

## Bell Ringing in Cape Town



St. Georges Cathedral, Cape Town, is the oldest cathedral in South Africa, built with sandstone from the nearby Table Mountain. It played a pivotal role during apartheid, as its doors were kept open to all races. It was the place where Archbishop Desmond Tutu would preach and first referred to the nation of South Africa as “Rainbow People”.

It was also here that, during a memorial service for Nelson Mandela, the bell was tolled 95 times.

Before visiting, we looked up the tower details on the online version of “Dove’s Guide to Church Bells” and emailed the tower captain. We were invited to the practice on Tuesday night.

The bell tower is separate to the Cathedral and has 10 bells. Everyone made us very welcome and we were encouraged to try different bells. We were happy to end the evening with no broken stays or injuries and pleased that we could say that we had rung the bells in Cape Town.

However, they asked us to return to ring for the Sunday service! All went well at first, then the call went out for “perfect rounds”; this is a joke amongst ringers and is what we all aspire to achieve.



I lost concentration for a split second and didn’t pull through enough on my back stroke, so my bell didn’t quite reach the balance point and came back down too quickly. I tried to recover, but pulled too much and bounced off the stay; Cliff was trying to follow me so this put him out of time as well.

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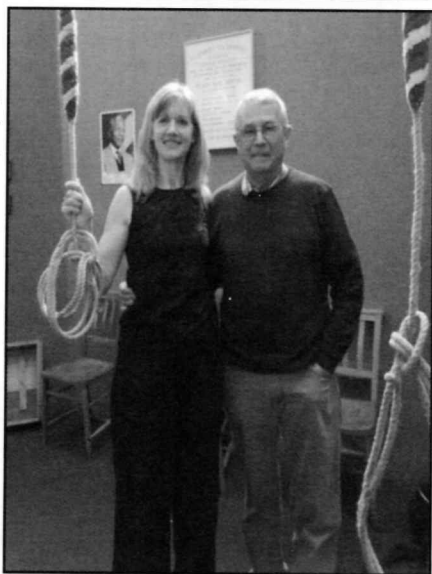
## Church News

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Amongst the clanging of the bells, a call went out to "stand" and all was silent, apart from us trying to catch our breath, and laughter from the other ringers.

They are such a friendly bunch of people and were happy to encourage us to ring. They didn't mind that we were not perfect. We had a great time and have of course invited them to ring at St. Peters in Great Totham. So listen out for us practising on a Friday night and for perfect rounds on a Sunday morning.

*Vanessa Ellams*



### **Are you interested in being a Summer Reading Challenge Volunteer?**

Essex Libraries are looking for volunteers aged 14 or over to help children develop their enjoyment of reading through Space Chase, the Summer Reading Challenge 2019.

Every year thousands of children across the county come to the library to take part in a fun reading activity during the summer holidays. The challenge is to read six books and their reward is stickers and a medal.

As a volunteer you'll help library staff to:

- Join children to the Summer Reading Challenge;
- Talk to children (mainly aged 4 to 11) about their books;
- Hand out stickers and rewards.

You'll have fun and gain new skills - and it's great for your CV!

We are looking for volunteers who can commit to a minimum of 18 hours from Saturday, 20 July to Monday, 2 September.

Apply online at [www.libraries.essex.gov.uk](http://www.libraries.essex.gov.uk)

Applications are open until 16 June and the process is quick and easy, so help us to have a blast this summer!