

SOUTHERN DISTRICT

NEWSLETTER



ST. THOMAS OF CANTERBURY, BRENTWOOD

A chapel was built on the current site in 1835 following independence from the parish of South Weald. It was subsequently demolished and the present building was consecrated in 1883.

The tower, spire (170 ft. tall), and bells were added in 1887. By the late 1990s the installation of eight bells required major refurbishment. Work started in July 2008. The bells initially went to the Whitechapel Bell Foundry (where they were cast) for cleaning and re-tuning before being transported to Nicholson's for modification and re-installation in the original but strengthened cast-iron frame. The project was completed by Christmas 2008 and rededicated in March 2009.

The bells are tuned to D# Major with the treble weighing 5cwt-0qtrs-11lbs, and the tenor bell 18cwt-1qtr-15lbs.

Practice nights alternate with Shenfield and are on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Thursdays (7.45 to 9.00pm).

DISTRICT MEETING 20TH SEPTEMBER 3.30PM BRENTWOOD

3.30 pm Ringing • 4.30 pm Service • 5.30 pm Tea followed by meeting. Take care where you park as the local parking restrictions are rigorously enforced. See parking info attached.

Numbers for tea to Warren Hawkings, 01277 214612
wsrjhawkings@btopenworld.com by 15 September.

CONTACTS

MASTER

John Harpole
(Basildon)
17 Tiplers Bridge
Ramsden Heath
Billericay
Essex CM11 1JE
Tel: 01268 711687
s-district-master@
eacr.org.uk

DEPUTY MASTER

Hilary Donoghue
(Downham)
16 Norsey Close
Billericay CM11 1AP
Tel: 07540 066789
s-district-deputymaster@
eacr.org.uk

SECRETARY

Alison Nash
(North Ockendon)
2 Woodview,
Langdon Hills,
Essex SS16 6TZ
Tel: 01268 490061
s-district-secretary@
eacr.org.uk

TREASURER

Mark Robbins
(South Weald)
6 West Way,
Brentwood
Essex CM14 4PB
01277 234345
mark@southweald.
org.uk

EDUCATION

OFFICER
Steve Nash
(Fobbing and Langdon
Hills)
2 Woodview,
Langdon Hills,
Essex SS16 6TZ
Tel: 01268 490061
stevenash@yahoo.co.uk

SOUTHERN DISTRICT & SOCIAL MEDIA



Find us on
Facebook

We do now have a facebook group at Southern District - EACR. If you are a facebook user do 'like' the page. If not follow this link : <https://www.facebook.com/groups/eacr.southern/>

It is proving an invaluable resource for sharing information and especially for appealing for additional ringers for weddings, funerals and so forth.

To become a Facebook member go to Facebook.com. Protect your privacy via the padlock icon and 'settings'.

John Harpole

THE ESSEX TRAINING DAY NOVEMBER 22ND

More information on the EACR website from 1st September

<http://eacr.org.uk/training/training.shtml>

Contact Richard Wilson on education@eacr.org.uk

CALL CHANGE STRIKING COMPETITION

This year's competition will be taking place on Saturday 15th November at Great Wakering (SS3 0AG). The draw will be at 2.30pm prompt and the competition will be followed by tea and a meeting. Do consider entering a band – last year we had a record number of competing bands.

Could you please let Alison Nash, Secretary, know if your tower is entering the competition. **Attached are the Striking Competition rules.**

FROM THE MASTER...

As you are all no doubt aware I was elected as the 13th Master of the Essex Association at our AGM in Chelmsford Cathedral on May 5th, in succession to Brian Meads who has served as our Master for the last 6 years.

I would like to thank all of you who came to the ADM, and for all the messages of support and encouragement I have received. I will do my best to be a worthy Master of the Association, and ask for your patience and understanding while I get familiar with the role.

I was particularly pleased to see so many Southern district members at the Cathedral for the AGM. When it came to my turn to speak, it seemed a very long walk from the west door to the microphone, and it was great to see so many familiar faces encouraging me. Also, well done to those of you who were brave enough to have a ring at the Cathedral!

I would also like to congratulate **Stephen Nash** on being elected a life vice-president of the Association, in recognition of the many years of service he has given the Association and the Southern District.

I also see that over 45 of you have discovered that Darren Osborne has been working on a Facebook group for the district. This follows a note I put in the last two newsletters. The idea is to boost communication within the District, and gives you all a chance to congratulate others for their ringing achievements (e.g. ringing something for the first time at practice, or a special quarter peal), to advertise for help at weddings, funerals, etc., to discuss ringing related questions, and to remind you about district events. Please do not use the group for non-ringing related content. You can join the group by going to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/eacr.southern/>. Big thanks to Darren Osborne for setting this up.

