

EA CR



NEWSLETTER

No. 4

August, 1989

Several events have taken place since the last NEWSLETTER and these are reported here. I would particularly like to thank all those who made an effort to ring for Essex Heritage Year. I hope many people will read the article about the Central Council Survey either in this Newsletter or the reports in *The Ringing World* and put forward their views either at district meetings or to me. I would be grateful if as many people as possible who have attended Association dinners over the last few years would fill in the enclosed questionnaire (please photocopy or obtain extra copies from myself or your District Secretary.)

AFC

Essex Heritage Year

As requested by the Archdeacon of Southend, bells throughout Essex rang out during the afternoon of Saturday 13th May to ring in the Festival of Pentecost and for Essex Heritage Year. A peal was rung at Coggeshall and successful quarters were rung at Thorpe Bay, Bowers Gifford, Fobbing, Langdon Hills, Rochford, North Ockendon, Ingrave, Downham, Rettendon, Shenfield, Little Horkeesley, Wormingford, Manuden, Colchester (Shrub End), Gosfield, Braintree, Inworth, Tolleshunt D'Arcy, Great Totham, Maldon (SMV), Sandon and Rayne. Quarter peal attempts were made at Witham, Rayleigh, Bocking, Halstead and Colchester (St Leonard), and general ringing took place at Little Waltham, Great Parndon, Henham, Mazeing, Epping Upland, Felstead, Colchester (St Peter), Kirby-le-Soken, High Easter, Maldon (All Saints), Purleigh, South Benfleet and Vethersfield. Many thanks to all who rang especially those who just turned out for general ringing.

In connection with Essex Heritage Year, Simon Foyser (PRO) mounted an Association display in the "Treasures of Essex Churches" exhibition which was staged in Chelmsford Cathedral during May.

A.G.M. 1989

A successful Annual General Meeting was held on Monday 1st May. We were pleased to welcome our President, the Bishop of Chelmsford who gave the address at the service preceding the meeting. Before the meeting commenced, Liz Hull presented the Master with a cheque for £200 representing profits from the sale of Webb Ivory goods.

The accounts were adopted, after queries had been answered, as was the Annual Report. The motion proposing a junior membership subscription was defeated, mainly because many members felt that £4 is not very much especially compared to subscriptions charged by other youth organisations. There was also a lot of discussion on the motion limiting the number of Life Vice-Presidents to 12, but this was left on the table with a view to the Committee making a firm proposal for the next AGM.

All the existing Honorary Officers were elected. Following a ballot for the four Central Council Representatives for the triennium starting 1990, John Armstrong, Fred Bone, David Sloman and Frank Lufkin were elected.

Bernard Fairhead (Colchester, St Leonard) was elected a Life Vice-President, and Lewis Castledon (Great Dunmow), Geoff Isgar and Stan Leech (Great Holland) were elected Life Members.

"Unringables" Seminar

The Association is planning to run a seminar for representatives from churches with unringable bells on the afternoon of Saturday 11th November 1989. It is intended to have speakers providing information on various aspects of a bell restoration project. The seminar will take place at Danbury Church Hall and letters of invitation have been sent to all PCCs of churches with unringable bells. If YOU have a contact at any of these churches, please make sure they know about the seminar and encourage someone, either from the PCC or parish, to attend. Please contact Ann Chapman for further information.

Striking Competitions

The Association took part in the Ridgman Trophy 10-bell striking competition held at Peterborough Cathedral in April. Eight teams from East Anglia participated and the competition was won by the Suffolk Guild. Essex did not do too well and only managed 5th place.

In June, a 'Chelmsford' band rang in the finals of the National 12 bell competition which was held at St Mary Redcliffe, Bristol, and came 8th (out of 8!).

The Association 6-bell finals were held at Fyfield with 9 teams ringing. Despite a last minute panic with judge availability, both Roy Meads and Frances Haynes were able to come (the former having only returned from Seattle the night before) and were ably assisted by Pat Saltmarsh (Sandon) who had kindly agreed to help out. The results were:-

Chelmsford Cathedral (28 faults), Downham (36%), Kirby-le-Soken (36%), Prittlewell (47), Dagenham (56%), Braintree (60), Witham (70), Colchester (St Leonard) (71), Little Waltham (77).

The 8-bell inter-district competition was held in the evening at Hatfield Broad Oak. Unfortunately a rope broke during the final team's (Northern District) practice but this was soon spliced by Adrian Semken. The results were: South-West (60), Southern (97), South-East (111), North-East (114), Northern (121) and North-West (184).

