably by just two spikes, one driven in each end, maybe anchored between two upright posts looking rather like a roof truss and probably made by the carpenter who built the church roof. These would have been mounted again in the roofs of churches or, increasingly in the years after the Conquest, in the towers that were being added to churches, and then gradually over time that the creation of bell frames of more complex shape using those sorts of roof truss type arrangements in different patterns with increasing numbers of bells hung, and then the bells could be swung higher. First of all, you had a lever to create the lateral movement, but not long after that, perhaps by 1300-1350, we begin to get evidence of a quarter wheel to create more leverage that evolved into a half wheel. Increasingly wheels increased from half to three quarters to full wheels and we think full wheels came in from about 1700 and enabled the bell then to be swung full circle in the way that change ringers in the English style are able to ring bells today.

Cathy: Where were bells made and how did that change over time?

Phil: In Hampshire, bells were sometimes made locally to the church, and we have records and evidence of some bells that must've been cast either at the base of the tower in the church or in the church yard or in a field near the church. In fact, bells cast for St. John the Baptist Church in Winchester appear to have been cast by the founder who was briefly working in Alresford, but those sorts of founders were often itinerant and moved from place to place to seek out work and seek out bells that needed to be cast or restored. But we also have from the 1200s and onwards evidence of established bell foundries in locations around the country. From Hampshire's perspective, most of those were outside the County.

We know that there were bell founders working in London from the 1250s, and there is evidence of dynasties of founders who would have operated in the medieval craft guilds, so lots of small, independent businesses, but all working under the umbrella of a craft Guild that would have set standards and overseen the conduct of that particular industry. We also know that there were bell foundries associated with a number of Abbeys and Priories. Although we don't have any bells in Hampshire that we can trace to it, we know there was a substantial medieval bell foundry in Shaftsbury, which appeared to be associated with Shaftsbury Abbey.

But the foundry in the early medieval times that sent most bells to Hampshire was actually a Foundry that originally was established in connection with Chertsey Abbey in Surrey and moved around about 1350-1360 and relocated to Wokingham. There was a Foundry at Wokingham then right down to the late 1600s, early 1700s. That Foundry sent many bells to Hampshire, particularly in the period between 1365 and 1450, a number of our early bells came from Wokingham. We also know that there was another medieval bell Foundry in Salisbury. We have fewer bells from Salisbury and often they're located in the Western part of Hampshire.

Cathy: The bells were quite heavy. Was this the reason why there were itinerant bell founders?

Phil: Very early bells were often actually relatively small. Some of the earliest bells we have dated from the first quarter of the 11th century, actually only weigh about a half to three quarters of a hundredweight. So in bell terms, bell ringers are used to ringing bells of often several tens of hundredweights, these are quite small bells, but as bells grew in size to be four or five, six, eight, even 10 hundredweights. And we traditionally measure the weight of bells in hundredweights, quarters, and pounds, then clearly those bells had to be transported. But we tend to assume that transport was impossible in early medieval times. But actually it wasn't as difficult as we think. One only has to think of the amount of stone that was moved around the country to build our great abbeys and cathedrals to realize it was possible for bells of significant size to be transported by wagon and a team of horses or oxen, some distance to the parish that needed it.

Cathy: And I know you have a story about a woman who was a founder.

Phil: Yes, indeed. One of those founders who was operating in the Aldgate area of London was a chap called John Sturdy. Now John Sturdy was operating in London between 1440 and 1458. And he died in 1458, his wife, Joanna Sturdy took on the Foundry. And she continued the family business until 1461. And in fact sent at least one bell to Hampshire during that time. We believe that she would have sent it rather than come and cast it in the county, because as I say the family bell Foundry business was operating in London.

Cathy: Where are the oldest surviving bells in Hampshire?

Phil: The oldest surviving bells in Hampshire, are actually generally in the South of the County. We have two bells at Chilworth, which we believe date to the first quarter of the 12th century. There's a bell at Bramshaw, which is just on the edge of Hampshire in the diocese of Salisbury, that's a little bit later, about 1150. There's also a bell up Mattingly, which is dated at about 1180.

Cathy: What were the earliest datable bells?

