



No. 30

April 1998

Tower:

The AGM

The One Hundred and Nineteenth Annual General Meeting of the Association will be held in Chelmsford Cathedral on May Day Bank Holiday, Monday 4th May 1998. Morning coffee will be available at the Age Concern Hall from 9.15am. The Cathedral bells will be available for all ringers from 9.15am until 9.45am, at which time the Master's invited band will ring the service touch. Everyone is requested to be seated by 9.55am so that the service can start promptly at 10.00am. The preacher this year is the Bishop of Chelmsford, the Rt. Rev'd John Perry and the Boreham Choir will be supporting us once again. The meeting, which promises to be lively with 2 major elections, will also be held in the Cathedral, starting at 11.00am. Lunch will be served in the Age Concern Hall at 1.00pm by members of the North Eastern District. The afternoon ringing and tea will be in the Southern District. Tickets for Lunch (£4.75), Tea (£1.75) with details of afternoon towers and the tea venue are available from M.A. Bishop, 56 Edinburgh Gardens, Braintree, Essex, CM7 9LH. Please send your cheque, made payable to the EACR, together with your order, any special dietary requirements and SAE, by Thursday 30th April.

Points From the Committee Meeting

Held on Saturday 7th February the Executive Committee were conscious that this was the last meeting for the Secretary, Mike Bishop and David Sparling as the Master. David continues as one of our Central Council Representatives.

As a registered charity one of the many requirements placed upon the Association by the Charity Commissioners is to produce an annual Trustees' Report. The members of the Executive Committee are the Trustees' of this Association and as such must approve this Report which will be found within the first few pages of the Annual Report. Don't confuse the Charity Trustees with the Custodian Trustees, see the list of Association Officers and Committee which is also within the first few pages of the Annual Report.

The Treasurer, Andrew Taylor, produced and circulated a copy of the year end Accounts. These were duly discussed and approved. Andrew had been asked previously about the insurance position for the Ringing Schools. He stated that the position of the tutors that are EACR members is clear but he would enquire of the insurers about the students and would report back.

The arrangements for the AGM were presented by the Secretary as were the nominations that had been received for the offices of Master and Hon. Gen. Secretary. For those of you who are not aware there are 2 nominations for Master: Janet Edwards and Stephen Nash; and 2 for Secretary: Liz Hull and Mary Bone.

Ann Chapman, the Millennium sub-committee convenor, gave a very detailed report on the work that the sub-committee had carried out during the year. Ann also outlined, and asked for the Committee's approval, for the sub-committee's plans for the future. Details will be found in this and future Newsletters. Again all Districts are encouraged to set up their own Millennium groups.

During David Sloman's report as Hon. Technical Adviser, he stated that of the 12 possible restorations for the Millennium only 4 were currently being considered, and of those Wivenhoe had received Millennium fund backing and is very near to completion. Two Bell Restoration grant applications were received and approved; they were St. John the Baptist at Layer-de-le-Haye, where a complete rehang and augmentation to 6 in a new frame is planned and St. Mary the Virgin at Kelvedon which are to be augmented to 8 also in a new frame.

Much in the forefront of people's minds is the Child Protection Act, or it should be if you're dealing with other people's children. If you're teaching children you have a responsibility to them and yourself. You must ensure that your actions and those of other members of your tower are not misinterpreted. You could inadvertently find yourself being prosecuted for assault. The Executive Committee has approved and published guidelines to help guard against these kinds of problems. You will find them printed in this copy of the Newsletter and in the 1997 Annual Report. The guidelines won't protect you against prosecution but if you follow them together with your own common sense you will greatly reduce the risk of your teaching methods being misunderstood.

Mike Bishop

Millennium Update

The Sub-committee is finding that work and home pressures mean we are not always getting things done as fast as we would like! So, please forgive us and if you've got lots of time on you hands, please join us!! However, we have managed to arrange the following meeting, courses and fund-raising activities so please make a note of the dates where appropriate:

Ringling School Meeting - 25 April, venue tba - this is an opportunity for ringing school organisers to get together to discuss various aspects of organising and running the schools.

