



Essex Association of Change Ringers

NEWSLETTER

Southern District

No. 104

September 2008

Contacts:

Master

John Harpole (Basildon)
17 Tiplers Bridge
Ramsden Heath Billericay
Essex CM11 1JE
Tel: 01268 711687
email
stripedgerbil@tiscali.co.uk

Deputy Master:

Phil Harrison (Thorpe Bay)
01702 711193

Secretary/Treasurer

Julia Jones (Downham)
10 Teignmouth Drive
Rayleigh Essex, SS6 9PF
email
julia.coggins@hotmail.co.uk
Tel: 07880 735659

Committee Rep.

Cathryn Corns (Prittlewell)
32 Coburg Lane
Langdon Hills Basildon
Essex, SS16 6TH
cathryncorns@googlemail.com
Tel. H 01268 413553
M 07768 124683

Timings for meetings:

NOVEMBER - District Meeting
arrangements (times are
approximate):
2:30pm: Competition Ringing,
4:30pm: Service, 5:00pm: Tea,
6:15pm: Meeting,
7:00pm: Evening Ringing

DECEMBER - District Carol

Service arrangements:
3:30pm: Afternoon Ringing,
4:30pm: Service, 5:30pm:
Seasonal Refreshments

Please send any and all reports,
pictures, notices etc to Beth
Johnson at
b.johnson@creative-plus.co.uk,
tel 01277 205102 or post to
67 London Road Brentwood
CM14 4NN.

District meeting at Basildon - Sat 20th September

*Normal arrangements with ringing from 3:30, and the service at 4:30.
We'll be able to use the church car park, and names to tea to Roger
Hobson on 01268 491549 or email to Basildonbells@aol.com.*

District Quiz Night - see details on last page Please display the poster in your tower

Future Meetings

Saturday 18 October District Training Day / Afternoon Practice
Wednesday 29 October District Evening Practice Basildon (8) 7:30 pm

Saturday 15 November DISTRICT MEETING
Preceded by Call Change Competition Rettendon (6) 2:30 pm
(note earlier start)

Saturday 13 December
District Carol Service Bentley Common (6) 3:30 pm
Saturday 17 January 2009 ANNUAL DISTRICT MEETING
Prittlewell (10) 3:30 pm

Association Striking Competition



*Congratulations to Prittlewell who came 2nd in the Association striking
competition final at Henham on July 4th, the winners being
Chelmsford. Downham did very well also, coming 5th out of the 11
teams entered.*

*Unfortunately our 8 bell team did not do so well. Having won the trophy
last year, we ended up in 6th and final place in this year's competition
at Hatfield Broad Oak. We were all very disappointed as we thought our
ringing was much better than the results suggested!*

*Once again the band was (above left to right): Steve Nash, Penny
Sloman, Paul Cammiade, Andrew Beech, Steve Halliwell, David
Sloman, John Harpole, Nigel Taylor.*

Thanks to all those who represented our district in the finals.

Petition

The following petition is on the government website and I think it might be a good idea if we all signed up. Some may argue that the government take no notice but if we do not sign it, it will be assumed that we do not think it is a good idea. Please go to the link below and sign up. The petition closes on September 17th, so you need to act quickly.

We the undersigned petition the Prime Minister to introduce a green paper proposing ways that, where complaints have been instigated by resident(s) against a long standing activity (for example, church bells, sports facility, local airfield and similar), and where residence has been taken up since the start of that activity (providing there has been no significant increase in activity), a presumption should be made to protect the continuation of that activity and reject such complaint.
<http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/livewithit/#detail>

Please consider supporting this petition, and distributing this message far and wide.

Training

Following Steve Hunter's resignation as Training Officer earlier this year due to a serious injury, no-one has approached the Master about taking on this role. This is a valuable role in the district to help with training and to develop ringing in our towers.

If any one is interested they should contact the Master in the first instance to discuss.

Letter from Brian Meads

Attached is a letter from Brian Meads, the Association Master, concerning the future of ringing in Essex. I'm sure many of us can relate to Brian's thoughts and share his concerns.

Brian is asking for a volunteer from each district who will survey the current state of ringing in their district, and listen to suggestions as to how the Association can improve the long term prospects for change ringing in Essex.