Phil: The earliest datable bell that we know of in the Hampshire vicinity is actually on the Isle of Wight, which obviously was part of the diocese of Winchester until the late 1920s. It's two bells, in fact, at Thorley just on the Western end of the Isle of Wight and because of the early medieval inscription on those bells in Latin, which refers both to the rector of the parish and to a Squire living locally, we can date that bell because of other records to between 1260 and 1285. And those are the earliest bells within the sort of close vicinity of Hampshire that we can say fit to a particular time period. Although it's a bit more difficult, we can identify a bell at Heckfield, the third bell of the five bells at Heckfield, to between 1345 and 1360, because we can identify the founder's marks, little ornamental stamps that appear on the bell as part of the inscription, that relate to one of two London founders.

We also have a bell at Christchurch priory, two bells in fact, the ninth and 10th bells of the current peal of 12, which were cast around 1367, by John Rufford of Bedfordshire, who was actually the founder with Royal appointment. Edward III appointed John Rufford as his Royal bell founder. The earliest bell that we can identify that has a connection with the Wokingham bell Foundry is a bell which was cast by Steven Norton in around 1368/1370. Those sorts of bells can be dated by reference to the known founder and the period that we know the founder was operating.

Cathy: Because of the founder's marks on the bells?

Phil: That's right. Bell founders used impressions of coins or shields or some other sort of badge and their lettering, that they used to stamp the inscriptions into their bell molds to appear on the surface of the bells, often unique to a particular founder or a particular dynasty of founders and so it's possible to identify early bells in those ways.

Cathy: What materials were used in the towers in Hampshire?

Phil: The issue in Hampshire is that we don't have a great deal of substantial local stone. Whereas the more wealthy churches may have been constructed, quite substantially, of imported stone material, including Caen Stone from Northern France and Purbeck limestone, Chilmark stone from the West of Salisbury. Smaller churches and smaller parishes would tend to only use stone for the quoins, the corners of the walls to give substance to the corners of the walls.

The walls themselves may well then have been built up of a mixture of maybe local brick from the plentiful clay supplies that we have in the Hampshire basin, but also obviously on the downland from flint, set into the wall.

But that also gave a problem, obviously with taller structures, such as towers. And we do have something which is not unique to Hampshire, but it is much more plentiful in Hampshire,

particularly in the areas close to the chalk, which is called the Hampshire Dovecote Belfry, which often figures as four huge oak timbers from one of the various medieval forests that were plentiful across Hampshire, rising up from typically the West end of the church against the West wall, supporting some sort of wooden box like structure on the roof or rising up through the roof, with the bells hung in that structure and the ropes coming down through to the ground floor level so that the ringers can be seen at the back of the church. Huge amounts of timber cross bracing and the structural timbers to hold it all together, but quite a common sight, with typically a little pyramid top of the tower, just to help deflect the weather off. And typically there were three bells in these structures because that was the number of bells that would be fitted into that space. And usually they were hung so that they swung parallel to the West wall of the church so there was some additional support to the swinging of the bells from the fabric of the church. That Hampshire Belfry and the use of timber, which was much more plentiful and weather boarding to board out the outside of the Belfry structure reflected the greater ease of getting hold of timber than of getting hold of stone and such like in the County.

Cathy: And how were bells tuned and how did that change over time?

Phil: If we go back to the bells of the early 1100s, the simple way of getting bells of different note was to create a bell of a different size or a different thickness. The thicker the bell, it tends to have a somewhat higher note. Alternatively, you could have a bigger bell, generally the bigger the bell, the lower the note. But, during the development of bell shape to that more smooth and curved and flared shape it became evident to master founders of the time, who were very skilled craftsmen, that they could actually, with the right thickness of bell and the right profile, create a bell which was actually quite musical within itself.

I should explain that when we talk about tuning, bells create a number of notes because of the shape of a bell, different radii, different diameters across the bell, at different heights up the bell, that reverberate at different frequencies. And so when you strike a bell what you're getting is a chord of notes, and there are a recognized five notes that are prevalent in most bells, and they're called partial tones and a nice rounded, melodic sound to a bell comes when all of those partial tones are in a recognized relationship to one another. And that relationship is typically that if we take the highest partial tone to be the nominal, we give it that name. Then the prime partial tone is half the frequency of the nominal and the hum tone, which is set up when the bell's reverberation really settles down, is a quarter of the frequency of the nominal. So in fact, there is a spread of two octaves between those three partial tones. How did they tune them? Initially, they discovered that the area just inside the lip, on the inside of the bell, if they took metal off the inside and effectively increase the internal diameter by reducing the thickness of the bell, they could flatten the tone. They could produce a bell of somewhat larger diameter – a very small amount, but a little bit larger and they could make small adjustments to the tone and improve the tone of the bell. And once that started to be a practice, the initial approach was actually to take a hammer and tuning chisel, and literally chip pieces of metal off the inside of the bell all the way around the inside of the mouth of the bell around the thickest part, where the clapper strikes to adjust the tone and bell founders became quite adept at this. They also discovered if they chipped a little bit off the lip, they could slightly sharpen the bell, although that wasn't always quite so successful. But we have a number of bells in Hampshire where there's evidence on the inside of the bell of quite rough surfaces, where gouges and grooves have been chiseled out by the bell founder, or his tuner,

the person who did the work, trying to flatten the note of the bell to make it more in tune with the neighbouring bells in the peal.

