

St Albans District Newsletter

Volume 27 Issue 1 – April 2022

District Meetings

District meetings have been quite well attended so far this year:

January (Harpenden): It started at 6.30pm which perhaps was not a popular time on a cold winter's evening – but after the AGM we did some ringing including a touch of Stedman Triples.

February (Radlett): This very light six caused problems for some but it was well attended and being a ground floor ring there was plenty of opportunity to socialise.



District Meeting at Radlett 19 February

March (St Stephens, St Albans): Again, well attended with around **18 people** from towers right across the District.

Future District Meetings: (**dates for your diaries**)

- **April** – no District Meeting as the third Saturday was Easter but it's our turn to host the County AGM which will be held at St Michael's on 23 April.
- **14 May:** South Mimms.
- **25 June:** District Outing – details TBA – but probably in the South Bedfordshire area.

Ringing for Queen's Platinum Jubilee

Bellboard showed that the following towers rang in celebration of the Platinum Anniversary of the Accession of HM Queen Elizabeth II on Sunday 6th February:

Welwyn:

Sunday, 6 February 2022

Rounds, Called Changes, Plain Hunt and 120 Bob Doubles

1. Janet Coates
2. Peter Gill
3. Les Harland
4. Andrew King
5. Amanda Turner
6. John Williams
7. Nigel Ward
8. Stephen Mitchell



In celebration of the Platinum Anniversary of the Accession of HM Queen Elizabeth II.

Kimpton:

Sunday, 6 February 2022 in 2h 54 mins

5088 Lessness Surprise Major

Composed by [Stanley Jenner](#)

1. Judith E Titmus
2. Daniel R B Gregory
3. June Mackay
4. Graham R D Lay
5. Stephen W Penney
6. Richard Sales
7. Robert J Crocker (C)
8. Adrian P Sweeting

Rung to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the accession of HM Queen Elizabeth II.



L to R: Stephen, Graham, Richard, Robert (mostly hidden), June, Adrian, Daniel, Judith.



Photo taken during the peal

Hatfield:

Sunday, 6 February 2022

70 Plain Hunt Doubles

1. Mary E Goss
2. Dianne E Crowder
3. Kath Sayers
4. Jonathan Bottoms
5. W Robert E T Goss (C)
6. David George

Rung before the morning service to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the Accession of HM Queen Elizabeth.

Sandridge:

Sunday, 6 February 2022 (6–0–18 in B_b)

480 Plain Bob Doubles

1. Ron Titmus
2. Christine Nutton
3. Judith Titmus
4. Richard Hayes
5. Vivian Nutton (C)
6. Richard Pether

For the Platinum Jubilee, following the ceremonial planting of a tree on the Sandridge Recreation Ground.

Lemsford,

Sunday, 6 February 2022

Rounds and Call Changes, Plain Hunt and Plain Bob Doubles

1. Ron Titmus
2. Judith Titmus/Fearne Palmer
3. Laura Hill
4. Darcey Palmer
5. Robert Crocker
6. Emily Palmer

Rung by the Sunday service band to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's accession to the throne.

QUARTER PEAL:**Sandridge:**

Wednesday 9 February 2022 (6–0–18 in B_b)

1320 Plain Bob Doubles

1. Trevor Hawkins
2. Christine Nutton
3. Judith Titmus
4. Richard Hayes
5. Vivian Nutton (C)
6. Ron Titmus

A Quarter for the Platinum Jubilee. Trevor (aged 93) rang this bell for his first quarter in June 1960

Other Quarters:

Great Amwell, Hertfordshire
St John the Baptist

Friday, 18 March 2022 in 42m (6–3–24 in Bb)

1296 Lodsworth Surprise Minor

Composed by Claire C Nicholson

1. Mary E Goss
2. Emily J Crowder
3. Liz Griffith-Jones
4. W Robert E T Goss
5. Claire C Nicholson (C)
6. Bjørn E Bradstock

Retirement (but not from ringing) compliment to Mary Goss

Wheathampstead, Hertfordshire

St Helen

Saturday, 22 January 2022 (14–0–22 in F)

1320 Plain Bob Doubles

1. Dianne E Crowder
2. Bernard P Quinn
3. W Robert E T Goss
4. Robert J Crocker (C)
5. Chris Male
6. Ron E Titmus

Rung by members of the Monday evening practice. 70th birthday compliment to Susan L'Estrange, Ron E Titmus and Robert J Crocker. First Quarter in this tower for Ringers 2 and 5.



