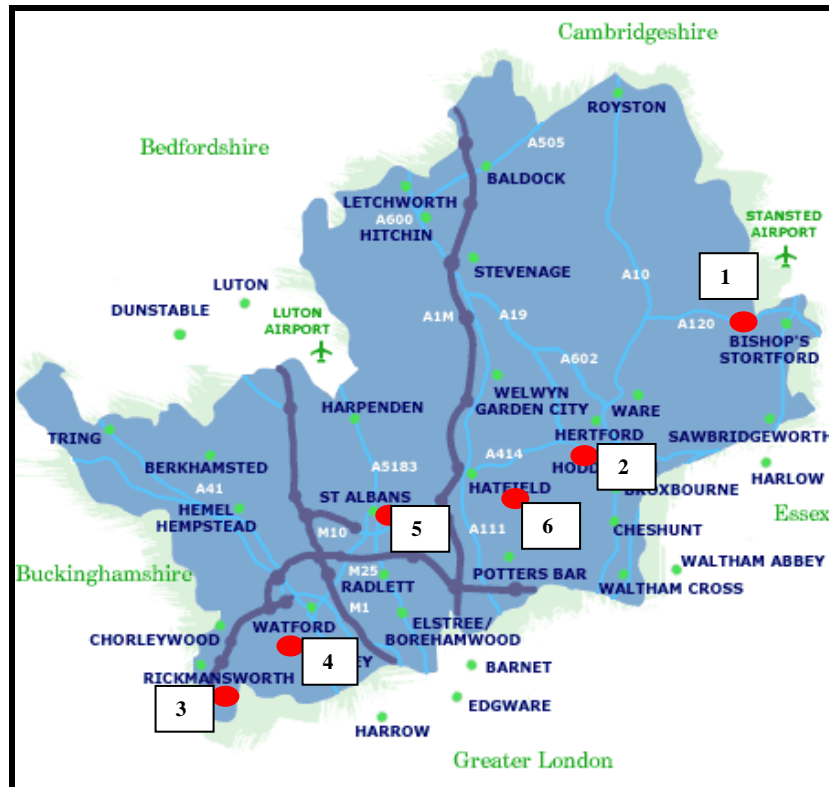


Volume 18 Issue 2 – May 2013

Hertfordshire Tens in a Day – by Claire Nicholson



I blame the Hitchin ringers. If they hadn't decided to augment their ring of ten to a twelve the idea would never have occurred to me. But once Hitchin were out there would only be six ten bell towers left in the county. That's when the idea arrived – let's ring a quarter at all six ten bell towers on the same day. Yes, all six sets are heavy or hard work or both, but how hard could it be?

At the second attempt all six towers gave permission for a quarter peal at the right time and a workable timetable was produced. All that was missing was nine more idiots to sign up. I suspected this day would be hard work and started asking all the back end or peal ringers I could think of. So it was that 10 ringers gathered at Bishop's Stortford at 09:45 on Saturday 26 April to start the first of six quarters. We agreed that as most of us would be ringing in all six attempts this would be the perfect opportunity to rate the bells and decide on the best and worst sets.

Bishop's Stortford surprised us all. They were much better than anyone had remembered and Bishop's Stortford Surprise Royal came safely round after 50 minutes, although we thought we may live to regret the composition being longer than necessary. We were off to an excellent start – until we went back to our cars and discovered one car was blocked in the church yard. The rest of us headed to Herford, All Saints and hoped the stranded group would catch us up.

They did, and once we were all safely gathered at Hertford and we started our quarter of Lincolnshire Surprise Royal. All was going well at the heaviest set of the day until the ringing chamber door opened after about 30 minutes and a lady came in and started talking to us. This came as a great shock as we'd locked the bottom tower door and brought the key up with us. Our visitor was firmly asked to leave and told we would be finished in about half an hour. The interruption unsettled the band a little, but we kept going and duly scored the second quarter. As we left the tower we discovered the interruption had been the BBC wanting us to stop ringing so they could do some filming in the church and the church officials had helpfully given the film crew the spare key to the tower.

Next up was lunch, but the timetable didn't allow for a lunch stop so we had to settle for a snack in the car on the way to Rickmansworth. We plan was to ring College Youth's Pleasure Delight Royal. This was not to the delight of the Cumberlands in the band, but they put on a brave face. The Rickmansworth bells proved to be better than we had remembered and we successfully scored the quarter in good style to bring up the half-way mark and start building the pressure on the next quarters.