In the 1690s, Gloucestershire gentlemen called Abraham Rudell invented a method of tipping the bell upside down and having a vertical lathe with a boring machine on it that would actually bore out a thin skim of metal from the inside. And gradually this approach of machining metal off the inside of the bell became quite common. And it's the practice that's used now.

Cathy: And how are bells being marked or inscribed over time?

Phil: We talked about founders marks and lettering, but the very earliest bells simply had a series of horizontal raised lines running round them, which we call molding wires, which was a very simple decoration, but by the late 1200s, and as we heard from the bells at Thorley on the Isle of Wight, it was possible for the founder to indent lettering and the shapes of coins, or shields or other marks that may indicate that would be their trademark onto the inside of the outer mold of the bell.

In the late 1300s and through the 1400s, the practice was generally to have Latin inscriptions using either Lombardic capitals or black letter, which were the earlier typefaces that were understood by society generally. And so those inscriptions were often simply religious inscriptions, usually in Latin. Something like, 'ave Maria ora pro nobis', 'let Mary pray for us', 'hail Mary, pray for us', 'sancta Maria', those sorts of simple prayers to religious figures to bless the parish and to be a part of the sort of invocation of goodness into the parish. But from around about the time of the reformation, so from about 1530 onwards, we begin to see inscriptions in English. Initially they're still fairly simple religious inscriptions, but we begin to see founder's names appearing on bells, either as initials or simply 'James Smith cast me', or just an initials and a founder's mark that we can identify.

But by the 1700s, when change ringing was beginning to really take off and bells were being cast much more plentifully to stock churches with sufficient bells to enable peels of bells to be run to changes, we find a more secular approach. Change ringing was a secular activity that happened to take place in church. The bells were chimed on Sundays but rung for sport and pleasure. But I think in the last hundred years, we've returned perhaps in the Victorian-post Victorian in a more modern period to really tending to record the names of clergy, church wardens, ringing master, maybe the names of people who have been the donors of the bells, or if it's been given in memoriam of somebody. And there may be a simple religious text that may also appear on the bell together with the marks of the founder and often just a simple statement of the name of the founder.

Cathy: So it's quite interesting to see all the different types of inscriptions that are on the bells.

Phil: Indeed. And one of the ways that we can help to determine the age of a bell is in the style of the inscription, the style of the lettering, the shape of the letters, and obviously in the founder's marks that also may appear – the trademarks and the ornament. And some founders added lots and lots of pretty patterns around their bells, we know that bells cast at the Aldbourne Foundry in Wiltshire, in the late 1600s and early 1700s by the Cor family of Aldbourne, carry a lot of ornamental decoration. And it's almost as though they found

whatever pretty shapes and patterns they could find and impress those around the bell to create a nice ornamental border.

Cathy: You were mentioning that bells were augmented in the 15th century because of change ringing? **20.26**

Phil: Yes. The initial augmentations really were because there was a desire to create a more musical sound from towers, even in the late pre-reformation period. Also bells were being replaced because they didn't necessarily last as long as maybe they do know. Not all of them were as robust as the bells at Chilworth or Bramshaw so there were replacements cast regularly for bells that cracked or fell or were damaged in some way. But in particular during the 1500s, we begin to see a period when bells are added to form musical rings, rather than bells of different notes, just to denote different purposes and to be cast, to form a sequence of notes.

And we begin to see evidence of very simple change ringing where maybe only one or two bells change at a time. And maybe some bells didn't actually change their position in the sequence at all. But because they could be swung, very nearly full circle, there was some control by the ringer when they were swung to a degree that they could be changed in their order. And that gradually evolved particularly in the 1600s into the change ringing that we understand today. And from then on, there was obviously desire to add more bells, to create more versatility. The more bells you have in a sequence, the more changes you can ring. If you've only got three bells, you can only ring six different changes. If you've got seven bells, you can ring 5,040 different changes and so on. So the idea of churches wanting more, or perhaps ringers wanting more bells became the sort of norm.

