



No. 28

AUGUST 1997

TOWER:

The Annual Dinner & Dance

As usual the 2nd Saturday in October will be the day, the 8th is the date, and the Benton Hall Golf Club will be the venue. The speakers will be the Ven. Ernie Stroud, the recently retired Archdeacon of Colchester and David Hull, one time Essex ringer who now lives, works and rings in York. The menu is as follows:- we start with Parma Ham with Melon Slices followed by Baked Salmon with White Wine and Chive Sauce, Buttered New Potatoes and a selection of Seasonal Vegetables. For sweet we will have Strawberry Mille Feuille, and to follow there will be Coffee and Mints. There is a choice of a vegetarian main course and for those on a gluten-free diet special arrangements can be made, please let me know when ordering your tickets. As usual there will be a cash wine table and a table to hold the raffle prizes. We rely very much on your generosity for the raffle prizes so if you could possibly bring one along it would help swell the BRF. Those who attended in 1996 will remember that there was a fair selection of real ale and I can report that 1997 will be no difference, and as in past years you can dance in the company of Starlight Disco. The ticket price is £22 which still represents good value when compared with comparable events. We are limited to 120 sitting down so a system of first come first served will operate. Tickets are available by post, from M.A. Bishop, 56 Edinburgh Gardens, Braintree, Essex CM7 9LH. Please include names, including first name, payment and SAE with order, on or before 27th September (Association Training Day!) - PLEASE.

The AGM

This years AGM was, once again, a lovely occasion. The address at the Service was given by the Rev'd. Canon John Brown, Priest-in-Charge at Margaretting. At the meeting itself the Association Officers were returned for another year. We welcomed the Rev'd Canon Anthony Abbey as a new Life Member of the Association. Ann Chapman gave the report on the Association's preparations for the Millennium, you will be hearing more on that in one way or another. You may think that the year 2000 is far away into the future, but when you're planning and co-ordinating the events to celebrate it you start to wish it was even further! For those who weren't at the meeting you should know that both the Master and the Hon. Gen. Secretary gave notice that they would not be seeking election in 1998. Anyone considering being proposed for election to these positions and would like to know what each job involves should contact, in confidence, either David or myself. The skills and requirements for these positions are very different and therefore appeal to different people. I am confident that an Association of nearly 1000 members shouldn't have too much difficulty in electing the right person.

The lunch was prepared by members from the North-Western District and the afternoon was spent ringing in the Northern District, with tea at Castle Hedingham. Our thanks to the Cathedral authorities for allowing us the use of the Cathedral, Chelmsford Age Concern for the use of their facilities for Lunch and to the members of the North-Western and Northern Districts for lunch and tea respectively.

Next years AGM should prove to be exciting with not only the important elections but a chance to hear a sermon from the R no, I shan't tell you just yet, you'll just have to come along and see, won't you??

Michael Bishop

13/14th September 1997

I hope that you will all take advantage of the Central Council's publicity for new recruits which is being launched on 9th September.

Our Open Weekend has been planned to coincide as near as possible with this launch and we hope to get maximum benefit from it.

The Resource Pack, to help you plan what your tower will do, should be distributed with this Newsletter. I hope you find it helpful.

We hope to take out advertisements in you local papers to highlight your towers and what times they will be open to visitors. Please let me know as soon as possible when your plans have been finalised to enable me to include your tower in the "What's On" page of your local paper.

Janet Edwards (01621 816496)

Can YOU Help?

Do you have a contact who could support the "Ring in 2000" project in kind with cheap/free envelopes, paper, card, photocopying, computers(!) (which could be used for simulators) etc. etc? If so, please contact one of the millennium sub-committee.

Southern District Newsletter

As you may have seen in The Ringing World, there was a competition for Newsletters with various prizes being awarded for content, originality etc. etc. The results were published in The Ringing World dated 18th April. The Newsletter produced by Mo Venus for the Southern District was among those commended. Congratulations Mo!

