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Essex Association of Change Ringers

# NEWSLETTER

Southern District

No. 106

January 09

## HAPPY NEW YEAR!

January 17th 2009

**ANNUAL DISTRICT MEETING at Prittlewell 3.30pm**

**The ADM of the Southern District will be held at Prittlewell on January 17th, and it would be good to see as many members as possible there.**

The meeting will follow the normal format with ringing from 3:30pm; please don't be afraid to come and ring on the 10 bells – we will cater for all standards so that everyone will get a chance.

During the meeting we will elect our district officers for 2009 (master, deputy master, secretary / treasurer and committee rep), and appoint the newsletter editor and training officer. Please think who you would like to hold these positions next year.

### Parking at Prittlewell

Car parking will be available in St Mary's school next door to the church; entrance from East Street.

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## Ingrave Ringing

*Although ringers in the Brentwood area have held a practice on the 3rd Wednesday of the month to keep the bells going, Ingrave bells have been silent for Sunday ringing for some considerable time.*

*With the arrival of a new Vicar who was keen to get the bells rung again, appeals were made for recruits. As a result about 18 months ago a number of people came forward, of all ages, but only 3 adults remained and with help from other ringers they have rung on a couple of special occasions. They are, however, now struggling with plain hunting.*

*A few weeks ago, after further appeals, another four adults suddenly appeared and they are making excellent progress. So providing these four continue to learn, which looks likely at the moment, there is now a viable number of ringers, plus experienced Caroline Lowe, to form a local band.*

*As can be appreciated, seven learners need experienced ringers around them to make progress and after the Christmas and New Year period any ringers would be welcome to help on any Wednesday evening (7.45 to 9p.m.)*

*Ron Brown (01277 372685)*

## Association Clothing

Don't forget the new Association clothing range, featuring the EACR badge - see [http://www.eacr.org.uk/for\\_sale/eacr\\_for\\_sale.shtml](http://www.eacr.org.uk/for_sale/eacr_for_sale.shtml) for details or order at the ADM.

## In Memoriam

It is sad to report the death in November of Peter Adams, ringing member from Navestock, after a short illness.

Denis Thompson, formerly of Downham, died in hospital in Plymouth on December 12th.

## A First Peal Remembered

Forty years ago on Saturday 23rd November 1968, the following peal was rung at Shenfield:

5040 Minor (London S, Ipswich S, Cambridge S, St Clements, Kent TB, Oxford TB, Plain Bob) in 2 hours 31 minutes

- 1 Arthur J Bryant
  - 2 Patricia M Harpole
  - 3 Laurence H Turner
  - 4 David C Isgrove
  - 5 Michael A Houghton
  - 6 Harry Turner (c)
- 1st peal – 2.

Earlier this year my sister decided she would like to repeat the performance, and so booked the bells for Sunday 23rd November 2008. Arthur Bryant and Harry Turner have now passed away, as has Michael Houghton who died suddenly in 1999 at the age of 50 while Bishop of Ebbsfleet. Over the years contact has been lost with David Isgrove, but Laurie Turner (Harry's son) agreed to ring. That left 4 spare ropes; my brother and I were invited, as was Adrian Malton. That meant that 5 of the band had been taught to ring at Shenfield by Harry Turner. The 6th rope went to Malcolm Penney, a friend of Pat's.



So we all met at Shenfield on the 23rd November; Laurie travelling from Dorset, Roger from Cardiff and Pat and Malcolm from Wiltshire. The peal was rung, with Pat and Laurie ringing the same bells as 40 years ago to the same methods in the same order, this time in 2 hours 25 minutes.

When Laurie returned home, he checked his records and found that he had rung his first peal at Shenfield on November 18th 1948. How many ringers get to commemorate the 60th anniversary of their first peal?

**Congratulations** to Alex and Tom Underwood on the birth of their baby boy, Oscar, born 29th November 2008. Alex is a ringer at All Saints, Hutton.

The 2008 band (right to left): Adrian Malton (1 – c), Laurie Turner (3), Patricia Davidson (2), Malcolm Penney (4), Roger Harpole (5), John Harpole (6).

John Harpole

Thank you to Lyn Benson for this jolly picture of the Prittlewell Ringers during their visit to Durham. Amusing antics in the back row.....



## ESSEX RINGING COURSE 16-18 APRIL 2009

The 2009 Essex Ringing Course is now open for applications.

For information on the Course, and how to apply, go to the web site at [www.eacr.org.uk](http://www.eacr.org.uk), click on Training and then the Essex Ringing Course. The Course is also advertised in the December Rounds and About, the Christmas issue of the Ringing World and posters on each Tower Notice Board.