John Harpole

RINGING FOR THE CENTENARY OF THE START OF THE GREAT WAR

Eastwood	Rayleigh	Fobbing
Monday, 4 August 2014	Monday, 4 August 2014	Sunday, 3 August 2014 in 47 mins
1260 Plain Bob Doubles	1260 Grandsire Triples	1260 Plain Bob Doubles
1 Helen McBride	1 Lydia Roberts	1 Clive Garraway
2 James Laken	2 Cathryn Corns	2 Stephen Nash (C)
3 Martin Newman	3 Peter Sloman	3 Ros Skipper
4 Cathryn Corns	4 Stephen Halliwell	4 Maria Loughenbury
5 Peter Knight (C)	5 David Belcham	5 Cathryn Corns
6 Colin Hall	6 James Laken	Rung for a special service and vigil commemorating the outbreak of the Great War.
Rung half-muffled to commemorate the start of the Great War and remembering all those who served their country.	7 David Sloman (C)	Shenfield
See also quarter at Langdon Hills, page 4.	8 Tony Lowe	Monday, 4 August
	Rung half-muffled to commemorate the centenary of the start of the Great War in remembrance of the men who fought in that conflict.	At the request of the Rector, tenor tolled half-muffled for 46 blows, representing the 46 named on the War Memorial of servicemen killed in action.
	50th QP: 8, 250th on the bells: 2	

DISTRICT OUTING TO CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Hemingford Grey



The district outing was held on Saturday June 21st, and followed the banks of the River Great Ouse as it meandered through west Cambridgeshire.

Our first tower was the ground floor eight at Over; these proved quite a challenge as we are all too used to ringing on upstairs sixes with short draughts! Unfortunately, one of the local residents didn't appreciate our ringing and was overheard saying, " *#?! off, ***** bell ringers" – Jean will be able to tell you exactly what the unprintable words were!

Next was Fenstanton, a ground floor six, where the church and village was being prepared for an open gardens afternoon.

Yet another ground floor ring followed, this time the eight in the riverside town of St Ives. Lunch followed, with some people picnicking by the river and others sampling the local hostelries. By this time the weather had become really hot and sunny, and several couldn't resist an ice cream by the river and the historic town bridge with a chapel built into it.



Next was Hemingford Grey, surely one of the most picturesque settings for a church. The tower was slightly unusual with a truncated tower, and is just a few yards away from the river. A course of Ouse Surprise Major was rung here, followed by the customary group picture.

Next up were our fourth ground floor ring of the day at Houghton, just by the National Trust mill. The NT tea room proved too much of a temptation, and several sneaked off from ringing to have cream teas and ice creams.



Our last tower was the heavy eight at Godmanchester. By now we were all getting tired, but everyone seemed to have had an enjoyable day.

Thanks to everyone who came along.

The outing made a profit of £66, which has been donated to the Essex Association Bell Restoration Account.

John Harpole



GORDON LUCAS STANDS DOWN AS CAPTAIN OF TWO TOWERS

St Mary Langdon Hills, Essex
Monday, 25 August 2014 in 41 mins

1260 Plain Bob Minor

- 1 Gordon Lucas
- 2 Cathryn Corns
- 3 Alan Gisby
- 4 Nick Allen
- 5 Richard Dunhill
- 6 Andrew Martin (C)

Rung for the St Mary's Open Day, commemorating the centenary of the outbreak of the Great War and a presentation to mark the retirement of Gordon Lucas who has served as Tower Captain at the church for 47 years.



Father David Rollings of Fobbing presents Gordon with a gift to thank him for his years of service to the church as tower captain.

On 25th August the Rector at St Mary's church, Langdon Hills made a presentation to Gordon Lucas to mark his retirement as Tower Captain after 47 years of running the ringing at the church.

Gordon learned to ring at Clapham Park in 1948 and when he moved to Basildon in 1965 started to ring locally, taking over as tower captain at Langdon Hills in 1967 and then at Fobbing in 1979. Gordon taught at Barstable School and recruited many youngsters from the school into ringing. A band of his 'youngsters' won the Essex 6-bell striking competition two years running in 1976 and 1977 - not ringing plain bob doubles, as everyone seems to these days, but ringing Stedman doubles! Using the skills honed as a teacher, his focus has always been on teaching ringing, rather than just telling someone to 'look up' a method, so the ringing with Gordon is never boring - if you can ring plain bob, you can ring St Martins, and then you can replace the frontwork and before you know where you are you can ring 11 doubles!