Bell Sunday Poems

The following are poems written by the children of St Mary the Virgin, Kelvedon as part of their Bell Sunday celebrations.

CHURCH BELLS

The Bells ring every Sunday
Calling the people to Church
Hearing them for miles and miles,
For marriages and sometimes for funerals as well
Bells that have rung for 300 years
And bells that are virtually new.

Jeanette Andrews

THE BELLS

The bells ring out, they seem to shout,
"Hey Sunday morning's here"
We're really lucky where we live
Because the Church is near.
We're at the gate, we won't be late,
The bells are ringing quicker
But here we are we're right inside
And just before the Vicar!

Laura Hillier

Porch Notice

Is your porch notice faded and out of date? Do you even have a porch notice? You can get a new one for the price of an A4-sized self addressed envelope and a 20p stamp by sending it to C.C. Publications, c/o Mrs B Wheeler, 18 Bankside, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 1XD

South Eastern District Training School

It all started for us during a conversation with our Vicar when he happened to mention "The Bells" and how they had not been rung by a local village band for many, many years. The idea appealed to us, but where should we start, who should we contact and more importantly, how would we do it? We need not have worried because little did we know expert tuition was but a few miles away at Writtle and Terling, where we were to find either in their tower or in their local pub, dedicated teams of experienced ringers ready and willing to give freely of their time and expertise. So we contacted our District Master and told him of our intention to learn to ring the bells at our local church. He was very enthusiastic and informed us that it coincided with the church's plans to have as many towers as possible ringing for the Millennium celebrations, and that special schools had been set up with this purpose in mind.

So we were invited to the Writtle training school to start our training. We were complete novices but brimming with enthusiasm and at this stage we certainly did not know our handstroke from our backstroke, but all was about to be revealed. Under the patient guidance of our tutors we were first shown the bells and then gradually taught how to handle them safely. We have learned how to set the bells at handstroke and backstroke, and how to ring up and down. All of our questions were answered again and again, and we have now begun to ring rounds, the first step on the ladder to ringing more complex changes with names like "Grandsire" and "Cambridge Surprise", certainly something to aim for in the future.

All this has been achieved in the space of 12 weeks and everybody in our band has progressed and enjoyed their training immensely. We feel this is due to the excellent facilities both at Writtle and Terling and to the dedication of our hardworking tutors. Based on our experiences so far, we can strongly recommend attending ringing school to anyone who may be interested in learning to ring or forming a band.

Look to, that's all, we're going, we're gone!

The newly formed "Pleshey Pullers"

Most people who have tried to teach others to ring have horror stories about broken stays and flying ropes. Happily, the instructors at the South Eastern District Ringing School have no new tales of woe (as yet)!

When the group met for the first session at Writtle, the instructors could not help trembling slightly at the thought of teaching fifteen people the basics of bell handling. However, this did not allow for the enthusiasm and dedication of our students. Their rapid progress has reflected this. By the sixth Saturday morning session, by now at Terling, all of the students were attempting rounds - with mixed fortunes!

It has been hard work for the teachers, but immensely rewarding. The look of sudden understanding on the face of a pupil when they manage to relate what you are saying to what they are doing is a joy to behold.

We all hope to see many of our new friends carry on ringing for years to come.

David Hengeli (instructor)

Ringing World Roadshow

Solihull - 12th April

I am one of those very sad bunnies who thought it would be great to drive 150 miles up the M something or another to go to a ringing exhibition. But as Jane Wilkinson, President of the Central Council put it, it was more like a 'Festival of Ringing'. Besides - if I'm a sad bunny, what does that make the other few hundred people that were there? Bearing all this in mind, it shouldn't really come as a surprise that I allowed myself to be persuaded (over a cup of tea and a bag of jelly tots (**easily bribed - Ed!**)) to tell you all about it.

