

ANCIENT SOCIETY OF COLLEGE YOUTHS

TOWER REPORTS for 2010



1. ST GILES-WITHOUT-CRIPPLEGATE

Secretary: Gwen Rogers

Steeplekeeper: John P W Taylor

➤ Secretary's Report

Service Ringing

With the help of the Foster Lane band there has been ringing for the Parish Eucharist on the second Sunday each month. On the first Sundays the 8-bell practice starts with open ringing to mark the day, if not actually before or after a service. Other services for which the bells were rung include the Rector's 10th. Anniversary, All Souls, Palm Sunday aka. Donkey Sunday, the Ringers' Advent Carol Service, the Parish Carol Service and Christmas Day. In addition to the Foster Lane ringers, regular support came from St. Paul's Cathedral, Stepney and the Middlesex County Association.

Ringling was also provided for two weddings

Practices and Quarter Peals

	2009	2010
Cripplegate	-	14
ASCY	16	8
SRCY	4	1
Middx CA & LDG	9	-
Southwark Cathedral Guild	2	-
ULSCR	-	1
Leeds Parish Church	1	-
St Martin-in-the-Fields	1	-
Alan Pink's Band	1	-
Melbourne, Derbys	-	1
Exeter	-	1

In 2009 we started teaching bell handling to two parishioners and both have helped with service ringing in 2010, on one occasion making six instead of four. A year ago we intended to trial a monthly eight bell practice on first Sundays. I believe the trial has proved worthwhile. The practice has been well supported by ringers from Foster Lane and Stepney. The remit of rounds to right-placed surprise major has been achieved on most occasions. In November, on the day after the Dinner, extra support from Society members, and a friend from another Society, made possible London S Major and Spliced S Minor (the Cambridge group).

Peals

There were 10 attempts during the year, of which 7 were scored; 2 by the Society, 1 by the Society of Royal Cumberland Youths and 4 rung non-association.

Tower, Bells and Frame

Many ringers have reported problems with bells 4 to 7, especially 4 and 5. These are all hung on the north side of the tower and swing in the same direction as the tenor. Alan Frost made an inspection of tower, bells and frame at the Society's November practice, which involved attempts by 2 members to ring 11th and tenor on opposite strokes simultaneously, with mixed results. His report recommends work on the frame and comments on the tower movement which, while not dangerous, is sufficient to make bells "suck and blow". I have also corresponded with Alan Hughes of Whitechapel who suggested, as an experiment, re-hanging one of the bells in new bearings but warned that this may accentuate the handling problems because ringers will not need to pull as hard. If the mobile telephone transmission equipment is not installed in the bell chamber I will request funding for the frame maintenance and new bearings for the 4th. in 2011.

➤ **Steeplekeeper's Report**

Condition of Bells and Fittings

In general, everything is in reasonable condition. However, there are three issues to report:

Frame

On 9 November 2010, Alan Frost inspected the bells, frame and tower while we were ringing. He noted that there was slight movement at some of the frame junctions. This may explain some of the difficulty of bells 4 to 7.

5th Pulley

I noted in my last report that the 5th pulley can rub against the pulley block. It is not noticeably worse after a year but will need attention soon.

Odd-struckness

The 11th and tenor have become unacceptably quick at handstroke.

Summary of Work Done

Stays

The stay of the 4th was replaced on 1 March 2010 and that of the 2nd on 4 January 2011.

Whites

Whites came for routine maintenance on 25 May 2010.

Clapper

The 10th clapper was rebushed by Whites on 11 August 2010.

Odd-struckness was corrected for the sharp 2nd using the twiddle pins on the 11 October 2010. The 11th has also been adjusted on a number of occasions since then, but it does not have twiddle pins: the current tapered washers are not nearly as effective as the twopenny piece in place for the weeks leading up to the 28 November 2010.

Rope bosses

We have now finished replacing noisy rope bosses with quieter ones. Eleven of them are Whites' solid metal design, that of the 8 is wood and the sharp 2nd is unchanged. The final two (2 and 12) were installed on 17 February 2010 – these Peter Gardner had taken away to machine down to fit against the ceiling beams. Many thanks to Peter for all of his help.



