



## Would you like to make the leap into this higher level of ringing?

In the past five years only five first peals have been rung in Essex whereas from 1984 to 1990, on average 14 ringers a year rang a first peal and many went on to be regular peal ringers.

We'd like to think we can find ringers in Essex who would become valuable peal ringers for the future and so we are launching the First Pealer's Club.

Yvonne Towler, who has rung over 1300 peals for the Association, will mentor new peal ringers, give them guidance as to what to do to train for their first peal and provide bands for their practices and attempts.

Do you aspire to peal ringing? Do you know a ringer who you think would be able to reach this milestone and might like some encouragement? To join the club you'll need to have rung at least five quarter peals and will need your ringing style and striking assessed by Yvonne and her helpers - but only to help you achieve your aim.

When you score your first peal (or first inside) you'll receive a certificate and pin to mark your achievement.

**Sign up now by contacting Yvonne or Beth - details below.**

Ringling jargon: What is a peal? A piece of ringing consisting of at least 5000 changes. (Prior to 2019 the convention was that seven bells and below required at least 5040.) The ringing must be "true", according to certain definite rules laid down by the Central Council of Change Ringers and so the peal conductor must check his/her composition is good. A peal generally takes around three hours.

*See page two for what regular peal ringers say about this achievement but here are a few snippets:*

*"The concentration required ensures that all other worries are forgotten..."*

*"I still feel the sense of wonderment, the challenge and the joy..."*

*"...it's not until I ring the same thing again and again for a few hours that I can truly see 'inside' the method"*

Contact Yvonne Towler on [jytowler@btinternet.com](mailto:jytowler@btinternet.com) (phone 01621 817212) or Beth Johnson, Education Officer on [education@eacr.org.uk](mailto:education@eacr.org.uk).

**David Sparling (602 peals):** *Peal ringing offers the opportunity for extended periods of really good ringing where each of the ringers is 'in the zone'. People often say that only the best ringers ring peals but actually the truth is that they become the best ringers BECAUSE they ring peals; the longer length ensures that your bell handling becomes as efficient as possible to guard against running out of steam and the time spent allows the striking to be fine-tuned to a degree not possible in practice-night touches or even quarter peals.*

*The concentration required ensures that all other worries are forgotten - an excellent way to forget about work for a while! Like so many 'long events' e.g. long-haul flights, peals seem to get shorter the more you do with the secret being to think about what you are doing right now and not to worry about how much longer there is to go or what comes next. There is a reason why the prolific peal ringers are so enthusiastic - try it; you might just get the bug as well!*

**Trevor Church (76 peals):** *I remember, as a 12 year old, looking up at the 'ancient' peal boards in the towers I rang at, wondering who those ringers were, how old were they? What was Double Norwich Court Bob Major!? And wondering how long three hours of ringing felt like, whilst thinking that, one day, I might ring one myself. Would I have a name on a dusty peal board somewhere, for kids like me to marvel at in years to come?*

*The thought of ringing one was not too long in my imagination. Soon after my 13th birthday, I scored my first 5040 Plain Bob Minor at the light ring of Bentley Common and, with a good band around me, went on to ring more within the next few months. My sense of wonderment soon changed to a sense of endurance, coping with blisters and feats of memory became my focus! But what a sense of achievement and kinship.*

*You'll know what I mean if you have ever taken a long bike ride somewhere new; passed your Duke of Edinburgh with your class mates; completed a longer ramble than usual, that seemed a challenge; or even managed to climb Snowden, for example. You would plan and practise for these, and when time was right, headed off to face the challenge. And I bet you felt great when you'd 'made it'!*

*Now, as a re-establishing peal ringer, I'm still loving it. With three teenagers and a busy work life, the sense of escapism, where I have a few hours of protected, hopefully uninterrupted, ringing time ahead of me, with like minded ringers, is my joy and appreciation! So, when standing in my circle of fellow peal attempters, ropes adjusted, minds prepared and focused, knowing we have at least 5040 changes ahead of us, I still feel the sense of wonderment, the challenge and the joy as, whilst I'm taking a deep breath, I hear the words, "Look to.....". You have to try one! You can do it!...*

**Christina Brewster (870 peals):** *I regard peal ringing as probably the pinnacle of my ringing. For me every peal is a personal challenge - to concentrate and ring to the best of my ability, to ring the method with as few errors as possible, to strike my bell accurately and perhaps most importantly to work with the band to produce the best ringing possible. Even though I can still be apprehensive before I start a peal, I just love the mental and physical demands and enjoy the feeling of achievement when "that's all" is called. For decades I have been teaching and encouraging ringers and ringing peals gives me the chance to concentrate on my own ringing which in turn assists me to put back into ringing. Peal ringing has taken me to many places I wouldn't normally ring and as every tower is different and presents its own unique atmosphere, whether a little village church or a cathedral in a large city or whether five or twelve bells or whether a 3cwt or an 82cwt tenor, all such aspects add to my fascination and enjoyment of peal ringing. Take this opportunity and have a go and see where it might lead!*

**Andrew Kelso (150 peals):** *Peal ringing is my opportunity to put a polish on my ringing - ringing short touches and quarter peals are useful for learning methods, but it's not until I ring the same thing again and again for a few hours that I can truly see 'inside' the method and understand it better. Peal ringing also helps me to dedicate time to improving my striking and bell control. And last but not least, I often enter a state a bit like meditation - concentrating on one thing to the exclusion of everything else - which is relaxing and helps me switch off. Ringing peals is good for my physical and mental health.*