

Historic handbell house holiday by Simon Gay

On the west coast of Argyll, opposite the Isle of Jura, in the hamlet of Kilmorey Knap, a house called Dun a Bhuilg was the location of the second and third handbell peals by the Scottish Association, in 1936. The house was built for Edwin and Agatha Lewis in 1929 as a holiday home, designed by the noted Arts and Crafts architect Albert Powys. Edwin Lewis (1881-1963) was a significant figure in 20th century ringing. He was President of the Central Council from 1930 to 1957, Master of the College Youths in 1936 and 1937, and author of the treatise *Towers and Forces* which was influential in relation to structural engineering and bellhanging.



Tina and Simon cut their wedding cake (left) and their anniversary cake (right), photo Julia Cater



Kilmorey Knap Chapel (photo Jonathan Frye). Below: Dun a Bhuilg (photo Simon Gay)



After commemorating the first Scottish Association handbell peal by ringing a peal at the original address (66 Hillhead Street, Glasgow), I started looking into the possibility of visiting Dun a Bhuilg. Some internet searching led me to the Whiting Society, which has republished *Towers and Forces*, and then I discovered that the house is now run as a holiday rental (alternatively known as Loch Sween House). I contacted the owner through Airbnb, explained why I was interested, and found that he is Edwin and Agatha's grandson. Assembling a group of friends, mostly handbell ringers, I booked a week at the house in April this year.

Apart from having a nice holiday, the main goal was to ring a peal, which we did. We also rang several quarters, lost a couple of other peals, and rang some



Edwin Lewis

commemorative touches around Edwin and Agatha Lewis's graves at Kilmorey Knap chapel. Coincidentally the week included the silver wedding anniversary of myself and the current Central Council President, Tina Stoecklin, which we enjoyed celebrating with our friends. The area is well worth a visit even without ringing.

Kilmorey Knap chapel is a little gem, built in the early 13th century. It is now filled with carved stones gathered from the area,

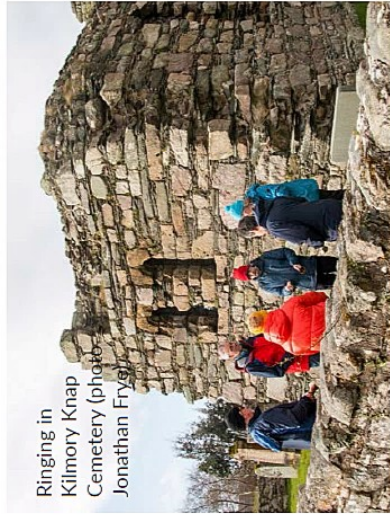
dating from the early Christian period to the 16th century. Nearby Kilmartin Glen has a concentration of Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments, including a stone circle and chambered cairns. During the week we took a boat trip around the Gulf of Corryreckan, location of the world's third largest whirlpool, in which George Orwell almost drowned after a mishap in a small boat.

Unfortunately I think this might be the end of the road for commemorating early Scottish Association handbell peals in their original locations. The fourth peal

was rung in 1946 at an army camp in India, by a band of three Captains: Albert Sargent (imagine the jokes!), who was a ringer from Glasgow; John Banks, who only ever rang two peals, both at the same army camp; and Wilfrid Moreton, later famous as the founder of the Hereford Ringing Course. Further information about Edwin Lewis can be found on the Whiting Society's website (www.whittingsociety.org.uk/old-ringing-books/lewis-towers-and-forces.html) and in the *Ringling World* obituary (RW 2734, 1963/609) and report of his memorial service (RW2742, 1963/746).

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Ringling in Kilmorey Knap Cemetery (photo Jonathan Frye)

Historic handbell house holiday (see opposite)

Kilmory Knap, Argyll. (Dun a Bhuilg) 6 Apr, 1260 Stedman Triples: Simon J Gay 1-2, Matthew J L Durham (C) 3-4, Julia R Cater 5-6, Nicholas W Jones 7-8.

Kilmory Knap, Argyll. (Dun a Bhuilg) 7 Apr, 1346 Cambridge S Maximus: Angela H Deakin 1-2, Peter G Kirton 3-4, Jonathan S Frye 5-6, Nicholas W Jones 7-8, Tina R Stoecklin 9-10, Simon J Gay (C) 11-12.

Kilmory Knap, Argyll. (Dun a Bhuilg) 9 Apr, 1280 Silver S Major: Angela H Deakin 1-2, Tina R Stoecklin 3-4, Jonathan S Frye 5-6, Simon J Gay (C) 7-8.

Kilmory Knap, Argyll. (Dun a Bhuilg) 9 Apr, 1440 Cambridge S Royal: Nicholas W Jones 1-2, G Jessica Durham 3-4, Julia R Cater 5-6, Matthew J L Durham 7-8, Peter G Kirton (C) 9-10. 1st S Royal as C.

