
St Albans District Newsletter

St Albans District Outing to Essex

August 2007
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Starved of a 'fix' of new towers for several years, finding myself free on the relevant day, being 'released' from my own tower as respects wedding ringing, learning that I would have the pleasure of the company of an excellent navigator and raconteur on the journey, how could I possibly resist the temptation of joining the St Albans District outing? Unbridled joy!

The weather was excellent and off we set to the first tower, Writtle. The utility of the route chosen was quickly apparent. The A 414 links Hertfordshire and Essex in a most convenient way although I did decide to use the M25 to avoid the risk of delay around Harlow. We arrived to meet up with the other 16 folk who joined the outing and awaited the arrival of the 'man with the key'. 'Man with the Key' was a little delayed - and had forgotten that some of the clappers had been tied (for the teaching of learners). Once these little matters were dealt with we enjoyed the superb Writtle 31Cwt 10 very much, this ringer feeling that he should have rehearsed Yorkshire Royal prior to arrival. These bells were superb and were a good start to the day.

(contd on page 2)

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Writtle

The company then proceeded to Galleywood. I remember when these were a ground floor ring. Now a choir vestry has been commissioned from where we used to ring and the ringers are up one floor. These are not easy bells nor particularly melodic. However I felt we achieved some good ringing by fierce concentration and careful listening.



Great Baddow

Lunch was then taken and ringing resumed at Great Baddow, a delightful 14cwt. 8 where we attempted our first serious touch of spliced. We had some nice ringing here. Quickly we moved to Danbury - another lovely 'sorted' eight

where again it was possible to bring out the best in the bands who caught hold.



Basildon

One of the great attractions for me as respects this outing was the opportunity to ring at the Basildon Bell Tower. This is a superb construction. But it wobbles a bit. And it doesn't always appeal to ringers who have issues about 'space'. Moreover the bells are horrendously loud outside and more than a bit loud inside. I'm sure the reason our attempt at a touch of Erin Triples failed was as a result of auditory incapacity. (Conductors should eat more red meat). I should add that the signage around Basildon is poor. Visitors should take maps, and Satnav, and any local knowledge person they can lay their hands on.

Finally, a visit to the beautiful 8 at Stanford-le Hope. What a truly tuneful and smooth going ring these bells are. Here we had some of our best ringing and the tone of the bells themselves sent us on our way home to Herts with gladness.

I want to thank all the good people who kindly met us and facilitated our ringing at the 6 lovely towers and on behalf of the District I thank Ann Evans for her efficient, crisp, kindly and thoughtful organisation

- Charles Pocock

Leslie George Coburn 1922 - 2007

Leslie was born in Harpenden, the son and grandson of carpenters, and lived all his life there. His father and uncle were ringers at St Nicholas Harpenden and Leslie followed the family tradition, learning to ring around the age of 16. In 1939 the records show him elected as a member of the Herts CA when home on leave from service in the RAF. Prior to that Leslie had left school (age 14) to enter the Northern Polytechnic (London) joining the Building Trades School and he later returned to the Polytechnic, after RAF service, completing examinations in his great love - woodworking. He was elected a Fellow of the British Institute of Carpenters, after which he was appointed to teach in Evening Classes. This was the beginning of his teaching career which culminated in him becoming Senior Lecturer in Carpentry and Joinery at the same College until he retired in 1985. Leslie also taught part time both at Hatfield Technical College and the St Albans College of Building.

An up-and-coming young lady ringer from Wheathampstead began to attend the Harpenden ringing practices and then to attend regularly for service ringing. Thus it was that Leslie met Amy Wren, and in 1949 the two were married and set up home at 3 Lea Road Harpenden, a house built by his father.

Leslie devoted all his energies to family matters, bringing up his much loved two boys Trevor and Martin, turning up faithfully for Sunday ringing, helping teach many learners at Harpenden and especially, and more recently, supporting Amy during her two year period of office as Hertford County Association President (1983 - 1984).

Leslie never aspired to ring complicated methods and he rang just four peals one of which was the first peal to be rung by a Sunday service band at Harpenden since 1913 in which his father had taken part. He did however ring many quarter peals the last one being to mark his and Amy's Golden Wedding. It was with great pleasure that he and Amy were able to give the 4th bell when Harpenden bells were

recast in 1990, this to mark their 40th anniversary. But to Leslie, Sunday service ringing was of prime importance and he served for many years as Steeple Keeper and wound the church clock. He and Amy were sidesmen for a considerable time.