Gordon instituted the ringing of a quarter peal for service every Sunday morning as a way of developing the skills of his ringers and extending their repertoire, which has been a very successful way for people to develop conducting skills and consolidating a newly-learned method. Ringing with him at Langdon Hills you had to be prepared to ring quarters of 54 spliced doubles, assorted spliced doubles principles and even 60-spliced surprise minor - if you met four an interesting treble bob minimus method would be found for you to learn!



On reaching his 80th birthday earlier this year Gordon decided to stand down as tower captain of Langdon Hills and Fobbing and both churches have made presentations to him to mark his years of service.

Cathryn Corns

RINGING ROADSHOW FINAL CALL FOR TICKETS FOR THE COACH

A small number of coach seats are still available at a cost of £17; late joiners will have to get their own entry tickets or pay on the door. Contact Janet Edwards on 01376 573412 email: janet@ajsplace.fsnet.co.uk

RIDGMAN TROPHY

On Saturday 7th June Essex played host to the 10 bell competition at Coggeshall. Despite a thorough downpour in the morning, the weather cleared up so that ringers from all over the eastern counties were able to enjoy the sunshine whilst listening to the ringing.

Test piece of 264 Stedman Caters was judged by Mark and Alan Ainsworth; the results as follows:

1st	Essex	20 faults
2nd	Hertford	36 faults
3rd	Ely	38 faults
4th	Suffolk	50 faults

Well done to the Essex Team: Hazel Steed, Vicki Chapman, Gill Sparling, Steve Waters, John Steed, David Sparling, Paul Bray, Brian Meads, Colin Chapman (c) and Nigel Taylor.

RON BROWN'S 90TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

On Sunday 6th July over 60 people from all over Essex gathered in St Nicholas Church Hall, Ingrave, to celebrate the 90th birthday of Ron Brown, well known to all in the Southern District. During his ringing career he has taught many hundreds of people of both sexes and all ages the art of church bell ringing.

The celebration took the form of an afternoon tea party at Ingrave and, as you would expect, included an open tower, and during the afternoon various methods rang out as well as call changes by some of Ron's learners.

Later that afternoon four simultaneous quarter peals were rung in the towers of Brentwood, Hutton, Ingrave and, of course, Navestock where Ron was part of the band, to commemorate this special day. Other quarter peals were rung at Bentley (conducted by Ron), Shenfield, North Ockendon, Langdon Hills and Theydon Garner.



Ronnie Crighton, Tower Captain of St Nicholas Ingrave

From Ron:

Fellowship among bell ringers is well known, but I was totally overwhelmed by the warmth, good wishes and generosity shown on the occasion of my 90th birthday over the weekend of 6th July.

The highlight was a gathering of more than 60 Southern District ringers at Ingrave Church Hall on Sunday afternoon, organised by Ronnie Crighton and Liz Atkins and my sincere thanks go to them and their 'committee' for inviting so many and for the magnificent spread of food.

My thanks also to the ringers of quarter peals which include two 'first inside' - Wendy Olley at Ingrave and Jonathan Lee at Brentwood. Well done to them, thanks to all who took part and to Beth Johnson for organising the bands.

I hope to carry on ringing for some time yet and to see many of you on Saturday, July 6th 2024 - 'the big one'!

St Thomas of Canterbury Brentwood, Essex
Sunday, 6 July 2014 in 46 mins (9-2-26)

- 1260 Plain Bob Doubles
- 1 Amanda Hazel-Rayner
- 2 Beth Johnson
- 3 Helen Harpole
- 4 Jonathan Lee
- 5 John Harpole (C)
- 6 Chris Bailey

Rung on the Patronal Festival of St Thomas of Canterbury and as a compliment to Ron Brown on his 90th birthday today, also to Trevor Sharp who was recently Ordained a Deacon and to the Vicar, Rev. Colin Hewitt, on his 30th Anniversary of Ordination. All Brentwood ringers wish to be associated with this Quarter. For Choral Evensong.

1st inside: 4



Ingrave, Essex
S Nicholas
Sunday, 6 July 2014 in 42 minutes (10-1-16)

- 1260 Plain Bob Doubles
- 1 Barbara A Leigh
- 2 Wendy A Olley
- 3 Paul A Cammiade (C)
- 4 John Cousins
- 5 Alan J Moody
- 6 John M Church

A 90th birthday compliment to Ron Brown, one of the best.

