

HAYES

The square west 15th century tower of three storeys and modern battlemented parapet, is topped by a 12 ft conical spire added c.1796 and bears graffiti. It is known as a beacon tower because above the louvres is a small oblong opening on each wall enabling the lookout to observe when beacons are lit in the surrounding area. The outside walls are 5 ft thick: inside the ringing chamber is a square hole in one of the outside walls, a remnant of the days when wooden beams were inserted to enable bells or materials to be hoisted from the ground floor. The thickness of the outside wall is demonstrated to visitors by inserting a broomstick pole, most of which disappears.

Above the ringing chamber survives a 21 ft long mediaeval staircase, the rungs constructed of split logs. Displayed in the ringing chamber is a set of wooden bells one sixth of the size of the original bells, turned by Charles and Clive Hammond, from the ancient beam removed from the tower during restoration.

Details of the original six bells:-

Treble	5-2-22	cast by J Warner in 1890
		Inscribed - John Godding, MA Rector
2 nd	6-1-23	cast by J Warner in 1890
		Inscribed - Edward Shackle, Mark B. Morton, Churchwardens
3 rd	6-3-12	cast by T Mears I in 1798
4 th	7-3-3	cast by T Mears I in 1798
5 th	9-2-6	cast by T Mears I in 1793
Tenor	14-0-7	cast by T Mears in 1798
		Inscribed - Edward Knibb, Robert Heel Churchwardens

These bells were recast and redundant metal from Sheffield Cathedral used for extra weight in the tenor of the present ring of eight bells cast in 1970. These bells were installed after a major restoration project which was master-minded by Percival S. Venn, assisted by a band of hard working volunteers.

Before the wall was built during restoration, dividing the first floor ringing chamber from the church, ringing was from the balcony. Early 19th century relationships between the clergy and ringers were fractious, so much so that the ringers would spit down onto the worshippers who entered the church using the door underneath the balcony.

That six new bell ropes cost £3.3s.0d. in 1864 and that payments were made to ringers is some of the information revealed in the Hayes Bellringers' Attendance Book as well as the names of the ringers in 1891:- F Smith - Captain, G Burr - Vice Captain, Prickett, Jno Funnell, J Bolton, Alfred Chilton, T Barnes, G Tilbury and Alfred Batt. At the 1894 meeting it was decided, should any member be fifteen minutes late for ringing, he should be fined 4d., as absent, and 2d. if late by less than fifteen minutes.

Wooden peal boards commemorate some of the peals rung from the time of the present bells. One in particular was created from an old piece of the No. 1 witness box at the Old Bailey.

Source: A H Cox, *LMAS Survey of Middlesex Parish Churches*, 1952; Church guide, (n.d.); Metropolitan Archives, Ref.DRO/47/B1/1; Percy S Venn; Anita Adams; Whitechapel Bell Foundry records; Ronald K Russ and Christopher J Venn, *Ringing world* March 20 1970 p 206 .