Can you all please read this letter, and think about its contents before the next district meeting. It would be really good if one or more members would be prepared to undertake the work that Brian is suggesting - I see no reason why the work cannot be shared, with one person collating the information and representing the district in the working group.
John Harpole, District Master

District Outing

Below you'll see a picture of the 10 gallant folk who enjoyed the district outing to Bedfordshire in June. You probably recognise the faces, but in case you don't they are (left to right):



Mike Hallett, Wade Vandenburg, Paul Cammiade, Paul's Dad, Phil Harrison, Judy Rolf, Charlotte Meldon, Raymond Jones, Brain Meldon, yours truly.

Training Day

We had originally planned a district training day last April, but this was cancelled after Steve Hunter had to give up.

At the time I suggested we could try and combine a training event with the afternoon practice that has been arranged on October 18th. So we could spend the morning doing some theory and practical work, and then have another practical session in the afternoon which was open to all.

Would any one be interested in attending a district training day? If so, what would you like to learn or get more practice at?

I need to know by the September district meeting if there will be sufficient interest to organise such an event. This will include people willing to act as helpers and tutors.

John Harpole

Canewdon John Mitchell Bell Project Update

The last of the ten new bells, the tenor, was cast at Whitechapel on 1st August. Bakers of Danbury will start the building work in the tower on 2nd September.

They will be replacing the old bell chamber floor with a 'sound invisible' steel mesh floor, preparing the walls for the new ten bell frame that has already been manufactured by Whitechapel, building the new ringing gallery including making a new door into the existing tower stairs, repairing the stairs, installing the electrics and lighting.

All the bell installation work and the construction of a dead floor beneath the bell frame will be done by Whitechapel. We are still aiming at a completion date around Christmas time.

The three old bells that were previously cracked have now all been welded and the cast iron clapper staples have also been drilled out to stop further cracking. They returned to Canewdon and were re-hung using all their original fittings in the tower on August 4th.

The new ECA chiming hammers were also fitted, but have not been roped up pending the building of the new ringing floor and the installation of the new bells lower in the tower.

All five bells were chimed in sequence just the once on August 5th for the first time in about 100 years as the tenor had been cracked sometime before 1910. Much historical research has been done and it is hoped that a booklet will be produced detailing the history of the old bells by the time the new bells are installed.

The number of people from Canewdon learning to ring at Prittlewell Ringing Centre on a Wednesday evening remains at about 15 and several of us are now ringing at Eastwood and Rochford as well as at Prittlewell (twice) every Sunday and four others have recently started. In July Peter Hawes and I were voted in as Tower Captains.



The first photo was taken by Peter Hawes on 8th May and shows the Whitechapel bell hangers removing the bolts from the 1678 Hodson treble, the lower half of the bell wheel had already been removed and the bell was supported from below at this stage. All the old fittings came undone without breaking and were re-used when the bells returned. This photo shows to good effect the condition of the old bell wheels that are dated 1717. Parts of the old bell frame date from about 1420.

Thanks to Brian Meldon for this report.

The second photo is the repaired 1636 Miles Graye 3rd bell as it started to be lifted back up the tower on 4th August.



Brentwood Bell Restoration - an Update by Chris Bailey

What an eventful few weeks it has been in the bell tower!

Before Evensong on Sunday 20th July we rang a final Quarter Peal on the 7 remaining bells. Andrew Beech (North Ockendon) kindly conducted 1260 changes of Plain Bob Doubles. We had two bells covering. The rest of the band comprised Phil Harrison (Thorpe Bay), Ray Jones (Shenfield), Amanda Hazell-Rayner, Jonathan Lee, Paul Burke and me, all from Brentwood. It was Paul's first Quarter Peal and my 100th.

Bright and early the following morning our builder, Lodge and Sons (Builders) Ltd. from Stebbing came in to open up the access hatchways and erect the scaffolding and safety barriers within the tower. Although not strictly part of the bell project, it was agreed that the two clock dials should be removed for restoration. Our clock specialist, The Cumbria Clock Company Ltd., removed them using abseiling techniques which saved the parish a lot of money on scaffolding costs. The removal was not before time. The dials appear to have been held in place by the nuts which secured the clock hands, the wall fixings having long since decayed or loosened!

So it was on 4th August, some 17 years since first mooted, the bell hangers actually started work removing the bells and frame. One by one the bells and fittings were carefully lowered through the tower and were stored beside the North Aisle. The cast-iron frame proved to be difficult to dismantle but eventually, a day or two later than planned, it too was lowered and with the bells, loaded onto a lorry. The bells were to be dropped off at for Whitechapel for a thorough clean and re-tune. In mid-September, they go down to Bridport in Dorset to receive new fittings and to be tested in the refurbished and stiffened frame. If all goes to plan they return to Brentwood mid-November and will be ready for Christmas.