First inside 2

- Navestock, Essex
- 1260 Grandsire & Plain Bob Doubles (600 Grandsire, 660 Plain Bob)
- 1 Clare Beech
- 2 Roger Dorking
- 3 Ron Brown
- 4 Paul Trueman
- 5 Andrew Beech (C)
- 6 Phil Denton

Hutton, Essex
All Saints
Sunday, 6 July 2014 in 41 mins (6-1-10)

- 1260 Plain Bob Doubles
- 1 Robin Page-Jones
- 2 Raymond Jones
- 3 Paul Wiggins
- 4 Bryan Shedel
- 5 Stephen Nash (C)

90th Birthday compliment to Ron Brown.
300th tower for a quarter peal and 475th as Conductor.



AND QUARTERS FOR RON ON OTHER DAYS...



North Ockendon, Essex
St Mary Magdalene
Saturday, 5 July 2014 in 42 mins (9-2-21)
1260 Plain Bob Doubles
1 Clare Beech
2 Cathryn Corns
3 Andrew Beech (C)
4 Brian Beech
5 Stephen Nash
6 Chris Tucker
Rung as a birthday compliment to Ron Brown who celebrates his 90th birthday tomorrow, 6th July. Ann Beech and Alison Nash would like to be associated with this quarter.

Bentley Common, Essex
St Paul
Monday, 14 July 2014
1260 Grandsire Doubles
4 different 240s.
1 Pattie Folkson
2 Bill Chandler
3 Rowena L Marshall
4 Ronald J Brown (C)
5 John Cousins
6 Alan Moody

Rung by the Sunday service band as a 90th birthday (06/07/2014) compliment to the conductor Ron Brown.

Shenfield, Essex
St Mary's
Tuesday, 8 July 2014
1260 Plain Bob Doubles
1 John M Church
2 Paul Wiggins
3 Ray G Jones
4 David Reed
5 Phil Harrison (C)
6 Chris Bailey

As a 90th birthday compliment to Ron Brown who helps everyone out. Happy Birthday Ron.

Langdon Hills, Essex
St Mary
Sunday, 6 July 2014 in 45 mins
1296 Beverley surprise minor
1 Alan Gisby
2 David Belcham
3 Gordon Lucas
4 Cathryn Corns
5 Charlie Martin
6 Stephen Nash (C)

1st blows in method: 5
500th together: 2 & 4
Rung for Morning service and to congratulate Ron Brown on his 90th birthday



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY JEAN &
FIRST QUARTER
CONGRATULATIONS**

Downham, Essex
St Margaret
Friday, 23 May 2014 in 41 mins

1260 Plain Bob Doubles
1 Jean Pavely
2 Hilary N Donoghue
3 Linda M Benson
4 Roger H Dorking
5 Paul A Cammiade (C)
6 Barbara A Leigh

First Quarter Peal at first attempt and 70th birthday compliment 1. Best wishes for a speedy recovery to Mike Hallett.

SOUTH OCKENDON LEARNERS' PRACTICES

The next Learners Practices at South Ockendon will be on the first Saturday of each month as follows, 10am to 12 noon:

6th September

4th October

1st November

6th December

3rd January 2015

If you have not been before then now is the time to try something new and don't forget we always need helpers.

DISTRICT 8-BELL SURPRISE PRACTICES

18 September

20 November

7.30pm St Peter's South Weald. Cambridge and Yorkshire will be rung at all practices, along with other methods announced by the Master

All able and aspiring surprise ringers welcome.

60TH ANNUAL ESSEX DINNER ON SATURDAY 4TH OCTOBER

Venue: County Hotel Chelmsford

See information with menu at eacr.org.uk/dinner2014

To secure your place please send a non-returnable deposit of £16 per person, with the Booking Form (available to download from the EACR website) to Andrew Brewster.

Tickets £34.

Make it your tower outing or social...

How about an Essex Course group reunion...

Bring friends and family - open to all, not just ringers.

INGRAVE RINGERS A-CLIMBING GO!

On the 25th of July, sixteen intrepid bell ringers and/or their associates assembled outside Portcullis House, Westminster with the sole mission of climbing 334 steps to visit 'Big Ben', the 13 ton cousin of our modest sized bells (our largest being just over 10cwt). Having cleared airport style security and document scrutiny we commenced our climb.

A short break, after a mere 100 or so steps, gave us an introduction to facts and figures of the recently renamed Elizabeth Tower – it was renamed to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Queen Victoria was also given this honour for the other tower for her 60 year celebration.

