

## **TOWER REPORT 2024**

Since the 12 bells were hung in November 2022 the local band has made significant progress. There are some 19 regular members of the band attending on Thursdays and Sundays.

Interested visitors and enquirers have been offered a 'Taster Session' and a result we now have 7 new recruits attending a bell handling practice on Monday evenings. This is held on bells with the clappers tied and the sound of the bells provided on the 12-bell simulator. There are also one-to-one method ringing practices held on the dummy bell simulator on Monday and Thursday mornings.

Thursday practice nights are from 7.00pm to 9.00pm. This starts with a 6-bell practice which has proved to be very successful in advancing the skills of many of our members in Doubles and Minor methods. Much progress has been made in triples methods of Plain Bob, Grandsire and Stedman. All the band are competent in ringing Plain Hunt on 9 and many have moved on to Plain Hunt on 11 in more recent months. The ringers have been making progress with Grandsire Caters and hope to add this to our 9.15am to 10.00am Sunday morning repertoire. On the first Thursday evenings of even months, we have been holding 8/10 bell practices. These alternate with 10/12 bell practices held on odd months.

The new light front 8 ring of bells with the sharp 2nd has very much come into its own on those Sunday mornings where we don't have enough physically stronger ringers for the heavier back bells.

As well as ringing for Funerals and Weddings at both St Michael's and St Joseph's the St Michael's ringers rang out for the National Bellringing Commemorations on 6th June for the 80th Anniversary of the 1944 D-Day Landings.

There were five peal attempts on the bells, all were successful:

Saturday 27 January	Essex Association - 5016 changes Little Bob Maximus
Saturday 2 March	Society Royal Cumberland Youths - 5136 changes Bristol Surprise Maximus
Saturday 11 May	Ely Diocesan Association - 5042 changes Cambridge Surprise Maximus
Saturday 5 October	Hertford County Association - 5037 changes Grandsire Cinques
Saturday 30 November	Hertford County Association - 5018 changes Stedman Cinques

The peal bands for the January, October and November included local ringers.

There were 13 quarter peals attempts, all were successful, local ringers took part in all but one:

Sunday 24 March	1260 changes Plain Bob Doubles
Sunday 28 April	1320 changes Plain Bob Cinques
Monday 6 May	1346 changes Yorkshire Surprise Maximus
Saturday 29 June	1289 changes Stedman Caters
Saturday 13 July	1320 changes Plain Bob Maximus (rung on the simulator)
Sunday 14 July	1368 changes Grandsire Caters
Thursday 1 August	1346 changes Cambridge Surprise Maximus
Sunday 3 November	1280 changes Cambridge Surprise Major
Saturday 9 November	1344 changes Bristol Surprise Maximus (rung on the simulator)

Friday 15 November 1320 changes Grandsire Cinques

Thursday 5 December 1295 changes Grandsire Caters

Sunday 22 December 1260 changes Grandsire Triples

Tuesday 24 December 1296 changes Plain Bob Major

There have been visits to the tower by ringing groups including the 2024 Waltham Abbey George W Pipe Trophy band in January, the Society Royal Cumberland Youths for a 'Country' ringing meeting in April, the Young @ Herts group in October and the Essex Association which held an all-day Bristol Surprise Maximus practice on the simulator in November.

Tower 'Open Days' were held on Monday 1st April, Monday 6th May, Sunday 28th July, Saturday 15th September and in conjunction with the Holly Fair on Saturday 7th December.

There were visits from 'uniformed organisations' as a means of introducing young people to ringing. Scouts came in March, Brownies in June and Cubs in November.

The ringers took part in seven Striking competitions:

Saturday 16 March Hayden Cup at Little Hadham with St Michael's entering two bands which finished 1st and 3rd out of 7.

Saturday 18 May NW Essex method competition at Moreton with two St Michael's bands entering which were placed 4th and 6th out of 6.

Saturday 15 June Richard Atkins Trophy at Much Hadham the St Michael's band was placed 6th out of 8.

Saturday 28 September Stan Clark Trophy at Ashdon, the St Michael's band was placed 9th out of 14.

Saturday 28 September Kimpton Cup at Weston, held at the same time as the Stan Clark Trophy, a different band of St Michael's ringers was placed 4th out of 8.

Saturday 26 October Bartram Trophy at Harlow Common, there were 11 entrants but only the top four were placed by the judge. St Michael's entered two bands and one of these came second.

Nick Hughes March 2025