70 Years Young (Bob Crocker, Susan L'Estrange and Ron Titmus)

Joan Badger 20/2/1938 - 21/1/2022

By Lesley Seaford (Ridge)

Born in South Mimms Hertfordshire, Joan spent her childhood in the small village until the 1950's, when she underwent teacher training. She then spent the next years in Junior schools in various parts of the country. During her travels she met and married David Badger. They subsequently decided to return to South Mimms to support Joan's parents and her younger disabled brother and it was then their connection with St Giles Church strengthened with both joining the bell ringing team and David becoming a Church Warden.

After retirement they spent holidays touring the country in their Camper Van, ringing at Churches as they went.

In 1997 came the major project to refurbish and augment the bells in nearby St Margaret's, Ridge. Already Tower Captain of St Giles, Joan volunteered to form a team of ringers for the new tower which she started by an article in the local paper inviting people to "Come and Help ring in the New Millennium" and soon she was back teaching. Joan was a good trainer, patient and thorough in teaching bell control and safety.

The two teams practised and socialised together, only splitting to cover Sunday services, Under Joan's guidance the combined bands visited other towers, had an annual coach trip to go further afield, helped with church fêtes and generally got involved in both villages.

Sadly, with the passing years, Joan's mobility became a challenge, and the bell towers came to be inaccessible to her, although she maintained her interest in both churches and their ringers. She continued to live independently but unfortunately a severe fall in mid-2020 resulted in her needing professional care and she entered a local nursing home where she remained until her death.



Joan hated having her photo taken. Here she is with David sticking her tongue out at the photographer!

Ridge:

Sunday, 6 February 2022 (11–0–24 in G)

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

1. Julie Lloyd
2. Celia Workman
3. Louise Bourton
4. Adrian Beardwell
5. Laurence Bourton (C)
6. Daniel Skerratt

Rung in memory of Joan Badger, former tower captain at St Margaret's, Ridge and St Giles', South Mimms, who taught the ringers of 3 and 5.

First quarter peal - 1, 6

First inside - 3

First doubles as conductor.

Joan would have been very proud of this performance.

Keith Tizard

By Susan L'Estrange

The ringing band (and associates) from St Helen's Wheathampstead offer their condolences to their colleague, Carol Tizard. Her husband, Keith, died in hospital on 2nd April after a long illness while Carol was recovering from a (successful) eye operation. Carol has been ringing in Wheathampstead since she joined as a beginner 11 years ago. We're looking forward to welcoming her back.

Pictures show Keith and Carol (a) last Christmas and (b) in earlier years when they were active supporters of the Air Ambulance (2nd and 4th from left)



Talking Bells

By Susan L'Estrange

You know how the conversation goes when you tell ordinary people that you're a bell ringer – once they've said 'campanologist' and how they secretly want to watch someone get lifted up in the air, they just glaze over, right? Well, my sister-in-law, Dee, is the best. She not only listens to the short answer, she asks follow-up questions ... and then asks how it's going the next time she sees me ... until we've reached a point when I'm telling her real things. And she seems a bit proud that she actually understands bell stuff. Until the other day, when we were looking up at the bell ropes in the tower, it all started to unravel.

D So that's the treble, and you're standing under number five, I'm under number seven and that's the tenor. And if you ring them in order, that's rounds.

Me Right.

D So when you don't ring them in order ... in rounds ... how do you know which bell to follow?

Me The first way is that an agreed person 'calls the changes' – and calls out which bell should follow a different bell. So on Sunday B was calling from the treble, and started by calling '3 to treble'.

D That bell to follow that one? So what happens to 2? ... Oh wait, it has to follow 3. But then 4 ... has to follow 2? And the others ring in the same order as before?