Train the Trainers Course - Saturday 20 June, venue tba. This is a one day course, run by the Central Council, for those who would like to have practical training in how to teach bellhandling. Those who have had some teaching experience but would like to consolidate or pick up new ideas can come along as assistant tutors. The course has been organised because there were 30+ people who expressed an interest in last year's tower questionnaire in attending such a course, so if you are one of those and have not yet signed up, we would love to hear from you! Even if you didn't put your name down, but would like to come there are still some places so please contact Colin or Judith Newman (0181 550 1931) as soon as possible for further information.

Essex Show - 19-21 June. The Association has been asked to join with the Churches Stand at the Essex Show to demonstrate ringing. The Show theme is village life so ringing from a church seems appropriate. A working model bell is being borrowed, but we shall need people to help on the stand to tell the delights of bellringing! Please contact Sue Beale (01255 676472) if you are available to help for a few hours on one of the days.

Sharing Good Practice Workshop - Saturday 14 November, venue tba. This workshop is being organised for tower captains and aspiring tower captains and is an opportunity to share ideas on various aspects of running a tower. Topics to be discussed will include the role of the tower captain, running a practice, public relations with Church, community and other ringers, and recruiting, training and retention. Further details will be sent to all towers in due course, but please make a note of the date if you're interested in participating.

100 Bell Club - this is a means of raising money for the Association, primarily to assist in costs associated with the Millennium Ring in 2000 recruitment drive. The Club is limited to 100 members in the first instance. Each member pays a subscription of £12 which entitles him/her to 12 monthly draws commencing in July this year with a prize of £50 each month. Full details and tickets can be obtained from Ann Chapman (01245 324461) and will be available at the Essex Course and AGM.

General update:

Leaflets and posters are available if any tower wants some for an open day, flower festival etc. Keep up the publicity in local magazines. Ask the Millennium Committee if you want someone to come and talk to a group of people about ringing.

Video training pack is available in each district for any tower to borrow. Contact your district secretary for more information.

Sponsorship. Any ideas for companies, preferably with a contact name, to write to in order to obtain sponsorship, please contact Phil Stephens (01245 421022).

Any other ideas, suggestions, etc. etc. please let us know!

Ann Chapman (01245 324461)

Bell Restoration Project for St Mary the Virgin Wivenhoe

The fund raising effort started in earnest in April 1997, a leaflet drop to all the houses in Wivenhoe plus a concert given by the North East Essex Wind Band, to which one of our ringers belongs, started the fund growing. I sent off a series of "begging letters" to various charitable organisations and as the months progressed positive responses were received. I had also submitted an application to the Millennium Commission in May 1997.

I was informed in mid November that our Millennium application was successful. On hearing this news, and as we had the requisite 50% in the kitty, I was able to contact Whites of Appleton who had been commissioned by the Parochial Church Council to carry out the restoration work and placed a firm order with them. They gave me a start date of Monday 12 January 1998 so the intervening weeks were filled with getting everything organised for that deadline, not helped by the intervention of the Christmas period, and also trying to keep the costs down as much as possible.

By lunchtime on the Tuesday the bells were loaded onto the lorry, kindly donated by Wilkins & Sons of Tiptree, and off to the Whitechapel Bell Foundry in London where they were re-tuned before continuing onto Oxfordshire where the rest of the restoration work has been carried out.

As you have probably seen this did evoke quite a bit of interest from the media. Anglia TV came on the Monday afternoon and interviewed David Sparling, Master and myself. The East Anglian Daily Times, the Colchester Evening Gazette and the Essex County Standard all ran articles with photographs during that week. Many photographs were taken, and the aim is to have a permanent record of the events.

The bells are due to be re-hung during the week commencing 16 March and again Wilkins & Sons Ltd of Tiptree have very kindly offered to transport the bells home the previous week so that all is ready for Graham from Whites plus the four "muscle men" to start work. The procedure will be the reverse of that described above, so we will just run the film backwards!

The rededication service will be held on Sunday 26 April 1998 at 10.30am.

I must now express my sincere thanks to ALL who have helped:-

Graham Clifton from Whites was very pleased with the level of expertise and teamwork shown by the four men from the Association, namely Stephen Clarke, Dickie Furminger, Chris Lamb and Malcolm Oliver. David Sparling has provided a good dose of moral support and of course David Sloman has been on the sidelines, but very aware of events, and has given invaluable technical advice.

