

LIMEHOUSE

At the west end of the church is the massive tower completed in 1719, surmounted by a pinnacled octagonal lantern, intended as a nautical landmark for vessels using Limehouse Reach and the Port of London. It can be seen from the hilltop Royal Observatory and the Royal Naval College at Greenwich on whose central axis it is precisely aligned, and now can be seen whilst travelling on the Docklands Light Railway. **VP: Beware – The following names were copied from a book. Am I able to repeat it?** Those who worked to build the church and tower were the masons Edward Strong, Edward Tufnell, Christopher Cass, and Thomas Dunn, and the carpenters Robert Jelfe, James Grove and John Meard.

The largest bell, the hour bell, is said to weigh 17cwt 2qrs 24lbs.: the tower clock made by John Moore of Clerkenwell was London's main timepiece before Big Ben in 1857.

John Adams was Churchwarden in 1849. At his insistence the church was insured with the Imperial Fire Office: at seven o'clock on Good Friday morning in 1850 the disastrous fire started. The Curate, the Revd. G Roberts saved all the parish documents and registers. Three hours later most of the church furnishings were destroyed. The tower survived but the single 38cwt Whitechapel bell did not; it was inscribed: *At proper times my voice I'll raise and sing to my subscribers praise.*

Care for St. Anne's was founded in 1980 with appeals for funds to reverse the onslaught of dereliction, and generous funding from the London Docklands Development Corporation enabled repairs to begin. In 1990 the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings supported the restoration of the tower.

The ring of eight bells from St. Peter, Walworth was removed by Messrs. Eayre & Smith who attended to headstocks after the bells were tuned at the Whitechapel Bell Foundry and sent to St. Anne's. The Middlesex and the Surrey Associations supplied the voluntary labour to reduce costs. The Dedication Service took place on May 11th, 1997 and included the hymn specially written by the Revd. Chris Idle for the 250th anniversary of the Church in 1980: *Towering over road and river stands this house of prayer.*

Source: The Friends of St. Anne's Limehouse Appeal Leaflet, (n.d.); Care for St. Anne's Appeal Leaflet, (n.d.); St. Anne's Church - The Open Churches Trust, (n.d.); Basil F L Clarke, *Parish Churches of London* 1966, pp 154-5; Lynden Hansford and Roger Booth, *Ringing World* July 14, 1995, pp 733-4; Roger Booth, *Ringing World* February 7, 1997, p 134; *Ringing World* May 2, 1997, p 472.