

## Bellringing at All Saints 2018

Ringling took place on most Sundays during the year although shortage of numbers meant that there were some unavoidable cancellations. Our new recruits have made good progress so that the number of cancellations was much less than for 2017. More recruits are, as always, very welcome. We have also been very fortunate in that there are ringers at other churches who come to ring with us on Sunday morning. Additionally we are regularly joined by ringers from elsewhere (principally Tewin and Ware) on practice nights. This provides a mutual benefit in that not only can we ring more advanced methods while ensuring that our newer ringers get the best possible environment in which to learn, but we can keep up and improve the standard of ringing.

As has been publicised already the bells are in need of some maintenance. Routine tasks (eg replacement of ropes) can, and have been carried out by the ringers at their own expense but the bells have become increasingly difficult to ring. In particular the main bell bearings are now around 60 years old and are coming to the end of their lives. In addition the pulleys, which were part of the original installation in 1907, also need some serious attention. We have obtained quotations from three leading bell engineering companies and found that the total cost of the work to be done is £25,000. The ringers have undertaken to take the lead in raising this money and are in the process of writing to charities and local businesses to ask for grants and donations. Members of the church can help as well, either by a direct donation or asking at your own workplace (if you work locally) about grants and donations. In addition, if you have a special day you wish to celebrate, we would be happy to undertake some special ringing for you in exchange for a donation to the appeal fund.

We have continued our practice of attempting quarter peals on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month, alternating with St Andrews. This enables participants to spend an extended time ringing a method, thereby learning it thoroughly. Quarter peals also help new ringers to progress when they take part, and provides them with landmark events in their progress. During the year, regular ringers at All Saints took part in four successful Sunday evening quarter peals. Another quarter peal was rung to celebrate John Kemp's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday while another was rung by a visiting band. Of the successful Sunday evening quarter peals, one was rung as a compliment to Nick Sharp on leaving Hertford Heath and one marked the centenary of the end of WW1. So far, our attempts in 2019 have met with total success.

In addition to the services and quarter peals, we rang for weddings and to mark the election of Hertford's mayor for 2018/19. The ringers also helped with the tower opening during the "hike and ride" event in September.

Looking forward to 2019, there are, so far as I am aware, no major national or local occasions to mark so my intention is that we continue striving to improve our ringing and to help our newer ringers progress as much as possible.

Please remember that anyone who wants to learn more about bells and bellringing is always welcome to visit the tower during our practices (1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 7.45pm)

Alastair Stracey

Ringling Master