

Volume 17 Issue 4 – November 2012

Ramble and Rhubarb

DISTRICT OUTING Sept 15th

Claire didn't just organise all the towers, the pub and the route but *also* ensured that we had glorious sunshine for the September District Meeting.

We met outside the church at Stevenage and Claire issued us with maps to ensure we did not get lost. We set off at about 9.45 am walking through Stevenage and soon crossed the A1(M) and then found ourselves in open countryside.



On the way to Great Wymondley

By 10.45 we had arrived at Little Wymondley and rang at the lightest six in the county. With 13 of us we had plenty of opportunity to do some ringing and yet time to enjoy the sunshine in the churchyard. A short walk across the fields brought us to Great Wymondley.

The bells here are perhaps a little more challenging but we did ring 'Rhubarb'. This is not really a 'method' and has no

'blue line'. You start off ringing a method such as Plain Bob and

then the conductor (Bjorn) would say "5th is the treble" and so you continue to ring the same method but you do the work for Plain Bob when the 5th leads. A change of method might be called and it could be Doubles with the 2nd finding itself in 6th's place so continues as cover bell. Then the 4th might be called as the treble bell and within a few blows a method change from Grandsire to Cambridge results in a sudden change of direction just to keep you on your toes. The bells are brought round by calling the treble back to its rightful role and reverting to Plain Bob or Grandsire. Not something for the purists but nevertheless it certainly gets you thinking and quite fun to do.

After Great Wymondley, we had lunch in the 'Green Man' across the road where we found that they were doing a special lunchtime offer for the 'Over 55's' - that suited me anyway.

A few beers later and we were on our way to Graveley where the locals were ringing for a wedding. We ensured that the wedding party certainly got their money's worth as we rang immediately afterwards and there were still many guests in the churchyard.

And so back to Stevenage for the only 8 bell tower of the day where we rang some Spliced Surprise Major to round off an enjoyable day out.

Kimpton Cup

Apsley, Bishops Stortford, Hemel, Royston, Sawbridgeworth, St Peter St Albans and Tewin produced teams for the Kimpton Cup striking competition on Saturday 29 September. This is a county six-bell competition with two teams from each of the six districts eligible to take part.

Datchworth was this year's venue. Participants were provided with a comfortable church room, beverages throughout the morning and a vast choice of excellent home-made cakes. In addition to taking part in the competition, this was an opportunity to listen to bells, meet up with other ringers and to catch up with their news. When the ringing was over, participants and judges retired to a local pub for lunch and the competition results. The judges were Heather Forster and Ben Meyer. They were frank about their relative inexperience in judging competitions but they both agreed on the order of results and provided well considered and constructive comments.

St Peter, St Albans provided the only team to represent our District. Several late changes were made to our team and we were the first to ring on the day. Richard Sales, our Ringing Master and conductor encouraged us to concentrate on the method and this strategy worked well as, despite a little nervousness, there were no method mistakes. In fact we rang pretty well and happily posed for a post-competition photograph, taken by David Gambling on his brand new camera.



"Richard and his Babes"

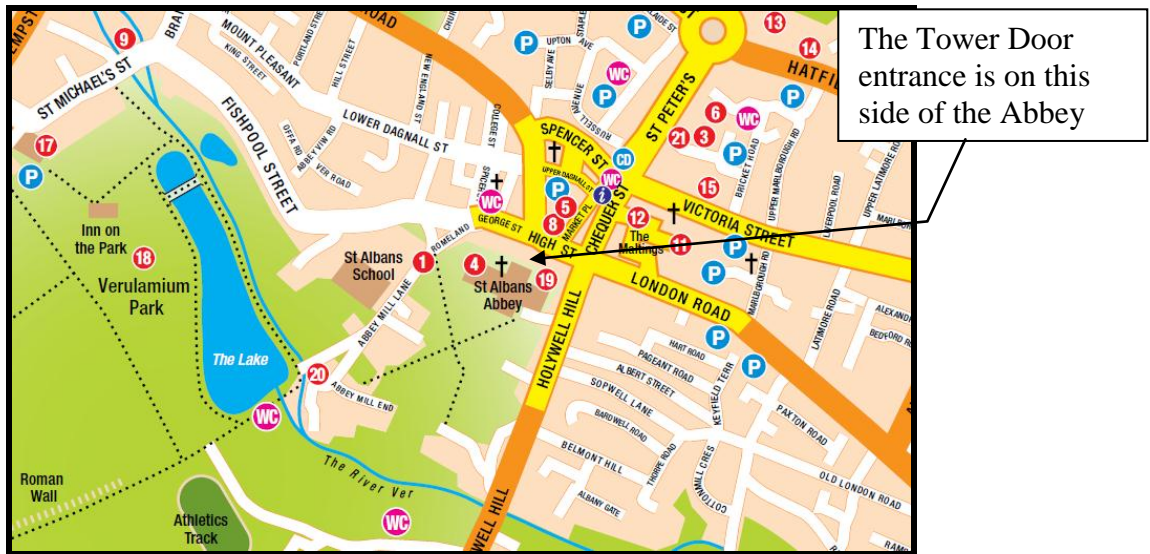
Left to right: Deborah (treble), Katherine (2), Ann (3), Rosemary (4), Richard (conductor 5), Elaine (tenor)