2. ST LAWRENCE JEWRY

Secretary: Rebecca L Sugden

Steeplekeeper: David G Maynard

➤ **Secretary's Report**

This year has been quieter than 2009, as we have had a Vicar in residence for the whole year and therefore we haven't been able to have as many peal attempts. There have been 8 successful peals this year, including a peal in December to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the destruction of the church and bells. There have also been 6 visiting bands and 5 quarter peals. Service ringing has been provided for the usual Corporation events and 3 weddings. I would like to say a big thank you to all members who have come out to ring for these events over the year. Most of the service ringing at Jewry isn't at the most convenient of times and therefore I am grateful to those who have given up their time to ring for these events.

Jewry are by no means being used to the maximum. The agreement with the Vicar is that there can be one peal (generally on Saturdays) and 3-4 visiting bands/practices/quarter peals per month. Current usage is well below, as such I would encourage members to consider using Jewry whenever they are looking to organise peals or events in London.

➤ **Steeplekeeper's Report**

We finally took delivery of the new ropes in May this year. I would like to thank all those who helped me with putting them on, especially Becky, Martin and Peter. The ropes had been on order for two years and it is a great relief to have them in place. The Vicar reported an issue with the clock chimes, but I was unable to find anything physically wrong with the chiming mechanism and the problem was resolved by the clock manufacturers. There have been no more broken stays or incursions by pigeons this year so the routine maintenance has been small.



3. ST MAGNUS THE MARTYR

Secretary: Dickon R Love

Steeplekeeper: James H Foster

➤ Secretary's Report

2010 has been a very busy year at St Magnus. Service ringing has been provided for 55 services, there have been 50 practices, 21 visiting ringers, 54 quarter peal attempts (41 successful) and 53 peal attempts (42 successful). This is the greatest number of peals rung in a City Tower ever, beating the record set in 1933 at Bishopsgate (which was 31 peals) and the 4th leading peal tower in the world in 2010.

The ringing room has also been used as a handbell venue with 3 peal attempts, of which 1 was successful. The ringing room is available to be used as a handbell venue and the chairs appear to be quite comfortable for such things.

One highlight of the year was the Eliminators for the National 12-Bell Contest which were staged at St Magnus on 27th March. My thanks go to all those people who helped on the day from teas to stewarding.

The parish is thrilled with all the ringing that takes, particularly on Sundays. My particular thanks go to Peter Valuks who has run the ringing on a Sunday during the year. Virtually all of the peals (which were virtually all rung at the weekend) were rung with the sound control open. Apart from some choice comments from a security guard at St Magnus House, there have been no complaints, while there have been several comments appreciating the bells. Even the Prime Minister was spotted listening to part of a Cumberland peal with his family.

This year saw the first peals on the back ten and back eight; the first peal on the back ten was on the 70th anniversary of the last peal on the old ten.

The Middlesex CA has been making good use of the bells, holding regular monthly practices on the 2nd Friday of the month, and quarter peals on the 1st Sunday of the month. It was good to see a number of members achieve 12 bell milestones.

During the year the Trustees agreed to recommend that the St Magnus the Martyr Bells Fund be continued to look after the finances of the tower. This recommendation is to be considered by the PCC on 20th January and is expected to be accepted. The Trustees during the year were Paul Mounsey (Chairman), John Hughes-D'Aeth, David Hilling, Dickon Love and Fr Philip Warner. James Foster was elected a trustee at the last meeting, and David Hilling announced his resignation, to take effect at a suitable time after the Independent Examination of the 2010 accounts. David has worked very hard as Trustee Treasurer and we are very grateful for the hours he has put in.

➤ Steeple Keeper's Report

2010 has been a year for making adjustments to the "bedding-in" process of the bells and fittings. The Whitechapel 1 year service resulted in a handful of remedial actions, but nothing of any great import.

The main focus throughout the year has been on acoustics, with continued work on internal acoustics to make the sound of the bells clear and uniform in the ringing chamber. A project is currently under way to install external acoustics and block openings to the bell chamber. Large panels of sound-proofing material have been purchased, and will shortly be put into place. This will greatly increase the efficacy of sound-control when needed.

Day-to-day work continues with rope splicing, and a new stay was recently put on the 7th. We have also had the peal board of the first peal of Surprise Minor in the City restored and regilded by Peter Rumley (who donated the gold and the work).