A few of the old bell fittings (iron clappers, timber wheels and headstocks) are still available for anyone wishing to make a suitable donation.

Once the bells were lowered it was possible to read the inscriptions and dedications around the waist of each bell. All the inscriptions are in Latin and the top one records the bell founder and year of manufacture as Mears & Stainbank of London in 1887. The inscriptions on the lightest bell, the treble, record the details of the then Vicar (Carolus Grinstead) and Church Wardens (J. G. Quennell, M. D. and C. J. Wallis). The inscriptions on the 2nd to 7th bells are the verses of Ps. 150, but in reverse order, beginning on the 7th. Finally, the tenor, is dedicated to those who generously paid for the tower and bells, Caroli Almeric Belli, (in memoriam), Edward Howley Palmer and Ellen Louisa Boreham. Have a close look when the bells are returned to the church.

The bell restoration marks a very significant milestone for the parish, especially as it is taking place in the 125th Anniversary year of the church on its present site.



The parish has been extremely supportive throughout the planning and fund raising period and we have been especially fortunate to have the strong support of our Vicar, Father Bob White. It is a pity that he and Rosemary will not be here when the bells return but I hope that they will visit us and have a ring.

From us all in the Belfry, we wish Fr. Bob and Rosemary a long and rewarding retirement.

Chris Bailey (Tower Captain).

A Ringing Rural Dean

South Weald, Essex.
15 Jun, 1260 Plain B Triples
A compliment to Rev. Dr
Ian Jorysz, who rang the
6, becoming Rural Dean of
Brentwood.

Beth Johnson 1,
Maria T Jorysz 2,
Vic J C Dale 3,
Alan G Ball 4,
Mark S Robbins 5,
Ian H Jorysz 6,
Paul R Trueman (C) 7,
Richard D Pearson 8.

For Sale!

Brentwood has some of the old
bell fittings available to anyone
who might care to make a
suitable donation to their Bell
Restoration Fund.

Clapper min. £25 donation

Wheels min. £40 donation
(each) Would make a good
trellis frame.

Elm headstocks (mostly with
stays) min. £40 donation
(each) A great garden feature

We also have a few of the old
chiming clappers available for
min. donation of £20 each.

Please contact Chris Bailey on
c.bailey697@btinternet.com
01277226614

The South Weald band had a very jolly outing to Kent in mid July, when contrary to the rest of the summer, we were blessed with good weather, if a little breezy. Unfortunately we didn't know there were two Goodnestones in Kent, and the one we were aiming for was the one with no bells. The day was finished off with a BBQ, enjoyed by all.

Towers: Rodmerston (6) - 9.5t
Whitstable - All Saints (6) - 7t
Whitstable St Alphege (8) - 3t
Goodnestone (6) - 11t
Faversham 8 - 16t
Ospringe 8 17t

Haddie Halliwell - Sponsored walk

From Steve Halliwell:
My apologies for the
delay in posting this
picture of Had (No 471)
on completion of her half
marathon last month. My
and our thanks to all who
sponsored her.

She completed the course
in about three and half
hours, raising over £130
in the process, which will
be going to the Essex
Association. If you have
still to pay, please could
I ask you to send or give
the money to her as soon
as possible, so we can
complete the paperwork.



Stop press!!!

Prittlewell Ringing Centre wins Founders Prize

Some years ago, the Worshipful Company of Founders funded a programme to establish Ringing Centres throughout the UK, intended to provide a focus for the training and development of bell-ringers and ringing in their area. Each year the Ringing Centres Committee of the CCCBR oversees the awarding of an annual prize (worth £500), provided by the Worshipful Company of Founders, for the ringing centre which is judged to make the greatest contribution to the teaching of ringing during the year. More information on Prittlewell's success next issue.

South Weald outing to Kent, July 2008

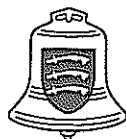


Did you have a tower outing this summer? Please send in a report and a picture for the newsletter. Contact details on p1.