Watford was the next stop and we just managed to squeeze all our cars into the church parking spaces. We played it safe here with a quarter of Yorkshire Surprise Royal. This proved to be a good idea as we produced the best ringing of the day - a really enjoyable quarter which again proved the bells to be better than some of the band had thought. We said goodbye here to Richard Horne who was bowing out after four quarters. Then we made a quick exit to avoid the football traffic as Watford were playing a crunch match at home.

We made it out of Watford and reinforcements arrived at St Albans, St Peter as Andrew Case took over from Richard for the last two quarters. The other nine ringers were looking slightly jaded by now and there was a definite lack of energy in the ringing chamber. But we held it together and scored a decent quarter of London No 3 Surprise Royal to bring the total to five quarters. There was a real chance we could do this. So no pressure for the last quarter...

Hatfield was the last tower of the day and we had definitely not saved the best until last. The band perked up a bit now the end was in sight and we started on the last quarter – Albion Little Treble Bob Royal. We were not helped by the sun blazing through the West window which made sure the ringers of the 7th, 8th, 9th and Tenor couldn't see anything at all. But we carried on regardless, the conductor didn't falter and 49 minutes later we came safely back into rounds.

Our task was complete we'd rung a quarter at all six ten bell towers in one day and nine of us had rung them all. We were tired, but happy and the only thing left to do was go for beer and a curry. It would've been rude not to.

I'd like to thank the all the towers and correspondents for their help in organising the day and allowing us to ring their bells. I'd also like to thank all those who came and rang whether it was for two, four or six quarters. It wouldn't have happened without you.

Which bells did we think were the best? And the worst? That'd be telling. If you want to know you'll have to decide for yourself...

The ringers were:

Andrew Case, Andy Reeve, Bjørn Bradstock, Claire Nicholson, Ed Mack, Richard Horne, Richard Sales, Sam Austin, Siân Austin, Stephen Penney, Tom Mack

Bishops' Stortford, Hertfordshire, St Michael

Saturday, 6 April 2013 in 0:50 (16-3-15)

1440 Bishops' Stortford Surprise Royal

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Andrew M Reeve | 6 Claire C Nicholson (C) |
| 2 Stephen W Penney | 7 Thomas B Mack |
| 3 Siân E Austin | 8 Edward R Mack |
| 4 Samuel M Austin | 9 Richard A Horne |
| 5 Richard Sales | 10 Bjørn Bradstock |

Hertford, Hertfordshire, All Saints

Saturday, 6 April 2013 in 0:49 (25-0-25)

1282 Lincolnshire Surprise Royal

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Richard A Horne | 6 Andrew M Reeve |
| 2 Thomas B Mack | 7 Claire C Nicholson |
| 3 Siân E Austin | 8 Bjørn E Bradstock (C) |
| 4 Edward R Mack | 9 Samuel M Austin |
| 5 Richard Sales | 10 Stephen W Penney |

Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire, St Mary the Virgin

Saturday, 6 April 2013 in 0:49 (20-0-20)

1400 College Youths Pleasure Delight Royal

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Siân E Austin | 6 Samuel M Austin (C) |
| 2 Bjørn E Bradstock | 7 Stephen W Penney |
| 3 Thomas B Mack | 8 Andrew M Reeve |
| 4 Claire C Nicholson | 9 Richard A Horne |
| 5 Edward R Mack | 10 Richard Sales |

Watford, Hertfordshire, St Mary

Saturday, 6 April 2013 in 0:47 (24-1-6)

1282 Yorkshire Surprise Royal

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Edward R Mack | 6 Claire C Nicholson |
| 2 Samuel M Austin | 7 Thomas B Mack |
| 3 Bjørn E Bradstock | 8 Richard Sales (C) |
| 4 Siân E Austin | 9 Stephen W Penney |
| 5 Andrew M Reeve | 10 Richard A Horne |

Rung a quarter at all the towers in Hertfordshire - 8

St Albans, Hertfordshire, St Peter

Saturday, 6 April 2013 in 0:47 (24-0-3)

1280 London No 3 Surprise Royal

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Andrew F Case | 6 Samuel M Austin |
| 2 Richard Sales | 7 Stephen W Penney (C) |
| 3 Bjørn E Bradstock | 8 Claire C Nicholson |
| 4 Siân E Austin | 9 Edward R Mack |
| 5 Andrew M Reeve | 10 Thomas B Mack |

Hatfield, Hertfordshire, St Etheldreda
Saturday, 6 April 2013 in 0:49 (23-1-20)
1296 Albion Little Treble Bob Royal

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Richard Sales | 6 Andrew F Case |
| 2 Thomas B Mack | 7 Edward R Mack |
| 3 Siân E Austin | 8 Bjørn E Bradstock (C) |
| 4 Andrew M Reeve | 9 Claire C Nicholson |
| 5 Stephen W Penney | 10 Samuel M Austin |

Ringers of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10 have now rung a quarter of Royal at all six ten bell towers in Hertfordshire in one day.