Wilkins & Sons Ltd - for delivery of the bells to Whitechapel and return from Whites of Appleton in Oxfordshire.

Adrienne Wood
Tower Captain

Last knockings

As the sun sets in the West on my time as Master and I start to look forward to a quiet life in retirement, our illustrious newsletter Editor(ess) has decided that it would be entertaining if I were to recount a few stories of the past five years and comment on some of the funny things that have happened to me during my term of office.

It seemed a good idea at the time and so I agreed. It is only when you come to think about the time in detail that you realise there are so few stories to tell.

Certainly there have been moments of hilarity but these were without exception products of the specific circumstances and have little or no interest to anybody who was not there at the time. In fact, this long after the event they have little or no interest even to those who were there.

True there have been the odd unaccountable brain seizures forgetting peoples names even though you have known them for years. Forgetting what year I was in when taking the chair for the election of District Master at one of the ADMs. Unaccountably referring to Heather Semken as Heather MacArthur at one of the Executive Committee meetings even though she had been married for 20 odd years. On the whole though nothing too unforgivable.

Without doubt the Annual Dinner is simultaneously both the high point and the low point in the Masters year. The very first Dinner I attended as Master provided me with one the best quotations I was to collect. A group of ringers who will remain anonymous but came from somewhere East of the Southern part of the county remarked during the after-dinner frivolities that we may be c*** ringers but we sure know how to party. This I believe sums up what the dinner is all about: the chance to get the posh frocks out and meet with people with a common interest. Everyone is there on an equal footing with no pecking order dictated by ringing ability. That, for me, is what makes the Dinner the high point of the year. The fact that the Master has to give a speech also makes the occasion far and away the most nerve-wracking of the year. The AGM, despite having to chair a meeting of well over 100 people, is as nothing in comparison. I still have not worked out quite why. New Master you have been warned!

I remember when I was elected, saying that I felt it was a great privilege to be Master of such an Association. I believe that even more strongly now than I did then. It has also been a very great pleasure and I admit to feeling very sad at giving the job up. However, I am also quite sure that it is time to do so for all the reasons I have given before. Mike and I inherited an Association which had been superbly run and was in fine spirit. We have tried to carry on the good work of our predecessors and hopefully whoever takes over will feel that they too are taking on an Association to be proud of.

Who ever is lucky enough to get the job I hope they enjoy and value the experience as much as I have.

David Sparling

Guidelines on Child Protection in the context of bellringing

These guidelines have been prepared by the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers and adopted by the Essex Association to provide a working document for Tower Captains and those teaching children to ring. They are not intended to be exhaustive and should be read in the context of the General Synod of the Church of England House of Bishops' "Policy on Child Abuse" and equivalent documents from other churches, as well as the Government Home Office Code of Practice "Safe From Harm", the Diocese of Chelmsford guidance document "Keep Children Safe" and the guidance issued by your parish church.

Introduction

Most dioceses have their own policy on child protection which Tower Captains should follow. Churches should also have an appointed person to whom any suspected cases of child abuse must be immediately reported. Tower Captains should find out who this person is. Some churches have a procedure for carrying out police or other checks and taking up references on anyone likely to be responsible for looking after children in the tower.

Suggested guidelines

- 🔔 **Always** have two adults present when children are being taught.
- 🔔 Invite parents of any trainees to come and watch a training session before allowing their child to start to learn. Require a parent to attend the first training session and ensure that the parent fully understands what is involved in learning to ring.
- 🔔 Make sure a parent is responsible for delivering the child to and collecting the child from the tower.
- 🔔 Ask parents to sign a 'permission to ring' form.
- 🔔 Keep an attendance register.
- 🔔 Be aware of the insurance position for children.
- 🔔 Never allow children up amongst the bells apart from an initial demonstration visit if it is safe to have one.
- 🔔 For tower outings get parents to sign a detailed permission form. Organisers should be aware of Health and Safety and other issues, for example: it is inadvisable for a child to travel alone in a car with an adult.

The Chelmsford Diocesan guidelines "Keep Children Safe" contain example forms.

