



Bell Casting Day Out for Let's Ring!

by Catherine White-Horne, August 2025

It's not every day you get to see a bell being cast at the last remaining bell foundry in the country. It was worth the early start for eight Let's Ringers, who set off from across the country to converge on Loughborough for our annual outing. Let's Ring! is our training scheme creating the next generation of ringers for St Mary's, Thornbury and beyond. Our itinerary also included ringing at five towers, playing frisbee, consuming huge portions of fish'n'chips and generous helpings of sticky buns. If this is making you feel queasy, fear not! We returned home buzzing with chatter about the day and a warm glow much like the bell metal we had seen being poured.

Naturally, we were accompanied by Ben our mascot teddy, our glamorous glitter ball and tremendous tie-dye.



Here's what we did:

1. Ringing at Quorn, a lovely 11cwt ring of eight bells got us off to a great start. We met up with Faith Daykin who was super friendly and who supported us throughout the day.
2. We regrouped at the Parish Church in Loughborough, a demanding 30cwt ring of ten bells. We befriended a visiting Dutch couple whom we invited in to see how it's done. Outreach is always high on our agenda. Also, the local ringers designed and put up a poster just for us!



3. A veritable hike to find fish'n'chips was rewarded with more food than anyone could eat and was accompanied by the famous Let's Ring! travelling ketchup.
4. The Foundry Tour, including not one but four bell castings, was fascinating and fully lived up to expectations. Our guide fielded many questions from our inquisitive group and Ben our mascot teddy got his own hi-vis vest.



5. Ringing at the Foundry Tower, a very light 6cwt 12, was challenging and fun, supported by our tour guide and some extra ringers we roped in (pun intended) along the way.
6. Oaks in Charnwood (10cwt, eight bells) awaited us as we navigated our way through Loughborough's many road works, but no time was wasted as the early birds staged an impromptu game of frisbee and scoffed sticky buns.
7. On our way home we were invited to join the practice at Tewkesbury Abbey. The beautiful Norman tower contains a glorious ring of 12 bells and the friendliest bunch of very capable ringers you could ever want to meet. Both of our youngest crew proudly rang the majestic 27cwt tenor bell.

We were home in time for bed and dreams of glowing bell metal, nicely struck ringing, technicolour tie-dye, glinting glitter ball, swirling sallies and smiling faces, sometimes smeared with ketchup.

Many thanks go to Faith and all the ringers who helped us that day, to Peter England our foundry guide, to Sally Brown who helped behind the scenes to make our day such a success and to Andrew Ward, as always, for supporting this and all our ringing adventures.



Watch this space for more from the Let's Ring Crew!