We learned of the competition to design the Palace of Westminster (won by Charles Barry and Augustus Pugin) and subsequent competition to design the clock and its mechanisms. The Astronomer Royal, Sir George Airy, was appointed referee and set out high standards for the clock to meet. These included the first stroke of each hour to be accurate to within one second, and the clock's performance to be telegraphed twice a day to Greenwich Observatory. This competition was won by Edward Dent and his stepson. The clock was completed in 1854. It cost £2,500 to make. However it had to wait a further five years as the tower wasn't ready!

Carrying on upwards we looked at the clock mechanism. This was split into three separate parts called 'trains'. One section controlled the chiming bells, one controlled the strikes for the hours and the middle section kept the time. It was an impressive array of cogs, dials, flywheels etc. It is kept in time by using old pennies to adjust the pendulum's speed. One old penny extra makes it gain an extra 2/5ths of a second in a day. The engineers phone 123 (the talking clock) to ensure it keeps in time!

The bell 'Big Ben', is actually the second bell designed for the clock. The first was broken after being tested to see if the 'correct' note could be struck; the bell we see today was cast at the Whitechapel Bell Foundry. Although the second bell was lighter it was too large to go vertically up the shaft, so it was turned on its side and winched up manually. It took thirty hours and many men. Big Ben rang out on 11th July 1859 but its success was short-lived. In September 1859, the new bell also cracked and Big Ben was silent for four years. During this time, the hour was struck on the fourth quarter bell. The solution was to quarter turn the bell and remove a square of metal from the top and bottom of the crack line. This can be clearly seen.

With ear plugs in place, we watched the bells strike the Westminster chime, and then were privileged to hear Big Ben strike 12 noon. The belfry at the top of the tower was open to the elements and we were able to see London's fantastic skyline. We learned that the Westminster chime was actually 'stolen' from the Architects University chapel at Cambridge.

We walked around the tower at the rear of the 7m clock faces. Each dial contains 312 separate pieces of pot opal glass, a type of glass with an opaque finish about 3mm thick. Luckily we didn't break any, or have to clean them (this happens every 7 years). We saw the 28 light bulbs that illuminate each face – each bulb costing £100!

Once we were back in the open air, the English weather obliged by providing us with a magnificent display of forked lightning as a backdrop to the tower. Unfortunately this also involved us getting very wet, but it was still a wonderful sight.

All in all it was a most impressive tour, we saw many awe inspiring things and learned about others that we couldn't see, like the one ton and its fellow 1¼ ton clock counterweights. If you would like to enjoy this as much as we did, it is free! You need to contact your MP and put in a request, and then be patient – but remember that it is a virtue!

You could pass your time waiting by coming to join us on Wednesday evenings.
Liz Atkins



STRIKING COMPETITION - MAY 17TH AT SHENFIELD

Six teams gathered in the late afternoon sun at St Mary's, Shenfield for the annual striking competition. Each band rang 240 changes, with most ringing Plain Bob Doubles, one Grandsire Doubles and one Plain Bob Minor.

After a sumptuous tea served up by the local ringers, the Master introduced our judges – Sam and Phil Gorman from Cambridgeshire. Comments were made about each of the teams, and then they gave the much anticipated results, with each band being given a good striking percentage.

South Weald, who rang 5th, were awarded 54% in 6ths place

Downham, who rang 3rd, were awarded 64% in 5ths place

North Ockendon, who rang 2nd, were awarded 72% in 4ths place

Langdon Hills, ringing 4th, were awarded 79% in 3rds place

Rayleigh, who rang last, were awarded 81% in 2nds place

Prittlewell, who rang 1st, were awarded 82% in 1st place

Well done to all the teams who entered, especially to Prittlewell for winning and to Rayleigh for coming second, especially as it is many years since Rayleigh last entered the competition.



Prittlewell

Ann Porter, Penny Sloman, Peter Sloman, Steve Halliwell, David Sloman, John Woollard



North Ockendon

Claire Beech, Hilary Spooner, Alison Nash, Michael Warren, Andrew Beech, Brian Beech



Downham

Ann Dorking, Julia Jones, Hilary Donoghue, Roger Dorking, Nigel Taylor, Chris Tucker



Langdon Hills

Gordon Lucas, Catherine Gisby, Richard Dunhill, Cathryn Corns, Andy Martin, Steve Nash



South Weald

Ron Brown, Helen Harpole, Maria Jorysz, Alan Ball, Paul Trueman, Nicole Brooks



Rayleigh

Ros Skipper, Jim Laken, David Belcham, Doug Bowles, Darren Osborne, Tony Lowe

LEARNERS' QUARTER PEALS AT EASTWOOD

We all know that once a learner has progressed to a certain stage what is needed to develop their ringing skills further is time at the end of a rope and that opportunities for this on a practice night are limited.