In St Nicholas Church and also in St Mary's at Kinsbourne Green there are numerous examples which are a lasting testament to Leslie's skill as a craftsman. Hymn boards, candle sticks, reading desks, a credence table and many other smaller items were lovingly made and presented and will remain in use for years still to come. Leslie spent many hours in his workshop producing items for the Church Christmas bazaars. In particular, ringers from all over Hertfordshire (and beyond) possess the wooden bells (all correctly dimensioned) which Leslie made and sold to raise money for the County Bell Restoration Fund and for this Leslie was elected a Life Member of the Association.

Leslie loved the countryside, he was a man of simple faith. His craft, his wife and sons, his friends and his Church, in no particular order, were his life. He died on July 1st in a local nursing home where he had spent the last year of his life being cared for with much love. Parkinson's Disease robbed him of working with his beloved wood, and ringing, for the last five years of his life.

The inspiring service of Thanksgiving on July 20th took place in the church where Leslie had worshipped, rung and spent so many hours, was attended by many friends few of whom would not have had something in their homes which he had made. The hymns and readings had all been chosen by him. The bells were rung open - as he wished - and also for the short service of committal which had taken place a week after his death. A peal of Grandsire Triples was rung prior to the Thanksgiving service, again the method had been specified by Leslie and after the service his many friends gathered in the Church hall for what could only be described as a 'bell-ringers' tea' - just as he would have liked.

- Charles Pocock

In memory of Leslie Coburn

Hertford County Association

Harpenden, Herts

S Nicholas

Friday 20 July 2007 in 2h55m (15)

5040 GRANDSIRE TRIPLES

Comp. JJ Parker (12pt)

1. Richard JW Tibbetts
2. Catherine E Hughes-D'Aeth
3. Christine C Darby
4. Geoffrey Dodds
5. Keith Lewin
6. Andrew WR Wilby
7. Bernard H Taylor (C)
8. David T Darby

Rung prior to the Thanksgiving Service for
Leslie George Coburn (1922 - 2007)

St Peter's, St Albans

Sunday 8 July 2007

1250 LINCOLNSHIRE S MAJOR

1. Judith A Mack
2. Jennifer J Johnson
3. Ann Evans
4. Rosemary J Duke
5. Richard Sales
6. James M Hills
7. Barry D Mack
8. Graham A Duke (C)

Rung open in thanksgiving for the life of Leslie G
Coburn who died on 1st July.

Harpenden, Herts

St Nicholas

Sunday 22 July 2007

1260 GRANDSIRE TRIPLES

1. Diana M Parrott
2. Andrew J Agg
3. Sarah Taylor
4. David T Darby
5. Rev John Orme
6. Christine C Darby
7. Richard JW Tibbetts (C)
8. John K Harper

For Evensong, in affectionate memory of Leslie Coburn.

Other quarters and peals

Harpenden, Herts

St Nicholas

Wednesday 18 April 2007

1260 STEDMAN TRIPLES

1. Liz Pocock
2. Di Parrott
3. Sheila Edmondson
4. David T Darby
5. Revd. John Orme
6. Christine Darby
7. Richard JW Tibbetts (C)
8. Charles F Pocock

Rung in affectionate memory of Ann Bethell, a ringer
at Harpenden from 1983 to 1991 by past and present
members of the band on the day of her funeral.

St Albans Cathedral

Saturday 4 August 2007 in 0:50 (23-2-11)

1311 STEDMAN CINQUES

1. Gerald Penney (C)
2. Deirdre R Watson
3. Rosemary J Duke
4. Rosemary E Sales
5. Janet L Penney
6. Geoffrey Dodds
7. John J Ford
8. Richard A Horne
9. Charles F Pocock
10. Graham A Duke
11. Brian C Watson
12. Richard Sales

Rung as a 60th birthday compliment to Charles
Pocock. 1st of Stedman Cinques: 4

Hertford County Association

Monken Hadley, Herts

S Mary V

Saturday 11 August 2007 in 2:46 (10-2-21)

5040 GRANDSIRE TRIPLES

Composed by: JJ Parker (12 Part)

1. Adrian P Sweeting (c)
2. Stephen Coaker
3. Jane L Kostelnyk
4. Tricia Narracott-Wales
5. Alan Spreadbury
6. Peter J England
7. Colin M Lee
8. Jon Spreadbury

Rung to celebrate the completion of restoration work
to the bells and tower. 1st Peal - 4.