Ringling Statistics

Peals and Quarters

	2009	2010
Tower bells		
Quarter peals	26	41
(Quarter peals lost)	3	12
Peals	3	42
(Peals lost)	0	10
Handbells		
Quarter peals	0	0
(Quarter peals lost)	0	0
Peals	0	1
(Peals lost)	0	2

Practice Nights

ASCY	16
Middx CA & London DG	14
Southwark Society	6
SRCY	6
ULSCR	3
Cornhill Ringers	1
Hampstead	1
Hertford CA	1
St Mary Abbotts Guild	1
Surrey Assn	1

Visiting Bands

Southwark Cathedral	2
Amersham	1
Bristol	1
Canterbury Cathedral	1
Essex	1
Exeter	1
Faraday	1
Guildford Cathedral	1
Leeds	1
Lympe & Hythe	1
Maidstone & Tonbridge Districts	1
Melbourne	1
Reading	1
Smarden	1
Southampton	1
St Martin-in-the-Fields	1
Stockton-on-Tees	1
University of Bristol	1
Worcester Cathedral	1
York Minster	1

Peals

ASCY	10
St James' Guild	6
Non Assn	5
SRCY	4
Guild of St Magnus	3
St Olave's Society	2
Amersham Guild	1
Cambridge University Guild	1
Chester Diocesan Guild	1
Durham University Society	1
East Meets West	1
Friends of Dorothy Society	1
Friends of Percy	1
Guild of Devonshire Ringers	1
St Martin's Guild	1
St Paul's Guild	1
University of Bristol Society	1
Yorkshire Association	1



4. ST MICHAEL CORNHILL

Secretary: Antony R Kench

Steeplekeeper: William Dawson

➤ **Secretary's Report**

The major event of 2010 was obviously finally achieving a very positive judgment from the Chancellor of the Diocese of London, and a faculty to go ahead with a new true-harmonic 32cwt ring of 12 for Cornhill; the faculty was received in August. The cost meanwhile had increased by 50% to £195,000 and substantial additional funding had to be raised; in fact an additional £90,000 has been most generously given, with £20,000 of Gift Aid associated, for which everyone's extremely grateful. Some of the extra came from parishioners, which was nice, but all the rest has come from ringers at Cornhill and members of the Society, with the 11th being donated by the Society's Bell Fund. After a final round of affirmation by the PCC, the order was placed with Taylors in November, and the first four bells were cast in November. The schedule now is that the old bells will come out in mid-February, the casting of the new bells will be completed in the third week of February, and the new bells will be delivered for consecration in the church by the Bishop of London on Sunday April 3rd during the morning service. We hope the new bells will be ringing some time in May.

Meanwhile the bells have again been rung after 44 Sunday services in 2010, and on Christmas Day; also for all 5 major midweek choral services plus the Drapers' service and 2 parish weddings, so we've met the church's service ringing expectations pretty well, and sustained a lot of good will for the Society. Service ringing has generally been to a high standard, and much appreciated by the church. My personal thanks to all those who have been kind enough to take part.

As well as all the usual Society practices, we've had Cumberland and Southwark practices and visitors from Essex, Kent, Oxfordshire, 'Young Ringers' and St Vedast. We've also held monthly practices based on the midweek service band, which have attracted back some ringers who don't otherwise do much ringing these days. There were 5 peal attempts during 2010, 4 successful: Bristol Max by Matthew Hilling's ASCY band, Cambridge Max by Gordon Birks' band, Stedman Caters by Richard Smith's Cambridge band - the 200th peal in the tower and the first-ever of Caters - and Stedman Cinques by Michael Uphill's Surrey band.

Net income to the Society Bell Fund from peal attempts, visiting band donations and excess from weddings in 2010 was £488, which was 27% up on last year. A copy of this report is being lodged in the Ringing Records binder in the Cornhill ringing room.

➤ **Steeplekeeper's Report**

Nothing to report on the current bells; no expenditure incurred.



5. ST SEPULCHRE-WITHOUT-NEWGATE

Secretary: Katherine L Town

Steeplekeeper: Martin L Cansdale

➤ **Secretary's Report**

Since taking over from Katie during the last year, ringing has continued much as usual at St Sepulchre. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Katie for all her sterling efforts of recent years, which have been appreciated by everyone.

2010 has seen 8 peal attempts, of which 5 were successful. There were 3 quarters, 15 practices and 3 outing visits during the year. This seems to be slightly down on recent activity, possibly because of the explosion in demand for ringing on the new bells at St Magnus.