C. C. Seminar

The Towers & Belfries Committee of the Central Council is organising a seminar on Saturday 7th October entitled "How to do a bell inspection" in Warwickshire and Berkshire and candidates will be taken to a tower and shown the various items normally covered in a bell inspection. Students will then prepare a report, as if for a PCC or similar, of another bell installation. The cost of the seminar is £10. If you are interested and want further information please contact Ann Chapman or see *The Ringing World* (July 28th).

DINNER

The Association Annual Dinner and Dance will be held at the Marconi Club, Beehive Lane, Chelmsford on SATURDAY 21st OCTOBER this year. Tickets (price £14.00) are available from Mrs. A. Chapman, 20 News Court, Chelmsford CM2 9PF - cash with order please (cheques made payable to The Essex Association of Change Ringers) by Saturday 7th October. Tickets can either be posted to you (please enclose SAE) or collected on the night.

If you are a regular attender at the dinner and will not be able to come this year because of the change of date, I would be grateful if you could let me know. Should numbers be significantly reduced, we may have to consider cancelling. It would also be helpful if you could book your tickets early if you are definitely coming.

The 1990 dinner will probably be held at a different venue and some alternatives are being looked at. Tickets will have to be priced much higher though, probably between £16 and £18, and it is possible that the number of places available will be limited to 120 so it will be a strictly first come, first served, basis. If anyone knows of a suitable, centrally located, hall where we could hold the dinner and make use of outside caterers, perhaps you would let me know.

Don't forget to fill in the Dinner Questionnaire and return it to me or any of the District Officers as soon as possible.

1990 CALENDAR

The 1990 Essex Association calendar features pen and ink illustrations of towers from all over the County. It will be available from September, priced £2.00, from your District Officers, or direct from: Helen Harpole, 34 Southsea Avenue, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 2AX (please include 30p for P&P).

C. C. SURVEY

Analyses of the Central Council Survey on the state of ringing in the British Isles which took place on 20th November last year, have been appearing in *The Ringing World* and I hope they have been read with some interest even if some of the statistics are a little difficult to take in.

Some points which I think should be of concern to all ringers are:

i) One-third of our towers are silent on a Sunday and this excludes unringable towers. On the Survey day, the average turnout, as a percentage of the band size, was about 55% which indicates that many towers are struggling to make their bells heard on a Sunday.

ii) There is only about 1 ringer per rope - when you consider that towers in larger towns are probably going to have more ringers than this, there must therefore be a lot of towers, mainly in villages, with less than enough to ring Sunday by Sunday.

iii) Relationships between ringers and the clergy seem somewhat distant. Clergymen could perhaps do more to integrate their ringers with other church activities and conversely ringers could perhaps do more to keep the clergy informed of their activities.

iv) Many tower captains gave no strong opinion on the activities of their local Association, as to whether they were satisfactory or not, and although most encouraged local ringers to join, over a quarter had not attended an Association event in the previous 12 months.

v) Recruitment is generally poor in East Anglia and generally ringing appears to be least healthy in the eastern counties.

Perhaps we could all think about what we as individuals and as an Association can do to improve the situation. Put forward your ideas or thoughts at your next district meeting. I hope to collate all the Central Council articles in one report and if you would like a copy please let me know.

Report Updates

Harlow (Churchgate Street) now practises on Tuesday.

Radwinter - following the death of Gerald Bacon, the tower correspondent is now Revd B. Macdonald-Milne, The Rectory, Walden Road, Radwinter, Saffron Walden CB10 2SW.

Snippets

A few snippets from *The Ringing World* collated over the last four months:

A quarter was rung at Danbury on 12th February as a compliment to Dick Roast on his 82nd birthday.

On 25th February a Shenfield-based band rang a quarter at Chelmsford Cathedral as a compliment to Revd P. Mason, vicar of Shenfield who was installed as an Honorary Canon.

Eight past and present members of the Girl Guide Movement rang a quarter of Cambridge Major at Danbury on 23rd February to celebrate the centenary of Lady Baden-Powell's birth.

Quarters were rung at Braintree, Gosfield, Great Totham, Hutton, Leyton and Great Baddow for Mothering Sunday.

Peals at Prittlewell and Terling as well as quarters at Downham, Eastwood and Coaley (Glos) were rung for George and Elsie Eve's 50th wedding anniversary.

Over Easter there were quarters rung at Chigwell, Great Totham, Langdon Hills, Rayleigh, Rayne, Halstead, Sawbridgeworth, North Ockendon, Springfield and Barking-side.

Six ladies rang a quarter at Downham on 3rd March for Roger Dorking's birthday.