The whole event was organised by the Central Council and sponsored by the Ringing World. There was a full day's ringing programme, lectures and presentations throughout the day, and a trade fair in the main hall. In fact there was so much to do that I had to decide very quickly what not to do! Reluctantly I chose not to ring, which was a shame having travelled so far (some people reading this will think I was ill!). Instead, I went to lectures on bell restoration and public relations - both subjects dear to me.

Several leaflets, samples and business cards later came what was for me, the highlight of the day. Steve Coleman, author of the Ringing Companion series of books, gave a talk on 'PRO for the Novice'. It was nice to put a face to such a well known name, and yes, he is just as funny in real life as he is in his books. He had us all in stitches as he recalled some of his antics, but there was a serious message behind the jokes. Whatever the reason we choose or need to promote bell ringing, as long as we put a bit of thought into it, prepare well and use a bit of imagination, almost anything is possible!

I came away uplifted and inspired, with a bag full of goodies and a head full of ideas. Maybe I'm not such a sad bunny after all!

Tracey Southgate

Terling Bellringers Quiz Night

Friday 26th September 1997 at 7.30pm

at Terling Village Hall In aid of Terling Belfry Floor

£4 per person (includes Ploughman's Supper)

Teams of up to 8 - Bring Your Own Booze

For tickets phone Sue Page on 01245 233488 or

Yvonne Towler on 01621 817212

Long Service - Amendments

Inadvertently omitted from the list of those who have been members of the Association for 50 years or more was Daisy Andrews (Thorrington), who rang her first peal in 1936 and has been a member for 60 years.

Charlie Smith of Ford End has pointed out that he was elected in 1934 and not 1933.

Ridgeman Trophy Striking Competition

This year's competition was hosted by the Hertford County Association and took place on Saturday 10th May 1997 at St Peter's Church, St Albans.

Four teams entered this year, these being Hertford, Essex, Cambridge University and Ely. The test piece was a set touch of 329 Stedman Caters, which not only was a test of the ringers, but also a test of the conductor's ability (thanks to Alan Barber for doing this for us).

The competition was judged by Robert Newton and David Moore from High Wycombe and the results were as follows:

1st	Hertford	37 faults
2nd	Essex	54 faults
3rd	Cambridge	60 faults
4th	Ely	Fired out

The hosts provided ample tea/coffee and cakes and made us feel very welcome. Thanks to the members of the band for taking part, namely Sue Page, Paul Cammiade, Alan Barber, David Sparling, David Rothera, Steve Nash, Peter Fleckney, Colin Chapman, Jim Towler and Mick Edwards.

Steve Nash

Southern District Summer Barbecue

Saturday 9th August 1997

at 30 Brendon Way, Eastwood, Westcliffe on Sea

For more information 'phone Penny Sloman on 01702 545568

Competition Entries

In the last edition, a task was set to find a new name for the Essex Association of Change Ringers Newsletter. The entries were to be set out in this edition, with the winning title being used for the December issue.

The closing date for entries was 1st July, and I am very disappointed to report that no entries were received at all.

The newsletter will therefore remain under it's existing title until someone suggests a better one!

Vicki Chapman

An Ode to "Getting On"

Inspired by an article in a previous Newsletter, Dickie Furminger put pen to paper!

It's not every day one's forty years old,
slightly greying - not quite so bold,
Think of all the past times you've had,
remember the good - forget the bad.

When you're next on a ladder, a window to paint,
if you come over queer and feel rather faint,
it's not the heat, height or being vague,
you've now reached that "funny old age".

Now a look towards 'new life' ahead,
cos in seventy years time your sure to be dead,
be sure you leave behind a good name,
one people will remember again and again.

So now, you take extra care,
but, keep on doing your share,
and if you're feel a trifle witty,
sit you down and pen us a ditty!

