



### **Tower Bells: Dunkeld Cathedral**

There are references to bells at Dunkeld as early as 1506 when the tolling of bells would be an integral part of monastic living. The Old Statistical Account (1791-1799) refers to four bells, one of which was rung every morning at six and every evening at eight and ten o'clock; there was also reference to a public clock which was kept in order and regulated at the expense of the Duke of Atholl. The New Statistical Account (1845) refers to six music bells which were rung to begin labour at six in the morning and the return from labour at eight o'clock.

A 'Curfew Bell' continued to be tolled at eight in the evening until the 1914-18 war though that was a single bell situated in a bellcote on the west wall of the Choir. The bell and bellcote were dismantled in 1975 and the bell, dated 1688, is now on display in the Chapter House and is the only survivor of a previous set of bells.

The current set of six bells in the tower was hung by Mears & Stainbank, Whitechapel Foundry in 1814. The bells were in use until about 1939 but were declared unsafe in 1945. They were refurbished and re-hung by the Whitechapel Foundry in 1981 though were not able to be rung until 1988 due to extensive repair work required on the tower itself.

Dunkeld Cathedral is one of only 19 towers in Scotland with bells hung for full-circle ringing (there are over 5,000 such towers in England.) The bells are a light six – the tenor bell weighing just six hundredweight.

The ringers hold their practice sessions on Saturday mornings 10.30 – 12 and ring for Sunday services from 10-11 am. For information about the ringing contact Kitty McIntosh on 01350 727399.