Cathy: I'm particularly interested in some of the specific sets of bells we've got in Hampshire, the ones at Romsey Abbey, Winchester Cathedral, and also the bells at Winchester College.

Phil: Romsey Abbey now has a famous peal of eight bells that were last restored in 2007, when a lot of work was done to stabilize the bell frame and make sure that everything was in good order. And those bells fundamentally date from 1791, although three of them were recast in 1932 and all of the eight bells were actually tuned in 2007, as part of the restoration to further improve their harmonics and the relationship of the music one to another. But we can go right back to medieval times to find out about bells in Romsey Abbey.

We know that there was a detached Campanile in the Northeast corner of the large, grassed area to the North of the Abbey. And we're not exactly sure when that was built, but certainly in the early part of the Middle Ages. And also, we know that in 1372, William of Wickham, granted a licence to the Abbey to enable the North aisle to be built or rebuilt to become St. Lawrence's church. Though it was built on the side of the Abbey, it was a separate yet integrated church within the area of the Abbey. And there is a suggestion that North aisle, that church in its own right had its own tower and it appears that one or both towers may have had five bells. So it could be, there were five bells in each church, but some of the records are a little ambiguous around that. But we know that money was left in 1557, following the Dissolution, to hang the bells from one of those two towers in the central tower of the Abbey, but that doesn't seem to have been done until 1624. So there was obviously a period of debate about how that would work. Of course, the Abbey as a convent was suppressed in 1539 as part of the suppression of Abbeys and Priories. And it may well be, there were bells in

the detached Campanile which were the Abbey bells, they might have been sequestered by the state. We know that lots of bells were acquired by Henry VIII's commissioners from those religious buildings as part of his acquisition of resources, shall we say to put it politely, but whatever happened in 1624, the detached Campanile was demolished, and six bells were transferred into the central tower of the Abbey. And we know from records because the base of that bell frame that was installed then, it's still in the tower at Romsey, that it was a five-bell frame. So it may be that the sixth bell was either a separate service bell, or maybe even a large Sanctus bell for use at the communion. But that bell frame was installed at the top of the Abbey tower and a ringing floor was installed underneath it in the position that the current ringing floor is at Romsey even today.

There've been some archaeological excavations there some years ago, which uncovered a bell pit or evidence of bell manufacturer. Again, some firing evidence from the fire that would have been used to dry the mold and so on. And also, again, some evidence of the loam and organic material that would have been used to form the mold around the bell.

And so we think that may have been by one of the itinerant founders who was operating in Hampshire in the early 1600s of which there were three or four, and it's possible one of them cast the bell at King John's house, likely for the Abbey.

But in 1791, those bells or any that were replaced were effectively traded into the Whitechapel bell Foundry at the time in exchange for the eight bells that were hung in a new frame, which was erected actually over the top of the base of the old five bell frame. And those are the bells which form the core of the peal of eight that is there now.

If we look at Winchester cathedral, I mentioned that we have some records of archaeological excavations of bells being cast in the area. We also have the records of the two bells being gifted by King Cnut before 1035, but then unfortunately there is a complete gap in records of all descriptions until 1630/1631, when a timber bell frame was constructed in the central tower of the present cathedral for seven bells and a ringing chamber floor was installed underneath that bell frame, so again, where the current cathedral ringing chamber is. And those seven bells were hung in the tower in 1632. They had Latin inscriptions so it's possible some of them were pre-reformation bells that are continued right through in use in the cathedral and were just being rehung in the new frame. But it seems likely that those bells were just swing chimed or maybe just swung high enough so they sounded and could be run to very simple changes. We don't believe that there's any evidence that they were rung full circle for modern style change ringing, the change ringing that came in the later 1600s and continues today. What we do know that about a hundred years later in 1734, Richard Phelps of the Whitechapel bell foundry cast a complete heavy ring of six bells with a tenor weighing 32 hundredweights, which is only somewhat lighter than the weight of the present tenor at the cathedral. And it appears that they may have been hung in the 1632 oak frame that existed in the tower because there's evidence that that bell frame has been altered. It looks as though it's been cut apart and assembled in a different pattern, possibly to accommodate more bells or to accommodate bells in a different arrangement.

It seems likely that those six bells introduced the idea of change ringing as we know it today, what bell ringers would call method ringing, where the bells change their sequence in every pull, that it began on those bells.

