



National Twelve-Bell Striking Contest

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

Press Release For immediate use

Oranges & Lemons (say the bells of St. Martin's, St. Magnus & Shoreditch)

The sound of Church bells is something we all take for granted. For some it conjures up a quintessentially English summer's day, for others a much-loved nursery rhyme.

The opportunity to hear bellringing at its very best will take place at three towers in London on **Saturday 27th March 2010**. 21 teams of 12 ringers will battle it out to qualify for the final of the **National 12-bell Striking Contest** and the competition will be fierce.

Teams are drawn from across the country: from Exeter to Stockton-on-Tees; from Bristol to Norwich, and from huge Cathedrals (St. Paul's in London) to small country parishes. (All Saints in Hursley, Hampshire.) Ringers range in age from teenagers to septuagenarians, and in a wide variety of professions too.

Bellringing is an ancient art, going back many centuries, but while it retains its history, it continues to develop. The contest itself is only 35 years old and the Chief Judge will, for the first time, be a woman: Margaret Whiteley.

The team from Birmingham has won the competition 16 times since the competition started in 1975. Will anyone be able to topple them? Will the new kids on the block from Leeds provide the upset of the year? "With such a fabulous selection of bells to ring on, the emphasis will be focussed on brain, not brawn this year." Said Peter Sanderson, Chairman of the Contest. "It will make the final in Crediton one of the toughest we have ever had."

You don't have to wait until you grow rich to listen to the bells of Shoreditch. Ringing takes place at all three churches - St. Martin-in-the-Fields in Trafalgar Square, St. Magnus the Martyr near the Monument and St. Leonard's on Shoreditch High Street - from 1130–1500. All are welcome.

Notes to Editors

Ringling usually takes place on 6, 8, 10 or 12 bells with considerable accuracy being required for the higher numbers. Thus this competition is regarded as being the crème de la crème of ringling activity. There are over 7,000 churches in Great Britain which have a ringling peal of bells, of which only 132 have 12 bells.

The eliminators take place at St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square, WC2N 4JJ, St. Magnus the Martyr, Lower Thames St, EC3R 6DN and St. Leonard's Shoreditch, Shoreditch High Street, N1 6NN. Each one has an historic bell tower, yet each one has had a new ring of bells installed recently.

Relevant literary quote: "From time to time complaints are made about the ringling of church bells. It seems strange that a generation which tolerates the uproar of the internal combustion engine and the wailing of the jazz band should be so sensitive to the one loud noise that is made to the glory of God. England, alone in the world, has perfected the art of change-ringling and the true ringling of

bells by rope and wheel, and will not lightly surrender her unique heritage” (Dorothy L Sayers ‘The Nine Tailors’)

Opportunities for photographs, interviews, sound recording and filming at any one of the three churches on the day (before the contest starts) may be made by contacting Ms George Unsworth on gu202@cam.ac.uk or 07736 616662. Further details of the competition can be found at www.12bell.org.uk.