Kilmory Knap, Argyll. (Dun a Bhuilg) 10 Apr, 1320 Stedman Cinques: Matthew J L Durham (C) 1-2, Julia R Cater 3-4, Simon J Gay 5-6, Tina R Stoecklin 7-8, G Jessica Durham 9-10, Peter G Kirton 11-12. 1st Stedman in hand: 11-12. Celebrating Tina & Simon's 25th Wedding Anniversary today.

Isle of Danna, Argyll. (Mid Danna) 12 Apr, 1312 Kent TB Major: Tina R Stoecklin 1-2, Jonathan S Frye 3-4, Simon J Gay (C) 5-6, Martin D Mellor 7-8. 1st handbell Q & first Q of Kent Major: 7-8. 1st Q on the Isle of Danna. In memory of Eileen Black (1935-2024), who lived in this house with her family in the 1970s.

Kilmory Knap, Argyll. (Dun a Bhuilg) 12 Apr, 1344 Bristol S Maximus: Tina R Stoecklin 1-2, Peter G Kirton 3-4, Simon J Gay (C) 5-6, Jonathan S Frye 7-8, Julia R Cater 9-10, Matthew J L Durham 11-12. 1st Bristol Maximus in hand: 1-2, 3-4, 7-8, 11-12.

Kilmory Knap, Argyll. (Cemetery) 7 Apr, 144 Kent TB Maximus: Peter G Kirton 1-2, Tina R Stoecklin 3-4, Angela H Deakin 5-6, Jonathan S Frye 7-8, Nicholas W Jones 9-10, Simon J Gay (C) 11-12. Rung at Edwin & Agatha Lewis's graves.

Kilmory Knap, Argyll. (Cemetery) 7 Apr, 144 Kent TB Maximus: Peter G Kirton 1-2, G Jessica Durham 3-4, Matthew J L Durham 5-6, Julia R Cater 7-8, Nicholas W Jones 9-10, Simon J Gay (C) 11-12. Rung at Edwin & Agatha Lewis's graves.

Kilmory Knap, Argyll. (Cemetery) 7 Apr, Rounds on 12: Peter G Kirton 1-2, G Jessica Durham 3-4, Dorothy G S Gay 5-6, Paisley R C Cater 7-8, Nicholas W Jones 9-10, Simon J Gay (C) 11-12. Rung at Edwin & Agatha Lewis's graves.

Kilmory Knap, Argyll. (Chapel) 7 Apr, 132 Stedman Cinques: Matthew J L Durham (C) 1-2, G Jessica Durham 3-4, Simon J Gay 5-6, Julia R Cater 7-8, Tina R Stoecklin 9-10, Peter G Kirton 11-12.

Kilmory Knap, Argyll. (Dun a Bhuilg) 8 Apr, 168 Kent TB Fourteen: Simon J Gay 1-2, G Jessica Durham 3-4, Julia R Cater 5-6, Matthew J L Durham 7-8, Peter G Kirton 9-10, Nicholas W Jones (C) 11-12, Martin D Mellor 13-14.

SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION

KILMORY KNAP, Argyll,
Dun a Bhuilg

Thu 11 Apr 2024 3h18 (15)

5040 Kent TB Maximus

Comp. Donald F Morrison
(Op 1617)

1-2 Julia R Cater

3-4 G Jessica Durham

5-6 Simon J Gay (C)

7-8 Matthew J L Durham

9-10 Peter G Kirton

11-12 Jonathan S Frye

First on 12 handbells: 9-10.

£10

SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION

KILMORY KNAP, Argyll
Mon 24 Aug 1936 2h21 (14)

5024 Plain Bob Major

Comp J A Trollope

1-2 Annie Richardson

3-4 Christopher W Woolley

5-6 Edwin H Lewis

7-8 Rupert Richardson (C)

The first peal in the county
of Argyll.

(RW1328 p.577)

KILMORY KNAP, Argyll

Tue 25 Aug 1936 2h38 (14)

5040 Plain Bob Royal

Comp E M Atkins

1-2 Annie Richardson

3-4 Christopher W Woolley

5-6 Wilfrid H J Hooton (C)

7-8 Edwin H Lewis

9-10 Rupert Richardson

First peal of Royal in hand:
1-2.

The first ten-bell peal rung
by the association.

(RW1328 p.577)

KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION

KILMORY KNAP, Argyll

Tue 23 July 1957 1h57 (13)

5040 Plain Bob Minor

Seven extents called

differently

1-2 Olive D Barnett

3-4 Edwin A Barnett

5-6 Edwin H Lewis (C)

Rung on Agatha Lewis's

birthday.

(RW2418 p.492)