In Spring 2007 a discussion at the Prittlewell Saturday morning ringing school on the value of ringing quarter peals to extend ropesight skills led to a suggestion that arranging these on a regular basis for learners would be useful. It would have been difficult to fit these in at Prittlewell, but Martin Newman and Peter Knight were happy for them to be rung at Eastwood. Being an easy-going (albeit very odd-struck!) ring of 6 these are suitable for learners, although due to the confined space handling needs to be good!

The first learners' quarter was rung in May 2007 and they have continued to be rung on a monthly basis since then, with the 65th being scored in January. The aim has been to put someone into a quarter once they can consistently ring a clean touch of doubles on either treble or tenor and we try to follow this up with a second soon after to consolidate skills and to concentrate on good striking. Similarly, once someone can ring a clean touch of a method 'inside' they are given the opportunity to ring a 'first inside'.

So far, 22 learners have rung a total of 173 quarter peals between them with help from 20 experienced ringers.

The list of firsts is impressive:

- 10 - 1st quarters (on the tenor)
- 11 - 1st quarters on the treble to doubles (5 were first quarter peals)
- 5 - 1st of bob doubles inside
- 2 - 1st of Grandsire inside
- 4 - 1st of minor on treble
- 1 - 1st of bob minor inside
- 1 - 1st of treble bob hunt on treble
- 1 - 1st of bob doubles as conductor

In addition, extra learners' quarters have been arranged at other local towers

- 1 - 1st quarter (on tenor)
- 2 - 1st quarter on treble to doubles (1 first quarter)
- 2 - 1st of triples on treble
- 1 - 1st of bob triples inside
- 1 - 1st of Grandsire triples inside
- 1 - 1st of bob major on treble
- 1 - 1st of bob major inside

The Eastwood bells are very odd-struck and getting good ringing can be a challenge for experienced ringers, but many of the quarters have been well-struck and only one has been stood up because of poor quality ringing. Indeed, of the 16 'lost' quarters most (7) have been lost due to a miscall.

There is no doubt that the quarters are beneficial - we go into them with the aim of giving a learner a chance to ring a good long touch and if the quarter is scored, it is a bonus. Scoring a 'first' gives a novice ringer a real sense of achievement and visibly improves their confidence. It's also an opportunity to identify and discuss any consistent ringing errors, of which the commonest are slow backstroke leads, slow backstroke in seconds, quick handstroke leads and not getting into or staying in 5th place. The benefits are also demonstrated by the fact that 3 Saturday learners' are now reliable inside ringers in the band, helping the next generation.

None of this would be possible without the support of Eastwood, especially Peter Knight and the experienced ringers who do their best to stay right if a learner wanders! Notably, Gordon Lucas (49), David Sloman (44), David Belcham (43) and Peter Knight (33) have been at the core of the band. Three 'Saturday learners' are also regular members of the band - John Woollard (26), Anne Porter (22) and myself (65). When the project started in 2007 I had been ringing less than four years so it's been a learning curve for me as well, going from relative novice, to learning how to keep the treble right, seeing what other bells are doing, to being able to call the quarters.

There's no doubt at all in my mind - and that of the ringers whose skills have developed as a result of ringing them - that these quarter peals are a definite success story!

Cathryn Corns

NEWSLETTERS

Please send any reports, pictures, notices etc., to Beth Johnson at bethjohnson6710@gmail.com, Tel: 01277 205102 or post to 67 London Road Brentwood CM14 4NN.

Newsletters are distributed at the end of Feb, April, August, October, and December – copy date for each on the 15th of the month. **Copies are sent to tower correspondents, preferably by email. Any member may request a copy via email by contacting Beth.**

North Ockendon Outing - Saturday 28th June 2014

Our outing this year was back in Kent, along the M20 corridor north west of Ashford. Rain seemed to threaten all day but only a sudden downpour just before and during our first tower materialised.

We were a little short of ringers on the day this year as many either had other events to attend or were taken unwell at short notice. Nevertheless, ten of us had an enjoyable day at four varied 6-bell towers.



Egerton

St James, **Egerton** was our first tower of the day. Even though this was an anticlockwise ring, home from home for North Ockendon ringer's, it still seemed strange to ring the other way round!



Pluckley

Next was St Nicholas, **Pluckley** where entry to the ringing chamber was via a trap door in the floor and was one of those ringing chambers with no opening windows, and as we all know, it can get quite 'warm' in those surroundings!

Apparently, Pluckley is referenced in the Domesday Book, at which time it was a more significant settlement than the now much larger town of Ashford. And it once had an entry in the Guinness Book of Records for being the "most haunted village in Britain" – we didn't see anything!