Stan Clark of Fyfield celebrated 70 years membership of the Association.

A quarter at Shenfield on 19th May was rung as a compliment to Jill Evans, installed as the president of the Brentwood Deanery of the Mothers' Union.

Jack Crampion (Life Member) made the front page when he became the first person to circle the tower to peals at St Paul's Cathedral.

CONGRATULATIONS

- Births:** Richard George to Janice and David Spalding
Martin Andrew to Julie and Andrew Hill
- Silver Wedding:** Michael and Janet Edwards
- Golden Wedding:** George and Elsie Eve
- Diamond Wedding:** Dick and Gertie Roast

Around the Districts

Owing to several keen quarter peal ringers being unavailable on the day, the South-East District quarter peal day in June was postponed. However, a successful barbecue was held in the evening with about £85 profit going to bell restoration.

District practices have been re-started on the usual practice night of towers. It is hoped that the local ringers will take advantage of these to ring methods they might not otherwise have sufficient people for or to strengthen the band for simpler methods or rounds and call changes. See the NEWSLETTER calendar for details of remaining practices this year.

In May the Northern District held a very successful Pub Games Evening at the Five Bells in Colne Engaine. Over 50 people enjoyed various games, a buffet and some good beer. A raffle was held and about £80 was raised for bell restoration.

The district striking competition in June at Gosfield attracted an amazing seven bands with Braintree and Witham going to the finals. In July the Car Treasure Hunt took place in very wet weather, but about 9 cars drove through floods and storm to a barbecue at Wethersfield. Maurice and Kath Downs were the eventual winners.

Several quarters have been rung in the district, ranging from Bob Minor to London Major with several 'firsts' being scored.

22nd August is a Red Letter Day in the Northern District - the District Secretary will reach the grand old age of 40. Any pension books and walking sticks will be gratefully accepted.

The April business meeting of the North-West District also marked the 70th anniversary of Stan Clark's election to Association membership; Roger and Glynis Burberry (former district residents) were welcomed and joined in evening ringing.

Thanks to all involved in the Open Day on Monday 29th May - especially clergy and tower captains. 35 of the district's 36 towers were open and £500 was raised for bell restoration.

Matching ringers held a quiz evening on 16th June which raised £500 for their restoration fund. Teams came from village organisations and local towers; Sawbridgeworth ringers were the winners.

A successful barbecue was held by the Southern District at John and Helen Harpole's home and £136 was raised for bell restoration. There will be a bring and buy stall with a 'Plants' theme at the next district meeting at Brentwood. Any plants or produce (priced if possible) will be gratefully received.

Calendar of Events

September	2	Pentlow & Foxearth - Meeting	Northern
	9	Ilford - Learners Day	South-West
	9	Inworth & Tollesbury - Meeting	South-East
	16	Essex Trophy 10-bell Comp - Ashford	
	16	Brentwood - Meeting	Southern
	22	Sandon - District Practice	South-East
	23	Takeley, Gt Hall. & Hatfield Heath	North-West
October	7	Committee Meeting - Danbury	
	14	Epping - Meeting	South-West
	21	ANNUAL DINNER - CHELMSFORD	
	28	Rickling & Farnham	North-West
November	4	Little Waltham & Terling - Call Change Comp	SE
	4	Ringling Course	Southern
	9	Tollesbury - District Practice	South-East
	11	Barking - Evening Ringing	South-West
	11	Outing - Lowestoft/Yarmouth	Southern
	11	"Unringables" Seminar - Danbury	
	14	Tendring - Meeting	North-East
	17	Children In Need ringing	
	18	South Benfleet - Meeting	Southern
	25	Thaxted - Meeting	North-West
December	9	Social - Barkingside	South-West
	9	Carol Service & Social	South-East
	11	Galleywood - District Practice	South-East
	16	Carol Service	Southern
	16	Carol Service - Great Parndon	North-West
	16	Carol Service - Rayne	Northern
	16	Carol Service - Great Holland	North-East

North-West District: 2nd Friday - Special Practice at Stansted
 4th Friday - Learners' Practice
 5th Saturday - Sawbridgeworth Practice
 5th Tuesday - Saffron Walden Practice

Rayleigh practice, Tuesday 7.00 to 9.00 p.m. Visitors are always welcome, especially on the first Tuesday in the month, when with your help we hope to guarantee 8 bell ringing. DEB

The next issue of the NEWSLETTER is planned for DECEMBER. Any news, views or articles please to Mrs Ann Chapman, 20 News Court, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 9PF (0245 358040) by 18th November 1989.