The closing date for applications is Friday 13 February 2009. There is no advantage to early application, as all applications in hand at the closing date are treated with equal merit. However early applications do help the organiser in planning the Course, so please start them coming in! *Brian Meads - Essex Ringing Course Organiser*

### Association Appointments

*Nominations for Association officers (Master, Secretary, Treasurer, 3 Property Trustees and 2 Independent Examiners) must be received by the Secretary by 1 February 2009.*

*Nominations may be made at a district meeting or can be sent directly to reach the Secretary before the deadline; please remember to include the name of the proposer and seconder.*

*Information about any nominations for Life membership of the EACR will be available at the Annual District Meetings.*

*Elections will take place at the 2009 Annual General Meeting on 4th May, Bank Holiday Monday, at Chelmsford Cathedral.*

*Notices of motion for the AGM (items for debate or proposed rule changes), sponsored by at least 2 members, must also be received by 1 February.*

*Vicki Chapman  
Hon. Gen. Sec.*

## Southern District Call Change Competition

Five teams entered the annual call change striking competition, which was held at All Saints, Rettendon prior to the district meeting on November 15th. We welcomed back to the district Richard Dunhill as one of the judges, along with Peter Smith from Braintree. Once again the winners were North Ockendon, with Downham in second place followed by Basildon.

The Basildon ringers were overjoyed to come third; special mention must be made to Ron Witt, who left his guide dog downstairs and then rang in a strange tower, on a bell he'd never rung before, almost faultlessly. How many of us sighted ringers could put on a blindfold and ring as well as Ron did?



North Ockendon - Andrew Beech, Hilary Spooner, Matthew Scott, Michael Warren, Alex Barnes, Brian Beech



Downham - Chris Tucker, Nigel Taylor, Will Wennell, Paul Cammiade, Barbara Leigh, Julia Jones

## 'LOOKING TO THE FUTURE'

In October your Executive Committee gave the go-ahead for 'Looking to the Future' - and it started at the beginning of December. Over four months this initiative will be finding out the facts about the state of ringing in Essex. It will also be asking Essex ringers for their views on the best way to secure a long term future for ringing in our county.

The 'Looking to the Future' team will make recommendations for action to your Executive Committee based on the facts and opinion they have gathered. The team hope that you will all want to contribute towards keeping Essex ringing alive and vigorous as we move further into the 21st century.

Full details of this project are on the new 'Looking to the Future' section of the website - [www.eacr.org.uk](http://www.eacr.org.uk). The team representative in our district is Hilary Donaghue.

BRIAN MEADS

## NEWSLETTERS

The Southern District newsletters will be published in 2009 as follows:

Beginning of January  
End February - copy date  
15 Feb

End April - copy date 15 April  
End August - copy date 15 Aug  
End October - copy date 15 Oct

### Distribution

The aim is to get the newsletter produced at least 2 weeks before each business meeting. Each tower will be sent at least one copy, preferably by email, with additional copies sent to district officers. Members can request their own copies via email by contacting the editor (Beth Johnson, [b.johnson@creative-plus.co.uk](mailto:b.johnson@creative-plus.co.uk)) and towers without an email contact will have their copy posted to them.



Basildon: John Harpole, Julia Fry, Kate Martin, Roger Hobson, Ron Witt, Helen Harpole



South Weald: Vic Dale, Maria Jorysz, Jenny Pittman, Mark Robbins, Ian Jorysz, Alan Ball



Hutton & South Weald: Ron Brown, Fiona Chapman, Renee Page-Jones, Pamela Rodwell, Beth Johnson, Robin Page-Jones.

## BRENTWOOD BELL RESTORATION PROJECT December 2008

Our Restoration Project is now complete.

Early in November two of us from the Bell Restoration Team together with David Sloman, our engineer and an engineer from English Heritage visited Nicholson Engineering Ltd's workshop in Dorset. We were all there to witness the testing of the frame which had been erected on the workshop floor, hung complete with bells. The test was designed to measure the movement of the frame when the bells swing.

It was an anxious time while gauges were fixed and the bells set in motion but thankfully the frame stiffening design proved to be successful with minimal movement well within acceptable tolerances. We travelled back to Essex very pleased with the results.

Two weeks later, the whole installation was back in Brentwood where Andrew Nicholson's men (Mark, Phil and Alan) worked extremely hard hoisting all the pieces of frame and bells back into the Belfry. The whole process took two weeks to complete and a first test ring was held on Thursday 4th December so that the bell hangers could observe and note any adjustments that were needed to be made before the full test ring the following day.

Throughout the project, the condition of the Belfry floor had been a concern of our engineer. We had already had the frame foundation joists bolted through the floor structure to create a 'composite structure' but the engineer still needed to satisfy himself that the floor itself did not move when the bells were rung.



The full test ring on Friday evening had a lot to prove. We were fortunate in having all interested parties present – bell hanger, engineer, David Sloman and Adrian Semken – to witness the event. The bells were rung in several combinations and movement monitored. All declared the results satisfactory. Furthermore, no additional structural work to the floor was necessary.