We then travelled to our next tower at Little Chart to have our picnic lunch in the churchyard. Some followed on a little later after taking a quick refreshing drink at the Black Horse in Pluckley!



Little Chart

Lunch over, we then rang at St Mary the Virgin, **Little Chart** - the lightest six of the day weighing 6¼cwt.



On our visit, the ringing chamber lacked some TLC but back in 1969 it had been given a 'highly commended' certificate in the Tidy Tower Competition of that year – and what a good year that was!

Little Chart is a modern church built in the 'fifties to replace the old Little Chart church which was wrecked by a V1 Flying Bomb during the Second World War.

The final tower of the day was St Margaret, **Hothfield**. The church was rebuilt in 1598 by Sir John Tufton having burnt down after being struck by lightning.



Hothfield



The Tufton tomb

The impressive 17th century Tufton tomb can be seen in the side chapel.

The consensus of us was that these were probably the roughest of the day – either that or we were just looking forward to getting home for a cuppa!



Ringling over, it was a good time to have the obligatory group photo before returning to Essex for that quick cuppa and small rest before some of us regrouped with partners for an evening meal at a local hostelry which rounded off the day nicely.

Andrew Beech

RINGING ACHIEVEMENTS -

Congratulations to:

Ros Skipper - first in triples at Rayleigh on Sunday, 13 July 1260 Plain Bob Triples

1 Alan Gisby, 2 Ros Skipper
3 Nick Allen, 4 Simon Smith
5 Cathryn Corns, 6 Doug Bowles
7 David Belcham (C), 8 Tony Lowe

And **Ros** again, for her first of treble bob at Langdon Hills on Sunday, 15 June 2014

1272 Cambridge s minor
1 Ros Skipper, 2 Cathryn Corns
3 Gordon Lucas, 4 David Belcham
5 Darren Osborne, 6 Stephen Nash (C)

Maria Loughenbury for her first of surprise at Fobbing on Friday, 30 May
1296 Cambridge s minor
1 Cathryn Corns
2 Maria Loughenbury
3 Gordon Lucas, 4 David Belcham
5 Stephen Nash, 6 Andrew Martin (C)

Nicole Brooks, for her first quarter of minor at South Weald on Sunday, 1 June,
1260 Plain Bob Minor
1 Nicole Brooks, 2 Maria Jorysz
3 Mark Robbins, 4 Alan Ball
5 Ian Jorysz (C), 6 Paul Trueman

John Woollard for his first in minor at Eastwood on 14 June
1260 Plain Bob Minor
1 Cathryn Corns, 2 Gordon Lucas
3 John Woollard, 4 Peter Knight
5 David Belcham, 6 Stephen Halliwell (C)

Penny Sloman for her first in method at Prittlewell on 3 May
1280 London Surprise Major
1 Peter Sloman, 2 Helen Harpole
3 Penny Sloman, 4 Steve Halliwell
5 Paul Cammiade, 6 Steve Nash
7 David Sloman, 8 John Harpole (C)

(As found on Bellboard; please let the editor know of any other significant achievements.)

BETTY NEALE 1928 - 2014



Although not a ringer herself Betty was an enthusiastic supporter of everything campanological and a Friend of the Association for many years. She was churchwarden of St Clement's between 1990 and 2002 and one of the prime movers in the project to augment the six bells at St. Clement's, Leigh, to eight in 2004 and was renowned for providing fine fare for ringers

outings and teas. Following her funeral on May 2nd at the church of St. James the Great, Leigh, a well struck open quarter of Grandsire Triples was rung at St. Clement's in celebration of her life.

Mary Folley

Quarter in memory of Betty Neale

St Clement, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex

Friday, 2 May 2014 in 44 mins (10-1-21)

1260 Grandsire Triples

- 1 Mo Venus
- 2 Penny Sloman
- 3 Helen Harpole
- 4 Peter Wycherley
- 5 Trevor Church
- 6 John Harpole (C)
- 7 David Sloman
- 8 Phil Harrison

LAURA JANE OSBORNE

Laura Jane Osborne passed away on June 6th after a long battle against a debilitating illness. Not many of us had ever met Laura but her husband, Darren, has been well known to us over the last few years.

While both Laura and Darren knew she was terminally ill, her death came very suddenly and it was with great courage and dignity that Darren helped me judge a striking competition the following day.

A few days after Laura's funeral a few of us were lucky enough to be asked to attempt a quarter peal in her memory, and I am really pleased to say that an excellent quarter was scored, called by Darren.