North Eastern District Training Centre

Ardleigh has been earmarked as the venue for our Training Centre, with Saturday morning session starting late September/early October. Every tower in the District should have been given the details, but if for any reason we've missed you, we do apologise. A rota is being drawn up for helpers, so if you haven't already been persuaded and would like to help, please contact the District Officers. We look forward to meeting your new recruits!

Tracey Southgate

Ring in 2000! - Millennium Record

No, not a CD! This will be a commemorative record of the activities leading up to and including the year 2000. We want to include details of new bands established, towers participating in the Open Weekend, Ringing School participants, press cuttings, details of sponsors/supporters etc. etc. Emma Chapman has volunteered to collate this information so please make sure you let her have items of interest. These can either be sent to her at 20 Mews Court, Chelmsford or 1, Took Drive, South Woodham Ferrers.

Dorkings Do!

This year the annual "Dorking Do" took place from 23rd to 25th May. Base camp was the Eathorpe Park Hotel in Eathorpe near Leamington Spa - proprietors: Carol and Rodney Grinnell (well he smiled anyway!).

The Friday evening tower was St. Margaret, **Wolston** (8 @ 11-0-2). The ropes hung between the choir stalls in the middle of the Chancel and it became apparent that only those who had had time for a swift pint could set the sixth. Peter (Fleckney) and Christina managed to get there just after the bells were lowered, so a few kind souls stayed behind and raised them again so they could have a ring. Then it was back to the hotel for food and a beer or two!

Saturday morning started with Roger (Dorking) in fine form at the breakfast table. Then we were off to St. James, **Southam** (8 @ 15-1-25), St. Lawrence, **Napton on the Hill** (6 @ 11-2-0) and Holy Cross, **Davertry** (10 @ 18-3-11). Lunch was at the Old Coach House Inn, Ashby St. Ledger, with beer with names like "Fuggled Frog"! Here we met up with David and Rosa Bardwell who imparted valuable parking information for the next tower and joined us for the rest of the day.

After lunch, ringing at two towers attached to the same Church - St. Andrew, **Rugby**. First we ascended the West Tower (5 @ 9-2-3), then through the Church and up the North East Tower (8 @ 24-3-8). The two towers being vastly different in size. Fleckney managed to get to these on time (only because he'd not rung here before!).

The last ring of the day was at St. Edith, **Monks Kirby** (8 @ 24-2-7), towering above everything, the view from the ringing room was spectacular. Then back to the hotel for more food and beer.

We had been asked to eat early as the hotel was catering for another function that night. Of course, the only trouble with that is, it leaves more time afterwards for beer! Seven pints later and people began drifting up to bed, except Jim (Towler) and Pete (Page) who thought they'd have a quick night cap - half a pint of Bacardi each!

Things were much quieter at breakfast on Sunday, but Roger soon woke up - and when he woke up, everyone had to!

First stop, St. Botolph, **Newbold on Avon** (10 @ 12-0-1). Again a very small ringing room. The locals had decided to let us ring for morning service ourselves, but one commented on her way into Church how nice it was to hear the bells being pushed along at a decent speed.

We had some time before the next tower, so most of us drove off to St. Peter, **Dunchurch** (6 @ 17-0-8). Some found a tea shop and filled up on scones and jam or chocolate fudge cake, whilst others sat in the Churchyard in the sun, watching the magnificent scenery.

Lunch was at the Eastcote Arms, Eastcote. There just happened to be a barbecue and beer festival on, and what a shame we only had two and a half hours there! Tearing ourselves away, the last tower of the weekend was St. Lawrence, **Towcester** (12 @ 23-1-17). Some bright "Sparky" thought it would be a good idea to try Plain Bob Minor on the front six whilst ringing Stedman Doubles on the back. So long as you knew that the singles were for the Stedman people and the bobs were for the P.B. peeps!

Overall, the weekend went very well. The hotel was good, food and beer reasonable, ringing respectable, company superb, and the organisation exceptional as always.