A Selection of Quarter Peals from Bell Board

Sunday March 17, 2013, Sandridge,
1260 Doubles (Grandsire, St Simon's, St Martin's, Plain Bob):

- 1 Peter Martin-Flaven
- 2 Trevor Hawkins
- 3 Claire Godfrey
- 4 Julia Pentelow
- 5 Vivian Nutton (C)
- 6 Richard Hayes

In memory of Kate Burrows (1909-2013), the senior member of the congregation.

Wednesday 24 April 2013, Sandridge
1260 Plain Bob Minor

1. Martin Cross
2. Claire Godfrey
3. Liz Middleton
4. Julia Pentelow
5. Vivian Nutton
6. Robert J Crocker ©

First quarter of Minor 1

Saturday, 23 February 2013, **Radlett**
1260 Doubles (300 Stedman, 240 each Grandsire, St Simon's, St Martin's and Plain Bob)

1. Sue Cameron
2. Jeremy Cheesman
3. Robin Leale
4. Rupert Cheeseman (C)
5. Gillian Leale
6. Sheila Cheesman

In memory of Colin Smelt who tragically died this week, a colleague of Sue.

Sunday, 21 April 2013, **St Albans** Cathedral & Abbey Church of St Alban
1280 Yorkshire Surprise Major

1. Janet L Penney
2. James W S Crawley
3. Andrew M Reeve
4. Siân E Austin
5. Claire C Nicholson
6. Charles F Pocock
7. Stephen W Penney (C)
8. Bjørn E Bradstock

Rung to mark 25 years of service to The Abbey by Paul Underhill, Head Verger.

Letter to the Editor (of The Ringing World)

Susan L'Estrange's letter was published in The Ringing World on Page 379:

Wheathampstead rising

Sir, - The ringing band at St Helen's Wheathampstead celebrated Easter Sunday 31st March 2013, by ringing all eight bells at a service for the first time for many years.

The notoriously long and unguided draught, and the public position of the ropes in the chancel crossing, makes Sunday ringing a real challenge. The band has been growing steadily in the past few years and now has ten 'Sunday ringers' and one learner. The next step, to raise the level of expertise and ensure there are enough ringers to keep the eight ringing in the future, is under way.

Adventurous ringers with a sense of humour are always welcome on Mondays at 8pm!



The Wheathampstead Ringers

In Rob's Engineering Monthly magazine:

Three engineering students were in an anatomy class discussing the possible designers of the human body.

"It must have been a Mechanical Engineer" said the first – "look at all those mechanical joints and look at the fluid mechanics – there are pipes and valves and exhaust ducts everywhere"

"No it was surely an Electrical Engineer" said the second one – "there is a highly complex computer thingy at the top and look at the many thousands of electrical connections in the nervous system"

"No you've both got it wrong" said the third – "actually it was a Civil Engineer. Who else would put a toxic pipeline right through a recreational area".

Essendon Outing, 4th May 2013

About 16 of us drove up to the Swaffham area of Norfolk for the 2013 May Essendon Outing. At Fincham (a7 cwt six) we found a steep, narrow uneven staircase up to the bells. But they went quite well and we had some good ringing to start off the day. The next Tower was Ashill and here the eight bells were quite difficult to strike as some of them were a little 'odd struck'.

Some braved the breezy weather for a picnic whilst others found that 'The George' or 'The Red Lion' or one of the Tea Shops in Swaffham were more of their liking.

Fully refreshed, we met again to ring at the 15 cwt eight at Swaffham. A balcony ring with a good view of the most impressive carved wooden ceiling in the aisle. A very long draught (probably >60 feet) but aided by two separate rope guides so these bells were not too difficult to handle. We rang a variety of methods including some good Stedman Triples.



Swaffham: Photo by Chris Hunt

At Northwold (8) the locals had just fitted new ropes and with the dry weather, these had stretched quite considerably so we spent the first 15 minutes adjusting and shortening the ropes

– especially for the back two or three bells. The bells are mounted on plain bearings and so needed a certain physical effort to ensure good striking.