Darren has decided to return to his native Devon to live. He will be greatly missed for his enthusiasm and humour, especially by the Rayleigh band.

Holy Trinity Rayleigh, Essex

Sunday, 29 June 2014 in 46 mins 1264 Plain Bob Major

- 1 Helen Harpole
- 2 Lydia Roberts
- 3 Cathryn Corns
- 4 Gordon Lucas
- 5 Jim Laken
- 6 John Harpole
- 7 Stephen Nash
- 8 Darren Osborne (C)

Rang and Dedicated to the memory of Laura Jane Osborne, wife of (C) who passed away on 6th June 2014 aged 39, after a long battle with illness.

John Harpole

FAREWELL TO DARREN...

Langdon Hills, Essex

Sunday, 27 July 2014 in 45 mins (10-3-7)

1296 Plain Bob Minor

1 David Belcham

2 Ros Skipper

3 Gordon Lucas

4 Cathryn Corns

5 Stephen Nash

6 Darren Osborne (C)

200th together 4 & 6

175 on the bells: 4

Composition contained 74 singles and no bobs

Rung as a farewell to Darren Osborne from the Langdon Hills band

Rayleigh, Essex

Sunday, 20 July 2014 in 47 mins (16-1-14)

1296 Cambridge Surprise Minor

- 1 Cathryn Corns
- 2 Lydia Roberts
- 3 Gordon Lucas
- 4 David Belcham
- 5 Charlie Martin
- 6 Richard Dunhill (C)
- 7 James Laken (cover)

Rung by the Rayleigh surprise band as a farewell to Darren Osborne who is leaving Essex to return to his native Devon. The band wishes to associate Darren Osborne and John Harpole with this quarter peal - local flooding prevented them from ringing. We also wish to thank Jim Laken for standing in at a few minutes notice.



Taking a break at Langham



Our oldest and youngest ringers

SHENFIELD 'SIX-BELL TOWER' TOUR 26TH JULY

The Shenfield band were joined by friends for a sunny day out at the end of July. There were plenty of rounds and call changes for the less advanced to gain some good experience handling different bells; as well as Plain Hunting, Bob Doubles and Minor, Grandsire Doubles, Stedman Doubles and raising and lowering the bells singly and in peal; and "the Wiggins Ring" with three members of the Wiggins family ringing at the same time.

The challenge of the day for the advanced ringers was Kent Treble Bob Minor which was rung at every tower and by the last stop, Wivenhoe, a course was completed without a glitch, achieving several personal challenges.

The first stop was St Andrew's, Wormingford, which had a ground floor ring with an 8 cwt tenor. The church grounds included the graves of relatives of John Constable and the ashes of John Nash, the noted painter. Second was St Mary's, Higham with a 9 cwt tenor. As a novice ringer, I found these a lovely set of bells, easy to handle and indeed the best of the day! If only all the Shenfield practice nights could take place at Higham! The final stop before lunch was at Stratford St Mary with a 16 cwt tenor.

On a very hot day we all enjoyed lunch at The Anchor with excellent quality food washed down in many cases with Suffolk cider – a welcome break out of the very warm sun. Langham, with a 7 cwt tenor, was our fourth stop - approached via a private road along an avenue of lime trees through the Langham Hall Estate. It was a

remarkably beautiful setting in the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty overlooking the Vale.

Then on to Wivenhoe, our final stop (well not quite final if you count the well-earned pub stop at the end of the day). Here was another set of obliging bells with a 7cwt tenor; 'the Wiggins ring' was admired by 6 year old Katie Wiggins, our chief photographer for the day and hopefully ringer in the future, and there was the brilliantly successful final attempt at the Kent.

The novice ringers much appreciated Ray, Beth and Ron's patience, guidance and encouragement in teaching us during the day and much thanks are due to the advanced ringers for having the forbearance to do many sessions of rounds and call changes for the benefit of the less experienced; but the programme for the day gave a challenge to all on the outing.

We left the last ring on a real high, and headed straight to the Black Buoy, (recommended by our own rector David Thomas, who was here before coming to Shenfield) near the quayside on a glorious, warm evening.

A special thanks to John Cousins for driving many of us in "Bertie" the minibus (the hospital community bus loaned by Brentwood Community Transport) enabling many of us to partake in a liquid lunch and Suffolk ales and cider at the final watering-hole.

Sue Gilder

PICTURES FROM A RINGING SUMMER....



Spotted in Washington DC - more from the US travellers next time...



From St Mary Shenfield's churchyard



Perfect spot for lunch



A lovely afternoon at Ingrave

Below and right: Alternative ringing outing activities



Two hoodies...



...three wise men