Down in the Ringing Room some two dozen ringers from across the District put the bells through their paces. John Harpole as District Master kindly agreed to run the ringing and started proceedings with Stedman Triples. Other triples and major methods as well as rounds and call changes followed before all were invited to partake of a celebratory drink with seasonal nibbles in the Church Centre.

Gone now are the heavy, lumpy old bells which many frequently shied away from ringing. In their place we have a restored installation in which the bells now 'go' much easier and sound magnificent (due in no small part to Nigel Taylor who tuned them at Whitechapel).

It is now about 11 months to the day when the Church Warden gave us the green light to proceed with Faculty applications and enter into contracts – and what an exciting time it has been. We've had terrific support from so many people and I hesitate to name names. However, our special thanks go to Andrew Nicholson and his team of bell hangers, to Stuart Armitage our structural engineer (The Morton Partnership) and to Lodge & Sons (Builders) Ltd. Our thanks also go to the Essex Association of Change Ringers and the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers both of which have agreed generous grants without which the project would not have taken place.

We would like to say a special 'thank you' to David Sloman in his role as DAC Bells Adviser. David's advice and support have been invaluable in achieving our goal. The Service of Re-dedication is to be taken by the Bishop of Bradwell on Sunday 15th March 2009. Watch this space for further details.

So, with a restored installation we have lost all our excuses for less than perfect ringing. Our practice nights have resumed (Thursdays 7.45 – 9.00pm, except the first Thursday of the month) and we are keen to improve and do justice to a fine set of bells. If you are at a loose end and would like to come and join us you will be very welcome.

Chris Bailey (Tower Captain, St. Thomas of Canterbury, Brentwood)

## **Minutes of the SOUTHERN DISTRICT Meeting at Rettendon Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2008**

### **Welcome**

The Master welcomed all present and invited everyone to sign the Roll Book. 29 Members were present. The Master thanked Rev. Harvey Reed for taking the service, the organist David Eveleigh and the Rettendon ringers for the use of the bells and an excellent tea. The service touch band of Beth Johnson, Lyn Benson, John Harpole, Peter Smith, Nigel Taylor and Richard Dunhill were also thanked for their course of Cambridge Surprise Minor.

### **Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from Susan McKay, Jean Dunne, Simon Higgins, Roger and Ann Dorking, Paul Cammiade, Hilary Donoghue, Kate Martin, Julia Fry, Ron Whitt, Mike Goodman, Lauren Spooner, Sally Ann Elkington, Lynne McEwan, Jackie Carr, Sharon Jones, Marion Squier, Rowena Marshall, Vic Dale, Jon Cousins and Peter Sloman.

### **Minutes of the previous meeting**

Held at Basildon on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2008 had been circulated in the November Newsletter. There were no amendments and were signed by the Master as a true record.

### **Matters Arising**

Andrew Beech questioned why there had been no profit from tea at the Basildon meeting. The Master explained that there were no available people at Basildon to prepare homemade food for the meeting and as a result, the tea was comprised of ready prepared shop bought food which is much more expensive. At some towers, food and labour are donated resulting in a profit but towers should feel under no obligation to do so. The Secretary commented that the cost of all food had risen greatly in the past year and as a result, the cost of tea for future meetings would be likely to be £3 or more per person, rather than £2.50.

Andrew Beech also asked the total profit made at the North Ockendon Quiz Night in September. The exact figure was not readily to hand but was shown on the receipt already sent to Ann Beech. (*Note: £141.05*)

Chris Bailey advised that all Brentwood headstocks had now been sold.

### **Executive Committee Representative's Report**

The Committee Representative (Cathryn Corns) read a report on the Association Committee Meeting held at Danbury on 11<sup>th</sup> October, as published in the November District Newsletter.

Phil Harrison had not yet seen a copy of the recent Newsletter and it was agreed that, while he remains a district officer, future copies will be posted to him.

### **Correspondence**

A donation of £30 had been received from Grays. The North Ockendon ringers had carried out some maintenance work at Grays and in lieu of payment, the donation has been made to the BRF.

### **Election of new members**

No new members were elected.

### **Training**

The Stebbing training day is now fully subscribed. No one from the meeting was planning to attend.

### **Diary of forthcoming events**

The District Carol service will take place at Bentley Common 13<sup>th</sup> December. Ringing 3.30pm for 4.30pm service.

ADM Prittlewell January 2009 will include the election of District officers for the coming year.

### **Any other business**

The copy date for the next newsletter is 18<sup>th</sup> December 2008.

The Association is able to offer a new range of clothing including sweatshirts etc with the Association logo. Profits will benefit the BRF and details are available from the Secretary.

### **Finally:**

The service collection amounted to £44.49. The profit from tea was £54. The raffle profit was £52. Further ringing was available until 8pm.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 7pm