See, she really does get it.

Me Except there was only one other bell because we were ringing on the back six, so this one was the treble. And the other bells were numbered two to five. And we didn't have enough ringers, so we didn't have a tenor behind.

D OK – not confusing at all.

Me You're now number 5 and I'm number 3.

D And over there is the front and that's the back.

Me Yes. Except I'd better just mention that in many – most – other towers, they call up, so to get exactly the same change we've just made, they would call '2 to 3'.

D O.....K.... So what, you 'call down'?

Me. Yes.

D But isn't ringing up and ringing down something different? Getting to ready to ring at the beginning ...

Me Yes. This is **calling** up and **calling** down. Keep up!

D How do you know which is down and which is up?

Me It doesn't matter. You just do what the caller says. But basically with calling down, the caller is moving the back bells down to the front. And the other way calls the front bells up to the back.

D But aren't the high sounding bells at the front? Why aren't high bells 'up' and low bells 'down', like every other musical instrument?

Me I don't think bells are like other musical instruments – we don't actually play tunes ...

D Except with a glockenspiel or carillon.

Me Yes. But that's just banging on the outside of the bell. We can't actually ring tunes.

D ... You said there was another way to know which bell to follow.

Me Yes. We ring 'methods', which are patterns we learn, and then we follow a different bell on every stroke – hand and back.

D Back's up, right?

Me That's a different back. Hand stroke is pulling the sally, and back stroke is pulling down on the tail end. I told you that last time!

D Sorry. So everyone learns their place in the pattern?

Me Yes. It's called following the blue line. And at the moment in our tower we're trying to get a home band to ring a method called Bob Doubles, and everyone does the same pattern but starting in a different place.

D How many rings?

Me Blows. Once through Bob Doubles ('doubles' means that we ring on five working bells with the tenor behind) till you get back to rounds is 40. That means ...

D ... that the front five bells follow the pattern and the tenor rings last.

Me Very good. And the next thing is that someone calls Bob. And we do basically the same sequence but following different bells.

D Isn't bobbing that thing you're not supposed to do with your knees?

Me Thanks for reminding me. Yes. But this is a different bob – and it's nothing to do with any ringer called Bob. And I don't know why it's called bob. But we do the pattern three times which gets us back to rounds again and that's 120 blows.

D Each?

Me Each.

D That's quite a long sequence to learn.

Me Well we're supposed to learn the pattern and the order in which we do our work, and then we move places. So my first move from the 3 would be to ring in fourths place.

D (*Looking wildly round*) You move?

Me No we don't move to a different bell. The bells move. (*Her eyes flicker upwards.*) Not actually, obviously. They move ... they ring in a different place in the pattern. And you count your places. And you use rope sight. Got it?!

D Impressive.

Me It would be if I could do it. I still need someone behind me to tell me what to do when I go wrong. But I think I'm getting there.

D How long have you been learning Bob Doubles?

Me Don't ask. ... But you've understood all that, right?

D Oh yes. Absolutely! Except ... if the last bell when you're ringing is the tenor, and on Sunday you were ringing on five bells with the tenor behind, but you didn't have a tenor behind, was the last bell the tenor or wasn't it?

Me Now you're just being mean. Why can't you just glaze over like everyone else??!!

Kimpton Half- Day Outing (26 March)

Unfortunately, Ben, Laura and Dianne tested positive just before the outing and so were unable to join us.

Four six-bell towers in the Towcester area: Blisworth, Gayton, Pattishall and Greens Norton. All of them were ground floor rings which meant we could have a good chat without disturbing those ringing. Glorious sunshine all morning and a very convivial lunch in 'The Brave Old Oak' in Towcester. Julie and Judith found a 'bride's and 'mother-of-the-bride' dress shop opposite the pub and could have spent all afternoon in there given half a chance especially as Judith's daughter is getting married later this summer.



Christine, Rob, Alan, Keith, Vivian, Sue, Gordon, Rachel, Julie, Judith, Mary, Ron

Many thanks to Judith for arranging the day.

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