Points to check:

- 🔔 Church insurance - does the policy have a lower age limit? In some churches this is 12 years of age.
- 🔔 Is it possible to prevent inquisitive children from wandering up amongst bells that are 'up'?
- 🔔 Is there a tower Health and Safety Policy? Is it reviewed regularly? Is there an accident log book? Is there a first aid kit for minor accidents?
- 🔔 Are you aware of any medical conditions affecting the children being taught? For example: epilepsy, diabetes.
- 🔔 Find out the name of the church's appointed person and the procedure to be followed in the event of a child making a disclosure about possible child abuse. Always follow up such allegations, avoid detailed questioning of the child and never promise confidentiality.
- 🔔

Your BIG Chance (Miss It, Miss Out)

Those of you who are not aware that the current Association Master and General Secretary are not seeking election at the AGM in May, must have your head in the sand! Much to the Secretary's relief there are 2 nominations for each position. They are, for Master: Stephen Nash and Janet Edwards; and for Secretary: Mary Bone and Liz Hull.

What has this to do with me, I hear some people say. Well, if that's what you're saying then probably not much! But, by taking an interest in your Association and coming to the AGM you'll have the opportunity to cast your vote for your choice of Officers of the Essex Association of Change Ringers. The fact that there is a choice shows that the EACR is in a healthy state. The AGM not only offers you the chance to vote but also gives you an opportunity to ring at the Cathedral, enjoy the worship, also in the Cathedral, have a great afternoon ringing and meet with old and make new friends. In fact it's a full day of doing what you like best. If that doesn't appeal, then you must be one sad ringer!

Mike Bishop

It's All 'Appening at Ardleigh!

It's been a long time coming, but at last the N.E. District Ringing School is up and running. Dickie Furminger is the co-ordinator and the first session took place on Saturday 31st January. There are 16 helpers and 14 students, coming from some of the most remote parts of the District.

We have 7 complete beginners from Layer-de-la-Haye and it's going to be great fun helping them all learn to ring together. If the bells are restored as it is hoped, there will be a local band in place, which will be fantastic. We also have learners from St Osyth, where there are renewed efforts to boost ringing. There are several other ringers attending who can handle a bell, but who need to concentrate on mastering rounds and call changes.

If anyone else would like to take part either as a student or a helper, please contact Dickie on 01206 271638.

Tracey Southgate

Association Register

Engagements: Congratulations to Ann Chapman and Mark Woolley (both of Danbury), who got engaged in January.

In Memoriam: Sadly, we report the deaths of Joyce Wilkins of Leigh-on-Sea, Violet Hales, Life Member of Tendring, Bob Coe, unattached member of the N.E. District, Eric Piper of Great Tey and Percy Mills, Life Member of Thorpe-le-Soken

Dates for Your Dairy

April	4	Hornchurch - District Meeting	South-Western
	16-18	Essex Ringing Course - Coggeshall	
	25	Ingatstone - District Striking Competition	South-Eastern
May	4	A.G.M. - CHELMSFORD & Southern District	
June	6	Great Easton - District Striking Competition	Northern
	6	Roydon - District Striking Competition	North-Western
	6	Pleshey/Great Waltham - Cricket Match & District Meeting	South-Eastern
	13	Wivenhoe - District Striking Competition	North-Eastern
	13	Shenfield - District Striking Competition	Southern
	13	District Striking Competition (venue tbc)	South-Western
	20-28	Quarter Peal Week	South-Eastern
	26	District Dinner (venue tbc)	Northern
	27	Saffron Walden - District 12-bell practice	North-Western
	28	District Barbecue - Terling	South-Eastern
July	4	ASSOCIATION STRIKING COMPETITION - South-Western District	
	11	District Meeting (venue tbc)	South-Western
	18	Barn Dance	North-Eastern
	25	Treasure Hunt	North-Eastern
August	1	District Outing	Northern

Change to Tower Correspondent

Please note that owing to the sad loss of Percy Mills, the new tower correspondent for Thorpe-le-Soken is:-

Linda MacKenzie, The Limes, High Street, Thorpe-le-Soken, Clacton-on-Sea CO16 0EA.
Tel: 01255 861638

The next issue of the Essex Association of Change Ringers Newsletter is planned for August 1998. Contributions please to Vicki Chapman, 20 Mews Court, Chelmsford, CM2 9PF.
Tel: 01245 358040 or e-mail to Vicki_Chapman @ mandg.co.uk **by 15th July 1998**