

**70th anniversary of the bells in Holy Trinity
Church, Ashford-in-the-Water:
Request for photos and memorabilia**

2024 marks the 70th anniversary of the dedication on October 20 1954 of three recast bells, one new bell, and a new bell frame in our church tower.

Following advice that the bells were not in a safe condition to be rung, they were to remain silenced for 16 years during a challenging fundraising effort, and the intervention of the Second World War.

For the greater part of this time, the bell project had been tirelessly promoted and managed by George and Ida Thorpe: the same Ida Thorpe who – also in 1954 – revived the village's well dressing tradition.

Twelve years later another two bells were added (again with the support and enthusiasm of George and Ida Thorpe) to complete the present peal of six bells. These new bells were donated by Mr Denis Whittaker of Devonshire Weir, Watts Green, in memory of his wife, Jean.

With the help of our Tower Captain Linda Pelc and several villagers, I have been attempting to re-discover the history of these 1954 and 1966 installations.

The acquisition of new bells is always a major undertaking, especially for a small village such as ours, and I am sure there must be some photographs somewhere memorialising these great achievements (we have found only a few so far) including what would have been the quite dramatic removal of the old bells and frame; their transportation to and from the bell foundry; and their re-installation in the tower.

So if anyone has any such photos or other memorabilia that they would be willing to share, I would be delighted to include them in the articles that I plan to write for subsequent issues of the parish magazine, as part of our 70th anniversary celebrations.

Many thanks.

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