10 years later in 1742, Thomas Lester who had taken over from Phelps at the Whitechapel bell Foundry cast two trebles to make a peel of eight. And in 1772, one of those bells was recast at Aldbourne in Wiltshire by Robert Wells. Robert Wells, his successor, James Wells recast the fourth bell in 1804 and the sixth bell in 1814. And in 1891, the tenor was recast again at Whitechapel. And in 1892, the cathedral gained two more small treble bells to make a peel of 10. I should explain the heaviest bell in a peel is called the tenor, the lightest bell in the peel is called the treble.

So if you're adding trebles, you're adding smaller, lighter bells to increase the range of notes. And those bells lasted down until after the first world war. And they began to become difficult to ring and some of them were not as tuneful as they might've been. And so in 1937, John Taylor and company of Loughborough were commissioned to cast a complete new peel of 12 bells. And the tenor bell there is quite unusual because it was cast bearing reference to King Edward VIII, who of course abdicated, and in fact, he abdicated before the bells were dedicated or consecrated. Edward VIII in Latin is inscribed through, and Georgius Sextus for King George VI is inscribed on the bell underneath. So there was a bit of hasty changing to recognize that the King who was on the throne when the bells were dedicated, wasn't the King who was on the throne when the bells were cast. And those bells still form the core of the peel of 12 bells. In 1992, two more bells were added, two more trebles. So Winchester cathedral is unusual and unique in having a complete change ringing peel of 14 bells, and in the 1960s, a bell from St. Lawrence's church in Winchester was transferred to the cathedral to make a flat eight, because it was added to the 12 bells then in the tower, and that meant that a combination of bells other than the full 12 could be rung to a musical scale, rather like needing a black note on a piano to play some scales, according to the key of the scale that you're playing. And in 1992, a further bell, a sharp fourth was added, alongside the addition of those two treble bells by Whitechapel.

So you have a ring of 14, you have two black notes, if you like for want of an analogy to a piano. So within that set of 14 plus two bells, you can ring a peel of 14, two peals of 10 of different musical scales and several rings of eight, two rings of six, again, of different scales. So that versatility helps in training ringers because you can have a complete musical scale, but quite a light set of bells. You don't have to ring the heavy tenor bell at which weighs 35 and a half hundredweights every time you wanted, perhaps train new ringers or something. So that's quite useful.

Winchester College, there appear to have been some bells in the college tower for many years, but it does appear some work was done either to restore or refurbish the college chapel tower in the late 1300s, early 1400s. And one of the Salisbury bell founders, a gentleman called Richard Brazier, who came from Wickham in Hampshire appears to have cast three or four bells for Winchester College and for the chapel in around 1413-1414. And it appears they were cast at the medieval Salisbury bell foundry that he was then the master founder of. And one of those bells actually still survives. It's not used regularly, but it still survives and is in the tower at Winchester college. But over the ensuing years, various alterations were made. John Wallace of the Salisbury bell Foundry provided a present fifth of the peel of six bells, Francis Foster again from the Salisbury bell Foundry in 1659 provided the second bell of the peel of six. In 1637 a chap called John Higdon, appears to have cast, or recast the tenor bell. A bell that weighs about a ten- and three-quarter hundredweights and then Mears and Stainbank of the Whitechapel bell Foundry cast a treble bell in 1866 and recast a third bell in 1952. So a mixture of bells forming that peel of six, some from Salisbury, some from London

and the bells themselves were restored and rehung and refurbished back in 1998 by a bell hanger from Appleton in Oxfordshire, the White Company of Appleton. So they're in good order and they, again, rung by college students. I know that from time to time, students coming to the college, learn to ring and provide ringing for college services and things.

Cathy: That's great. Is there anything else you wanted to say, Phil?

Phil: No. I'm just glad to have been able to share something of what is quite a unique heritage and Hampshire has quite a lot of that heritage and obviously churches and those interested in bells and ringing are very keen to preserve that and also to preserve the heritage of change ringing, which is a fundamentally English tradition. I just hope people have enjoyed exploring some of the contents of the bells and belfries of Hampshire.

Cathy: Thank you very much indeed, Phil.

Phil: Thank you.

Outro: We hope you enjoyed listening to today's episode. If you would like to find out a little bit more about what we've been talking about, then please visit the website, www.winchesterheritageopendays.org, click on Hampshire HistBites, and there you'll find today's show notes as well as some links to more information.

Thank you.