A very big "THANK YOU" to Roger and Ann Dorking for organising the weekend, and to all those who supported it. Every year, Roger says he's not sure if he'll do another one, and every year everyone has a brilliant time! Where to next year Rog?

Vicki Chapman

St Peter's Update

Work started a little later than originally planned, but once it got going there was no stopping it!

The rotten sections of framework have been cut away, new timbers bolted on and new support steelwork added where necessary. The frame has also had to be treated to prevent further deterioration. It is hoped that now the frame is much more rigid, new bearings will not be essential. However, just for good measure, they may be replaced at a later date.

Everyone is delighted that the project has gone so smoothly, in under half the time estimated and hopefully well within budget! In fact, the architect and structural engineers have already given the go-ahead for ringing to recommence!

Our congratulations and best wishes to Dickie and the rest of the Band. Also, our thanks must go to anyone who has contributed to the project over the past 4 years.

P.S. When's the party?

Tracey Southgate

Association Training Day

The date for the training day this year is Saturday 27th September. The venue will be Hatfield Heath.

Topics to be covered are:-

- i) Rounds, call changes and plain hunt
- ii) Plain Bob Minor
- iii) Oxford Treble Bob Minor and Major

The exact make-up of groups will depend on the numbers of applicants and what they require within the above framework.

It is expected that group i) will have three ringing sessions whilst groups ii) and iii) will have a theory session followed by two periods of practical ringing.

After this refreshments will be available at Hatfield Heath and then the new Central Council video on bell handling will be shown.

The day will conclude with a discussion (symposium?) on training. This is especially important as there is a growing number of District teaching/training set-ups being put into place. We can all learn from the experiences of others and it may be of benefit to all if some common objectives on standards of instruction could be established.

Within the Association there is a very considerable need for assistance in teaching the basics of bell handling and this should be regarded as an important first step along that road.

If you would like to attend the training day as either a student or helper, or would like further information, please contact me on 01376 561183

Adrian Semken

Said with Bells

"Look to, treble's going!"

The ropes chase the sallies, wheels the bells raise,
the sounds ascending ring our praise,
off we go into rounds again.

Clanging, clashing. Booming, bashing,
the clapper strikes shout, "Joy to the Lord",
their peals fly forth high abroad,
across the drowsy field to Wickford.

"Go Bob Doubles!" is the cry,
treble hunts and tenor's the drum,
into the changes the other bells run,
singing their song all the way to Ramsden.

Passing treble, dodge three four up,
turning from lead make seconds,
listen, the peal to the service beckons,
call the bob and ring the changes.

Up in the belfry we ringers wait,
as the organist plays here comes the bride,
and down the aisle the loving couple stride,
they've exchanged the ring and pledged their troth.

"Keep the confetti beyond the lych gate",
we know the address, we've heard it before,
the Vicar tells them the plates by the door,
then echoing around all the lanes of Downham.

Quarter peals ring out on occasions,
a christening for a mother's darling charmer,
or half muffled, "Stedman's" concluding drama,
with tolling tenor resounding its mellow knell.

The organist declares he admires our bells,
his overwhelming voluntaries could be innuendos?

for as we pull off the organ crescendos,

but through the still air we call to Rettendon!

At Sunday morning service we do our stuff, "Grandsire", "Plain Bob Minor" or just plain rounds,
the method's unimportant to the message in the sounds,

"Come to Church and worship the Lord!"

The minute bell chimes, "Hurry you're late!"

as down the stairs to the service we creep,
the Vicar knows there are many lost sheep,
but we'll echo again for those with ears to hear.

Association Register

Births: Congratulations to Sarah and Matthew Brown (Dowham) on the arrival of William Richard on 25th March and to Vicki and Colin Chapman (Chelmsford) on the arrival of Rachel Katharine on 14th July.

