

Ringling at Hesse in Memoriam – Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

On the evening of Thursday 8th September, we had just started ringing a quarter peal at 6.30 p.m. to celebrate the forthcoming marriage of a friend of two of our ringers when we received the news that Her Majesty the Queen had passed away. That was the end of our ringing for that evening. Early the next morning, Barry, Stuart and Sam went up the tower to fit muffles (circular pieces of leather with Velcro straps) to both sides of the clappers for each of the bells, except the tenor (the heaviest bell) which was only muffled on one stroke. Ringing fully muffled in this manner is something which is only done on very rare occasions, one of them being the death of the reigning monarch, and it makes a solemn sound with the tenor tolling on alternate strokes.

The arrangements for ringing to mark the passing of the Queen were something the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers had agreed some time ago, in consultation with the Church of England and the Royal Household. At 12 noon on Friday 9th September, along with bells throughout the United Kingdom and further afield, All Saints' bells were rung to mark the passing of Her Majesty.

All Saints, Hesse. Friday 9th September 2022 (13–3–4 in F#). General Ringing

Christine E Pictor	Rosalyn Smyth
N Stuart Pictor	Nicholas J Hodgson
Barry K Baxter	Abigail L Morris
Rosina M Baxter	Huw Griffiths
Samantha Hessey	Victoria Y Welborn

Rung fully muffled with the tenor open at backstroke. In memoriam Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

The muffles then had to be taken off because, according to protocol, following the proclamation of King Charles III on Saturday 10th September any ringing on the bells had to be open (i.e. unmuffled) until after 1 p.m. the next day. This was fortunate for the couple who were married at All Saints' Church that Saturday as their wedding bells could be rung open – muffled mournful bells are probably not appropriate to celebrate a marriage!

In the meantime, after the ringing on Friday, Ros and Barry set off for a holiday in North Wales with a group of ringing friends. We rang muffled quarter peals (a set piece of ringing lasting around 45 minutes) in memory of the Queen at St Peter's Church in Ruthin, Denbighshire on the evening of Friday 9th September and at the Church of St Oswald King and Martyr in Oswestry in Shropshire on the afternoon of Sunday 11th September. On Monday 12th, Stuart and Christine joined the group in North Wales and during the rest of the week we rang to mark the Queen's passing at several other towers in the area, some that otherwise would not have been rung due to lack of sufficient ringers in the local band.

Our ringing for the Sunday morning Eucharist at Hesse on 18th September was fully muffled and we then rang again before the Commemoration Service later in the day.

All Saints, Hesse, Sunday 18th September 2022 (13–3–4 in F#). General Ringing

Gary A Hornsby	Samantha Hessey
Christine E Pictor	John E Griffiths
N Stuart Pictor	Huw Griffiths
Barry K Baxter	Matthew Walker
Rosina M Baxter	

Prior to the local Special Commemoration Service marking the death of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

The hour prior to the funeral on Monday 19th September was again a time of solemn ringing nationally. We rang a quarter peal starting at 10 a.m. and then tolled the tenor up to 11 a.m. when the funeral service began in Westminster Abbey.



The ringers just before the quarter peal (*Photo: Huw Griffiths*)

All Saints, Hessle, Monday 19th September 2022 in 52 minutes (13–3–4 in F#)

1320 Plain Bob Doubles with 7, 6, 8 covering.

1 Abigail L Morris

2 Christine E Pictor

3 N Stuart Pictor

4 Rosina M Baxter

5 Barry K Baxter (Conductor)

6 John E Griffiths

7 Nicholas J Hodgson

8 Samantha Hessey

Rung fully muffled with the tenor open at backstroke prior to the funeral of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II at Westminster Abbey.



During the quarter peal (*Photo: Huw Griffiths*)

Funeral ringing over, all that remained was to go up the tower later in the week to remove the muffles. One set of these will be brought out and used for half-muffled ringing on Remembrance Sunday in November, but it will hopefully be many years before both sets are needed to ring the bells fully muffled again.

Ros Baxter