The restrictive ringing policy that has been agreed with the church, which currently limits ringing to 1 evening per week and 2 weekends per month, has meant that a number of requests for the bells have sadly been unfulfilled. The situation with having a habited flat above the porch means that the policy is unlikely to be able to be relaxed for the foreseeable future. Additionally, the regular Tuesday services, which have a habit of running into practice time, are unlikely to change anytime soon.

Income for the year was £450, and outgoings £1800 for a new set of ropes, leaving the current bell fund at £2596 (2600).

As the steeple keeper will/has mention, the new ringing chamber floor scheme is underway, and there is a plan afoot to upgrade the lighting.

Ringing for services before College Youths practices at the tower will continue, and I would ask if anyone who is able to ring for half an hour from 5:45pm on such occasions and who haven't received a reminder from me previously to please let me know.

➤ **Steeplekeeper's Report**

This year at St Sepulchre has seen the usual routine maintenance, as well as the clearing and tidying of the cupboard leading into the roof space. Much of the plastic netting left in the ringing room during the work on the roof has been moved into the defunct spiral staircase up to the bells.

The year has also seen some progress on longer term projects. The long awaited set of new ropes arrived last September. All twelve ropes have been put on, and appear satisfactory.

I have received an updated quotation for the materials for replacing the ringing room floor. This is in line with the previous quotation, at £815 including VAT and delivery. I am currently in discussions with the supplier over delivery times, but am otherwise ready to place the order.

After a visit to the tower Alan Frost, the church architect, suggested replacing the current light fittings in the ringing room with brighter halogen fittings. I would suggest that this is investigated after the completion of the work on the floor, when the size of any surplus from the £2000 set aside from Society funds for the floor is known. This work would ideally coincide with the replacement of the faulty light fittings on the tower stairs.



6. ST MARY-LE-BOW

Steeplekeeper: Simon S Meyer

St Mary-le-Bow is not a Society tower, but we have strong links and are grateful to receive their annual report.

I think there has been even more ringing at Bow in 2010 than in 2009. The society was welcomed on 8 occasions for practices and there have been 11 peals in the tower during the year, one of which was in hand. 8 of the peals were for the society. We have also rung for all the feast days that we were asked to ring for, which is a major factor in maintaining the excellent relationships we have with the church authorities.

We had a couple of evening occasions to ring for during the year & organising quarters for these appears to have been a successful approach. These have also provided some of the regular supporters an opportunity which they might not otherwise have had.

It is interesting that we have managed a fairly high standard of ringing for services at Bow, higher than you would expect from the mixed band. I think we see a similar phenomenon to St Pauls where those who ring the bells regularly are able to turn out a better product.

October saw the London 12 bell competition at Bow. It appeared to run very smoothly & the bells certainly differentiated the teams, as one would expect. We needed to make it easy for the judges given that they only came from Birmingham!

The Rector discussed the possibility of handbells in the carol service with me once again but we decided that it would be better to perhaps do this every couple of years, both to provide variety & because it is a lot of commitment for a very short piece of ringing. Perhaps we'll do this again in 2011 so some of you can expect to be approached later in the year.

On the maintenance front I think the only thing we have had to do was to replace the 4th stay at the back end of the year.

The other aspect I have been investigating is the replacement of the tune machine. The current setup has a poor repertoire & is not particularly reliable – in fact it completely packed up over the Christmas period & needed repair works carrying out.

There are a number of options here and I am working with the church authorities to establish the best plan.

Relationships with the Rector remain strong & he once again joined us for the anniversary dinner, the London ringers' carol service & drinks in the tower before the parish carol service.

Do not underestimate the power of Revd Bush! He has had the route of the marathon in the Olympics diverted to go past St Mary le Bow and is now working with the churches on the route to ensure they maximise this opportunity. There is a meeting of interested parties at St Mary le Bow on Wednesday 19th January at 5pm so if your church is on the route you may want to ensure you are represented.

The diary for 2011 is already looking full with the usual range of services, a good number of peals already booked & additional events such as the Royal wedding to ring for. We also have the 50th anniversary of the dedication of the current ring on 21st December which I intend to mark in an appropriate manner.

I look forward to the continued support from the society & its members which is so important to maintaining the ringing at Bow.