The Essex Association of Change Ringers

Founded 1879

President: The Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Chelmsford



130 Tilkey Road
Coggeshall
Colchester
Essex
CO6 1QN

Tel; 01376 562892

E-mail; master@eacr.org.uk

17 July 2008

Dear Julia,

'LOOKING TO THE FUTURE'

This is a request for you to initiate discussion and decision in your District BEFORE the October Committee Meeting

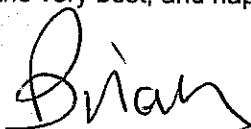
Have you recently paused to consider the probable state of ringing in Essex in 20 years time? If you do so now, I believe that you will not find the prospect rosy. Association records show that our membership profile is ageing rapidly, and this is most likely true of the whole body of ringers in Essex. This is in spite of tremendous hard work being done in many towers to obtain new recruits, and to adapt to the social conditions of the new millennium. Active and enthusiastic Sunday service bands are maintained not only by a commitment to serving the Church, but also by the interest and enjoyment obtained from change-ringing as a challenging and sociable hobby. The Association's object of furthering the work of the Church by the ringing of bells can only be fulfilled if change-ringing is maintained as a viable independent activity. I believe that if present trends in change-ringing continue, a high proportion of towers are going to find it difficult in the long term to maintain a band to ring regularly on Sundays. Essex is not alone in this - it is a situation noted by many across the whole country.

The promotion of change-ringing is a core object of the Association. Now is the time, whilst we are still active and strong, for the Association to examine what we are doing to fulfill this object in the modern world. I will be proposing at the October Committee Meeting that a working group be set up to carry out a comprehensive survey of the current state of ringing in Essex. At the same time it will consult as widely as possible on views of what services the Association could and should be providing to ringing and ringers in Essex, so as to improve the long-term prospects for change-ringing. The group will collate and report their findings to the committee, together with their resulting recommendations for action by the Association. My hope is that all members will feel that they have been involved and consulted by the group, and that the group's recommendations will therefore command wide support. I include with this letter a copy of the detail of the proposal.

I hope you will feel able to support this initiative, and if so I am keen to move ahead without undue delay. I believe that if worthwhile results are to be obtained, on which action can be securely based, the survey and consultation exercise must be carried out on a personal face-to-face basis. If this is to be done it will need an enthusiastic person in each district, not necessarily a Committee member, to be on the working group and to push the work along. I would therefore ask that before the October Committee Meeting you speak to and consult members of your district about this proposal, and that District Officers come to the meeting ready with a named representative who would be willing to take on this role.

Wishing you all the very best, and happy ringing,

Brian Meads
Master



Charity Registration Number 292250

'LOOKING TO THE FUTURE' - A PROPOSAL

1. A working group shall be set up, to consist of the senior officers of the Association, and one member from each district. At the first meeting of the group one of the district representatives shall be elected Convenor, responsible for the progress of the work of the group.
2. The task of the group will be -
 - a. to enquire into the current state of ringing and ringers in Essex.
 - b. to gather, if felt appropriate, historical data on the above, in order to illustrate trends.
 - c. to consult ringers in Essex about what services the Association could and should be providing to improve the prospects for change-ringing in Essex in the long-term.
 - d. to collate the information gathered and to present a report to the committee.
 - e. on the basis of that report, to recommend actions for the Association to implement.
3. The group will commence its work as soon as constituted.
The group is to present an interim report to the February 2009 committee meeting.
The group shall finalise its report and recommendations, and with the approval of the senior officers distribute it to committee members two months before the October 2009 committee meeting.
4. The survey and consultation shall be by questionnaire assisted personal interview - at practice nights or other suitable opportunities.
5. The group shall draw up the questionnaire as necessary, and provide any necessary advice to people conducting interviews.
6. Each district representative will be responsible for the survey in their district.
If required by the workload and timescale, district representatives may recruit other district members to help with the work.
7. All towers affiliated to the Essex Association, as far as practicable, shall be included in the exercise.
8. The group shall publicise to members what is being done, as they see to best advantage and so as to encourage all members to feel part of the exercise.
9. Group members shall be able to claim expenses incurred in carrying out their work, as laid down for Officers of the Association in Rule 12.

SOUTHERN DISTRICT QUIZ NIGHT

SATURDAY 27th SEPTEMBER 2008

held at **North Ockendon** church hall
7:00 for 7:30pm start

Teams of 6 (max)

Tickets - **£6 per person**, which includes a
ploughman's supper,
are available from Ann Beech

Please send your cheques (made payable to EACR)
to

Ann Beech, 48 Glebe Way, Hornchurch, RM11 3RR
enclosing a SAE if you would like your tickets
posted to you before the quiz

or alternatively you can purchase them
at the District Meeting
at Basildon on Saturday 20 September

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU

(Please remember to bring your own drinks)