The Albantide Festival Pilgrimage June 2007

On Saturday 23rd June over 5000 people flocked to St Albans Abbey for the Albantide Festival Pilgrimage to celebrate Britain's first martyr and to be led in worship by Archbishop Desmond Tutu.



Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Until recent years the Patronal Festival has been a relatively low key event but following an opinion poll, won by St Alban, as to which saint should replace St George as patron saint of England, interest in the event has grown significantly.

The ringers were lucky enough to be involved in the festivities by being invited to ring both before and after the service at 4pm at which the Archbishop spoke.

Open ringing took place on the 12 bells for one hour leading up to the service by ringers from a variety of churches around Hertfordshire. Two sessions of rounds and call changes and two respectable plain courses of Grandsire Cinques were achieved.

Many ringers then chose to stay and join in the service as best as we could by either watching from the nave gallery or quietly joining in at the back of the north transept. Although the sound relay system at the Abbey meant that we could not hear every word that was spoken by the Archbishop his message of love and peace could not be mistaken. The service ended with a series of rousing processional hymns during which the entire congregation filed past the shrine of St Alban before leaving the Abbey.



The shrine of St Alban

Once the Abbey began to empty some of us again climbed the 160 stairs to attempt a quarter of Grandsire Cinques, which I am pleased to say was successful. The details of which are below.

- Janet Penney

St Albans, Herts Cathedral

Saturday 23 June 2007 in 49m (23-2-11)

1253 GRANDSIRE CINQUES

1. Christine M Carter
2. Deirdre R Watson
3. Roger Baldwin
4. Geoffrey Dodds
5. Janet L Penney
6. S Kathleen M Baldwin
7. Richard A Horne
8. John J Ford
9. Brian C Watson (C)
10. James A Forster
11. Alban D Forster
12. Ian F Galpin

Rung for the Patronal Festival at the conclusion of the St Albans Pilgrimage led by The Most Reverend Desmond Tutu.

Coburn Trophy

The Coburn Trophy was held at Northchurch on 2nd June, and was won by the St Albans district who rang Stedman Triples. Congratulations to the team below:

1. Christine M Carter
2. Catherine E Hughes-D'Aeth
3. Geoffrey Dodds
4. Rosemary J Duke
5. W Robert E T Goss
6. Graham A Duke
7. Barry D Mack (C)
8. Thomas B Mack

The first three placings were:

St Albans with 47 faults

Western with 53 faults

Northern with 68 faults.

The judges said that we rang the tenor well, slowed down considerably during our test piece and our last section was the best ringing of the day.

- Barry Mack

Woolford Cup

This year's Woolford Cup was held at South Mymms on 19th May. The Judges were David Gambling and Steve Crawley.

1st St Peters - 30 faults

2nd Cathedral - 46 faults

3rd St Michaels - 49 faults

4th Hatfield - 72 faults

5th Barnet - 106 faults

Request Help

Would you like to ring a standard method at your practice night but often find yourself short of ringers with enough experience? Cathy Hughes-D'Aeth (contact details back page) is happy to help find ringers to visit your practice night to help you. Also if you would like to ring a quarter peal but need help either raising a band or finding a conductor, Cathy is happy to help find ringers (and a tower if necessary) to help you.

More quarters and peals

St Michael's, St Albans

Sunday 25 March 2007 in 45 mins (12-3-20)

1260 STEDMAN TRIPLES

1. Catherine F Moore
2. John N Hughes-D'Aeth (C)
3. Katherine S Hardy
4. Catherine E Hughes-D'Aeth
5. Edward N Hughes-D'Aeth
6. Andrew M Reeve
7. Richard W Butler
8. Robert J Moore

Rung for Evensong in memory of Anthony James, a ringer at this tower, who tragically died earlier this month. The band would like to associate Howard Wastling with this performance; he was prevented by illness from taking part, having been in a previous unsuccessful attempt.

