

## St. Mary's Walthamstow

Our original 18th century peal of 8 bells was rehung in 1896 with two additional bells to make a peal of 10. Since then the only major work carried out was to rehang them on new ball bearings in 1947.

The bells are now approaching the end of their life, so we have embarked upon a series of events to raise money to have them rehung with new headstocks, wheels, pulleys, etc.

The Village Residents Association gave us a stall at the Village Fete and Garden in July where we sold bric-a-brac and books. As it was a day when we had heavy rain all day, our sales were somewhat limited.



On September 1st we had originally booked the Charmborough Ring to give demonstrations, let people try their hand at ringing a bell and hopefully recruit new ringers. Sadly we had to cancel this as the English Defence League announced they had planned an anti-Muslim march that would pass the site we had booked for the bells. In addition a group of local people planned a counter demonstration meeting on the same site and wanted us to only ring when they asked us to. After many meetings and phone discussions that included our MP and the Borough Police Commander, they were given an alternative site for their meeting.



After searching the internet the Rector found the Suffolk Guild Vesty Mini-Ring was available. A member of the congregation kindly agreed to collect the bells on Friday, so all was not lost.

As we now had a wedding to ring for, we were only able to use the bells for about three hours. However, it was a huge success and attracted many visitors on their way to and from Walthamstow High Street Market. In spite of setbacks we raised nearly £98 in donations as well as awareness.



We also had the tower open as part of the London Open House Weekend. We had plenty of visitors wanting the fantastic view from the tower and raised £200. Subsequently further donation of £240 has been received.

September 23rd was the day we had a concert in the church. This was by a local group of singers and musicians called Kuma Lisa. They perform Bulgarian Folk songs and music in a modern, jazz-like style. The performance was excellent. They very kindly offered to take only expenses so that the entire profit would be for our funds. This amounted to £600.

Dennis Hewitt