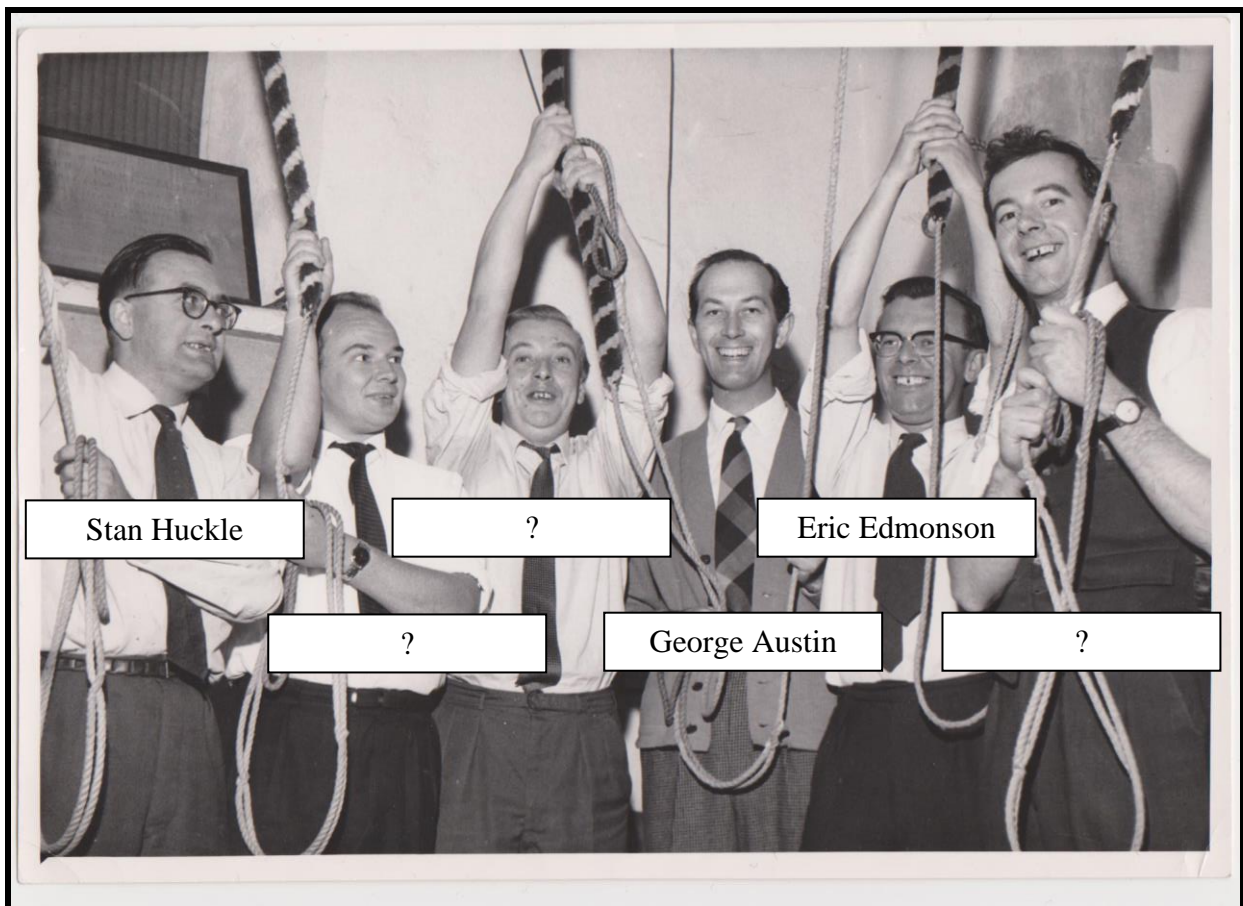
The last tower of the day was a lovely light six at Hockwold –cum-Wilton and we enjoyed the ringing here before we drove down to ‘The Chequers’ at Eriswell near Newmarket for a very convivial evening meal. Thanks go to John Ford and Chris Hunt for organising the day.

Next Newsletter Issue:

Is your tower organising an Outing? Please send in details/photos to The Editor.

Found amongst George Austin’s collection

George Austin (Hatfield) died earlier this year and his sister found this photograph amongst his belongings. Can you help identify the ringers in this photo? Handwritten on the back is ‘Kimpton 1963’.



This Newsletter is issued by e-mail only. If you know of anyone who would like a printed copy, please contact the Editor.

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