Hertford County Association

St Peter's, St Albans

Saturday, 30 June 2007 in 3:19 (24 cwt)

5040 YORKSHIRE SURPRISE ROYAL

Composed by: K W Scudamore

- 1 Christine M Carter
- 2 Rosemary J Duke
- 3 Judith A Mack
- 4 Edward R Mack
- 5 Andrew M Reeve
- 6 Thomas B Mack
- 7 James M Hills
- 8 Barry D Mack
- 9 Graham A Duke (c)
- 10 Stephen W Penney

First peal at first attempt (aged 12): 4

Hertford County Association

Essendon, Herts

St Mary the Virgin

Saturday, 21 July 2007 in 2h57 (15-0-13)

5085 GLASGOW S MAJOR

Composed by: N J Diserens

1. Catherine E Hughes-D'Aeth
2. David J Dearnley
3. Christine M Carter
4. Edward N Hughes-D'Aeth
5. Russell A Brown
6. John N Hughes-D'Aeth (C)
7. Stephen W Penney
8. Paul N Mounsey

50th peal as a trio: 1,4,6. Rung on the morning of the Garden Party to celebrate Swaz Apter's 50th birthday year.

Ringling Centre Courses

There are still places available on the next two courses at the Ringling Centre - Treble Bobbing on Saturday October 6th (Tutor Geoff Dodds) and Cambridge S Minor on Saturday 1st December (Tutor Richard Sales).

If you know of anyone who may be interested please refer to the leaflet that should be in your Tower or contact Ann Evans (details back page) for more details and information on how to book.

Newsletter by Email

This district newsletter is now available electronically! If you would like to receive a personal copy of this newsletter by email, please let the editor know and he'll add you to the distribution list. The email will be sent in PDF format, and will be <1Mb (A few minutes to download on a dial-up modem).

Ridgman Trophy

The Ridgman Trophy Striking Competition was held at Rothwell on 16th June. The results were as follows:

- 1st Bedfordshire Assn - 6 faults
- 2nd Herts Assn - 9 faults**
- 3rd Suffolk Guild - 11 faults
- 4th Essex Assn - 16.5 faults
- 5th Lincolnshire Assn - 22 faults
- 6th Cambridge University Guild - 32.5 faults
- 7th Peterborough Guild - 34 faults
- 8th Ely Assn - 41 faults
- 9th Norwich Guild - 81 faults
- 10th Leicester DG (did not complete test piece)

As pointed out by Robin Hall on the Ringling Chat email list, 6 faults is either very good ringing or very lenient judging!

St Albans Cathedral Outing

On 14th July the St Albans Cathedral band (and some of their friends) visited North Kent for their annual outing.

Public Transport across London was taken advantage of for the day, with enough time being allocated to allow for any delays! The day got off to a good start with a prompt meet at the ten at Beckenham, followed by a ring on the fine Gillett eight at Bromley Parish which many of the group wanted to take home with them.



SS Peter & Paul, Bromley

Lunch was across the road at the Tom Foolery which served us well with good food and Fuller's beer which was on top form.

Although bus links were available the group opted to walk down the road to Bromley Common, and then onto Bickley for our final ring of the day. The outing was completed by a return to Bromley for a curry before heading home.

All in all, good bells, good beer, good curry, good company. What more does a ringer need?!



Outside Bickley Church

St Albans District Ringing Programme 2007/8

Month	Date	Bells	Ringing Time			Notes
			10:00 – 12:00	15:30 – 17:00	19:00 – 20:30	
August	25	10	-	-	Rickmansworth	Association 10 bell
September	15	10	St Albans, St Peter		-	
September	29	8	Kimpton 09:50		-	
October	20	6	-		St Albans, St Michael	
November	17	8	Sandridge		-	
December	15	8	-	Harpenden	Harpenden	Nominations
January	19	6	-	Kimpton	Kimpton	ADM

P = Provisional

District Officers 2007/8

Ringling Master:	Claire Nicholson 020 7944 3518 ccnicholson@fsmail.net	Deputy Ringing Master:	Barry Mack 01707 371671 barry.mack@ntlworld.com
District Secretary:	Judith Mack 01707 371671 judith.mack@ntlworld.com	Committee Member:	Ann Evans 01727 824313 ann@ev43.wanadoo.co.uk
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General Committee Rep:	Ben Duke 01727 768336 ben.duke1@ntlworld.com		

District Quiz 2007

The St Albans District Quiz Night will be held on Friday 12th October, 7pm at Hatfield.
More information will be sent to Tower Secretaries shortly.