Engagements: Congratulations to David Church (Gt. Wakering) and Teresa White (Prittlewell) and to Peter Hinton (Gt Baddow) and Sarah Bear of Cambridgeshire.

Marriages: Congratulations to Hilary Brown and David Hill (both of Prittlewell) who were married on 19th April, and to Jane Parker (Tendring) and Paul who were married on 28th June.

Deaths: It is with sadness that we report the death of Edna Lufkin on 5th April, wife of the late Frank Lufkin.

North Eastern District Beetle Drive

Saturday 25th October 1997 at 7.30 pm

at Tendring Village Hall

Tickets £4 each (included fish and chip supper)

Bring your own beer! Proceeds to Bell Restoration

For tickets contact Sue Beale 01255 676472 or Tracey Southgate 01255 240632

Striking Competition Finals

11 teams entered for the 6 bell and all Districts entered the 8 bell. The event took place on Saturday 5th July in the South-Eastern District, the 6 bell competition at Great Totham and the 8 bell at Goldhanger. The judges for both events were Paul Flavell ably assisted by Pat Saltmarsh. Points rather than faults were given for good ringing, so the greater number of points the better the ringing. The results were as follows:-

Six Bell (maximum number of points = 480)

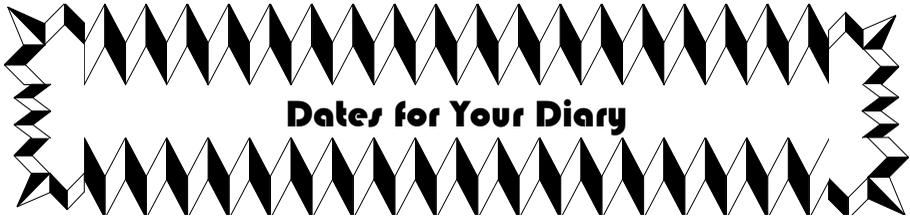
1st: Dagenham (461), 2nd: Chelmsford (446), 3rd: Gt Totham (435), 4th: Downham, 5th: Rayne, 6th: Kirby le Soken, 7th: Coggeshall, 8th: Gt Bromley, 9th: North Ockendon, 10th: Hornchurch 11th: Sawbridgeworth

Eight Bell (test piece 252 Grandsire Triples, maximum number of points = 504)

1st: Southern 453), 2nd: North Eastern (445), 3rd: South Western (441), 4th: Northern (420), 5th: North Western (417), 6th: South Eastern (409)

Congratulations to the winners of both events and to all those 6 bell teams who got through their District heats in order to enter the finals. Thanks go to those members of the South Eastern District who organised the event and supplied the tea at Goldhanger.

Michael Bishop



Dates for Your Diary

DATE	EVENT	TOWER	DISTRICT
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SEPTEMBER

6th	District Meeting	Margaretting	South-Eastern
	District Meeting	Gt. Bardfield	Northern
13th/14th	COUNTY WIDE OPEN WEEKEND		
13th	Call Change Competition	TBC	South Western
20th	District Meeting & Practice	Shrub End	North Eastern
	District Meeting	Thorpe Bay	Southern
27th	ASSOCIATION TRAINING DAY	Hatfield Heath	

OCTOBER

11th	_____ASSOCIATION DINNER Benton Hall, Witham		
18th	District Meeting	Woodford	South Western
	District 12 Bell Practice	Saffron Walden	Northern
25th	District Meeting	Gt. Parndon & Harlow	North Western

NOVEMBER

1st	District Meeting	Gosfield & Wethersfield	Northern
8th	Call Change Competition & DM	Sandon & Danbury	South Eastern
15th	District Meeting	South Benfleet	Southern
29th	District Training Day	TBC	South Eastern



The next issue of the Essex Association of Change Ringers NEWSLETTER is planned for December 1997. Contributions please to Vicki Chapman, 20 Mews Court, Chelmsford, CM2 9PF Tel: 01245 358040 by **15th November 1997**.