

St Albans District Newsletter

Volume 16 Issue 4 – September 2011

SUMMER SCHOOL

The District ‘Summer School’ started on 18 June at Essendon where we had an excellent attendance. ‘Students’ were divided into a number of groups –

- those who were learning Plain Hunt .
- those who were learning Plain Bob Doubles and/or Minor
- those who were learning Grandsire Doubles
- Those who were learning Plain Bob Major and Grandsire Triples

Barry Mack had prepared extensive notes and ‘homework’ for all the groups and after a ‘theory session’ the practical began. Plain Hunt on 5 was first on the agenda and several ringers managed this for the very first time.

Several courses of both Plain Bob Doubles and Minor followed and again some ringers achieved their ‘First in Method’. A few ‘touches’ of Plain Bob were rung and finally some courses of Grandsire Triples.

On 16 July the second session was held at Kimpton and with Barry away on holiday, Claire Nicholson took the reins and soon had the learners practising their chosen methods. This included Plain Hunting on just 2 bells to help enhance bell-handling skills. The Hatfield learners in particular did find this useful. A number of other methods were rung up to Plain Bob Major.

On August 20th it was Welwyn’s turn to host the event and this time Jen Johnson had the unenviable task of trying to give everyone a fair ‘go’ in the two-hour period.

Odette Coe attended all three courses and writes|:

At Essendon we started with a theory session discussing the concept of the method and then we had a go at Plain Hunt Doubles ringing from the number 2 bell position. The main area we all agreed that was needed was to improve our bell control so that we could strike it accurately when changing speed. At Kimpton we rang Plain Hunt on 2 bells (again from the number 2 bell) and we continued practising this on our Thursday evenings at Hatfield. This started to work really well as we had to ring at different speeds in a short space of time meaning that we really had to have the bell under control. At Welwyn we practised ‘rapid-fire’ Call Changes so that we were called up to the back and down to the front at almost every hand stroke and this too helped with our bell control on unfamiliar bells.



Some of the ringers in action at Welwyn

The attendance at all three towers was excellent and the Committee would like to thank everyone (both learners and ‘helpers’) who came along to help make these Courses such a success.

Barry Mack writes:

“Good to see so many up and coming ringers enjoy themselves at the Summer School sessions. The Committee will shortly be thinking about the program for next year. Perhaps you could let us know what you would like to see – perhaps a repeat of the Summer School, more Saturday morning ringing, special sessions over the winter etc. as well as any socials. Please contact either me at barry.mack@ntworld.com and/or Claire Nicholson at noslohcinc@gmail.com”

Letters and comments please!

MORE COURSES

There are two courses at The Ringing Centre, St Peter’s St Albans in the pipeline. “Starting to Call” on October 22nd (still 4 vacancies at the time of going to press) and “Advance with Stedman” on November 5th (course full). If individuals are interested in applying they should contact their tower correspondent for details. Or visit the HCACR web site.

MIDWEEK WEDDINGS

Are you able to ring for mid-week weddings? Some towers are finding it increasingly difficult to get people to ring and a few years ago a list of ringers with their contact details was collated – but it is now completely out of date. If you want your name to be on the NEW REVISED LIST – please contact me with the details as outlined below before the end of September:

Name	Home Tower	Phone Number	E-mail address

.....

Date for your diary!

DISTRICT OUTING: OCTOBER 15th St Neots area

THE COBURN TROPHY (St Michaels 11 June)

Six teams from across the Districts entered the 2011 Coburn Trophy (8-bell) ringing competition and this year St Albans District were the hosts so the competition was held at St Michael's St Albans.

The golden rule of striking competitions is “Don’t make a method mistake”. Yours truly completely disobeyed this rule and missed a half turn in Stedman Triples with a result that for at least 12 blows, we completely fired up and it took us another few minutes to find any sort of rhythm. I therefore apologise to the band and to the District as a whole for my error which resulted in us being placed 6th out of 7. The final placings were;

Ringing Order	Team	Method	Peal Speed	Faults	Position
5	Bishops Stortford	Grandsire Triples	3hrs 10 mins	106	1
4	Watford	Grandsire Triples	2 hrs 37 mins	145	2
6	Northern Blue	Cambridge Major	2 hrs 55 mins	157	3
3	Western	Plain Bob Major	3 hrs 17 mins	179	4
2	St Albans	Stedman Triples	3 hrs 8 mins	181	5
1	Northern Red	Plain Bob Triples	3 hrs 8 mins	182	6

DEDICATION OF SANDRIDGE BELLS by Vivian Nutton

A Thanksgiving Evensong was held at Sandridge on Wednesday August 17 to thank all those who had contributed in any way to the rehanging and retuning of the bells. The bells were formally blessed by the Bishop of St. Albans, who took ringing as the theme of his sermon. He told of his fascination as a young ringer in Dorset with the mathematics of methods, even composing short touches on the way to school, and suggested that the organisation of methods could serve as a metaphor for the Christian life, whether simple or complex. Although each ringer had his or her own path, the success of the band depended on the common effort, unified by the method. Afterwards the Bishop came and rang a 120 with ringers from the District and beyond, before descending the stairs to chat with the many ringers and non-ringers who attended the service.



Before the service, a quarter peal was rung by Sandridge ringers past and present:

1260 Doubles (Grandsire, St Simon's, St Martin's, Plain Bob)

- 1 Trevor Hawkins
- 2 Kevin Horan
- 3 Sheila Foster
- 4 Vivian Nutton (C)
- 5 Mike Foster
- 6 Richard Hayes

Peal and Quarter on the new Sandridge Bells

Sunday, 24 April

1260 Doubles 4 methods

Grandsire, St. Simon's, St. Martin's, Plain Bob

- 1 Julia Pentelow
- 2 Trevor Hawkins
- 3 Christine Harris
- 4 Dominic Holroyd
- 5 Vivian Nutton (C)
- 6 Richard Hayes

First quarter on the rehung and retuned bells.

Sunday 26 June in 2h23

5040 Plain Bob Minor

- 1 Julia Pentelow
- 2 Dominic Holroyd
- 3 Frances Dodds
- 4 James A Haseldine
- 5 Robert J Crocker (C)
- 6 Vivian Nutton

Rung in memory of Geoffrey Dodds, being the first peal on the recently refurbished bells.

**Quarter peal rung for Gerald Penney
(should have been in Issue 3!)**

Harpden, Herts

Sunday 17th April 2011

A Quarter Peal of 1296 Cambridge Surprise Minor

1. David Darby
2. Susan Sparling
3. Revd. John Orme
4. Andrew Agg
5. Geoffrey Sparling
6. Charles Pocock (C)

Rung for Palm Sunday evensong in memory of Gerald Penney

NEXT DISTRICT MEETING.

The next District Meeting is at St. Stephens and the Abbey on September 17th. Meet at St Stephens for afternoon ringing between 3.15pm and 4.45pm and then there will be Tea in the Crypt in the Abbey followed by the District Meeting. In the evening is the opportunity to ring on the new bells at the Abbey before the formal Dedication Service the following week.

Everyone is welcome and we especially want suggestions for the District Diary for 2012.

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