Our team came second to the winners, Hemel Hempstead.

By Ann Evans

NEXT DISTRICT MEETING

The next District Meeting will be held at the Abbey on Saturday November 17th between 10 and 12 noon. This is a great opportunity to ring on 12 bells and we don't mind if you are just learning rounds. A ring at the Abbey is an experience in itself and you will get the opportunity get to see the Abbey from a perspective that most members of the general public never see without paying. Get there at 10 o'clock – meet at the Tower Door (see map below). The door has to be kept locked so please try and get there on time!



FUTURE MEETINGS

Come along to Harpenden on 15th December at 3.30pm for Ringing then Service, Tea and the Nominations Meeting. The tea and cakes are always excellent at Harpenden!

In January (19th) we are ringing at St Michael's in the afternoon (3.30pm) and then making our way up to the Abbey for tea, Annual General Meeting and more ringing. Those that want a service are welcome to join the regular evensong at the Abbey, but the ringers will not have a special service.

Job Vacancy

The following post will be coming vacant in 2013:

- **District Treasurer**

Nominations can be accepted at the nominations meeting at Harpenden on 15th December and elections will take place at the Annual District Meeting on Saturday 19th January 2013 at the Abbey.

Please note that the rules of the Association were changed at the 2009 AGM to allow for separation of responsibilities between a District Secretary and District Treasurer.

Role of District Treasurer

- To receive members' subscriptions within the District, issue receipts and pass money to the County Treasurer with an end of year annual statement of the same;
- Immediately after 31st December prepare a provisional annual statement of the income and expenditure of the District and submit to the appointed independent examiner with all the relevant vouchers and books. The accounts should be confirmed at the Annual District Meeting, on the 3rd Saturday in January and copies sent to the Honorary Treasurer;
- Transmit to the Honorary Secretary immediately after 31st December each year a list of members of the District (by tower) for inclusion in the Annual Report (based on subscriptions paid where applicable).

St Albans District strictly prohibits discrimination against any employee or applicant for employment because of the individual's race, colour, religion, the number of beers you have in the pub, gender, sexual orientation, bell handling ability, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, pregnancy status, disability, or knowledge of ringing methods or other characteristic protected by law. The St Albans District is only just an equal opportunities employer because we offer equal pay (none). There are no pension rights and there is very little thanks (but you might get a round of applause occasionally).

Applications are also invited for any of the other District Officers/Posts.

Rector's Ringing Success

The tradition at St Helen's Church, Wheathampstead, is that, at the induction of a new Rector, he should ring one of the bells to represent the number of years he expects to stay in the parish. Because of the long drop, the Wheathampstead bells are notoriously hard to ring, so there was no way Richard Banham could learn to ring sufficiently well in the few weeks between the official notification and his 'rectification service' (as his parishioners referred to it) on 2 September this year. However he made a good job of chiming the treble (25 ½", 3-2-13, F), although there was a slight pause between the initial two and the subsequent ten strikes (which may be accounted for by the two years he has already served as Priest In Charge).

The service was conducted by The Venerable Rev Jonathan Smith, and was obviously preceded by some enthusiastic ringing by the local band, headed by one of the joint bell captains, Roger Gedye.



Susan L'Estrange

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