



District does well in Striking Competitions

On the 4th June, a lovely Saturday evening, 50 ringers descended on All Saints Church, Rayne for the District 6-bell Striking Competition heats.

The Judges were Andrew Brewster and Christina Fleckney from Writtle. Andrew congratulated the District on the turnout as 8 teams entered – only one team entered in his SE District.

The Winners were Coggeshall, with 20 faults; 2nd were the “Home” team from Rayne with 25½ faults; and 3rd were Bocking with 29 faults. All received Certificates from the District Master to hang in their towers, and Coggeshall took away the District Shield to display in their tower for the next twelve months.



(Andrew, Christina, & Brian Meads)

The team from Halstead came 4th; followed by Witham 5th; a joint team from Pebmarsh and Gestingthorpe 6th; a combined team of young ringers 7th; and the Wethersfield team 8th.

This sort of event not only fosters good striking, is also a great social gathering with other District ringers.

This year the **Association Finals** were also held in our District; the 6-bell competition at Stebbing, and the 8-bell final at Great Bardfield. Both competitions were judged by David Salter (Ringing Master of the Suffolk Guild) and his wife Katherine – a 6-hour marathon effort by them!

The 6-bell competition provided some interest and upsets with a new winners name on the Trophy – Downham. This was particularly poignant for one ringer: Ann Dorking is the daughter of Frank Lufkin, who presented the Trophy to the Association in 1961.

Of our District teams Coggeshall came 5th, tied with last years winners Chelmsford Cathedral; and Rayne came 9th, just behind regular winners Dagenham. A very good effort by both teams – Well Done!

The 8-bell competition featured a test piece set by the Association Master - a touch of 240 changes of Double Norwich Court Bob Major.

This produced some very good ringing on these “challenging” bells!

The SE team came 1st with 9 faults, and the Southern team 2nd with 9½ faults – you don’t get much closer than that!

Best of all our Northern District team, including 2 junior members, came 3rd with 25½ faults, beating the SW team!

Our best result for many years: Keep it up everyone - the District last won in 1993....

Many thanks to Marian Wood for organising everything so well, including selecting the 8-bell team, and thanks also to her supporting team of helpers providing both food and tea service on the day.

As others hear us....?

Overheard outside one of the churches being used for the recent Essex Ringing course, from mother to child, in broad accent.

"Ooh! Listen, 'Chelle, listen to the nice church bells. Ain't they pretty?"

Do you hear how they go?

Ding Ding -- Teding Ding Ding,
Ding Ding -- Teding Ding Ding"

As the Celtic Bard almost said,
"O wad some Power the gift tae gie us,
to hear oursels as ithers hear us!"

District Officers for 2005:

Master: Alistair Donaldson (01787-463106)
Deputy: Marian Wood (01371-856382)
Secretary: Ian Hamilton (01371-850965)
Treasurer: Di Carpenter (01279-870414)

Intermediate Practices

The next practice is **6th August**, at Wethersfield. This session will focus on **Little Bob & Kent Treble Bob Minor** - starting as usual with a short theory session at 7pm with ringing from 7:30 to 9pm. **Everyone welcome!** – but please let the Master know if you are coming during the week before...

Future Sessions:

3rd September, St. Clements & Double Court at Halstead,

5th November, Double Oxford & Oxford Treble Bob at Witham,

3rd December, Cambridge & Ipswich Surprise Minor at Sible Hedingham

Advanced Practices

These continue on the **3rd Saturday** of each month at St. Michael’s Braintree: please come along if you can ring Treble Bob hunt, Surprise minor or major, or Stedman triples or better.

Please contact Maurice Downs on 01376-330412 if you are coming on **20th August** as it may become a QP if too many are on holiday! Also contact Maurice if you want to practice a particular method on **17th September**.

Situations Vacant

Newsletter Editor

Due to her impending move out of the area our current editor Gill Musto has resigned - many, *many* thanks to Gill for all the wonderful Newsletters we have enjoyed over the last 3½ years.

Thus this latest edition has been put together by the District Officers.... but we are sure that there’s someone out there who could do a much better job – please get in touch with any District Officer to discuss!

Note that the Newsletter needs not be produced single-handed either! It could be put together by a team from a Tower or, by e-mail, from anywhere across or beyond the District.

We presently publish 3 issues a year, broadly Spring, Summer and Autumn.

Obituary

Bob Lindsell

Bob learned to ring in the late 1940's together with the likes of Terry Earle and Howard Egglestone and was ringing master at Braintree during the 1970's. He dropped out of ringing in the early 80's. He was largely responsible for the augmentation of Braintree bells to 10 in 1972, when his father offered to purchase one of the bells on the condition that the ringers raised the rest of the necessary money. Bob was District Secretary and also District Master of the Northern District.

As well as being a talented ringer, he was also very interested in music, and a qualified teacher of the clarinet, and taught many locals, including children of ringers, to play the instrument to a high standard. He was a builder by trade.

After dropping out of ringing, Bob became a Freemason, and became a well-respected senior officer.

Sadly, he had been ill for the past few years, and passed away at the end of January aged 68.

On 6th February, a commemorative quarter peal was rung at Braintree. I was surprised how many had been affected by Bob's work in ringing, music, as well as other acquaintances. We rang a good quarter peal of Grandsire Caters, and as well as the 10 who rang, others would have liked to.

When I sent the quarter to the Ringing World, I had an unexpected reply from "Liz Admin." at the Andover office who said that Bob had taught her to ring, and that her mother and Bob's mother were good friends. Her name is actually Liz Lewis, nee Wigley. *Maurice Downs.*

Tom Bird

Sadly Tom passed away in May at the age of 93. He had been a member of the Essex Association for an amazing 74 years - the Association's longest serving member - having been a member since 1931 when he rung his first peal at Gestingthorpe. He had been associated with Wickham St. Paul for many years, but was a well known and accomplished ringer, ringing all over North Essex and South Suffolk with the likes of Walter Arnold, Frank Lufkin, Hilda Snowden, Frank Claydon, and Lew Whiffen. *(cont...)*

Tom will always be remembered as an accurate, neat and tidy man - both in ringing style and lifestyle. He first worked as a shepherd for Frank Nott, and then went to Bulmer Brickyard where he stayed long after normal retiring age. Not many know that he was also a keen cricketer. He rang many peals of spliced surprise major, particularly at Lavenham, and rang the 7th to the record time peal of Double Norwich Major at Clare with Walter Perry, conducted by Frank Lufkin. He also rang in the peal of Original Major conducted by John Peverett - including 400+ bobs!

Many ringers will also remember his wife Bertha knitting while waiting for him to finish ringing....

(Please send any other reminiscences of Tom or Bob to the Master for the Report)

District Quarter Peal Week

This annual event has been timed to coincide with the 60th commemoration of VE/VJ day - the end of the 2nd World War.

Quarters were attempted in 11 towers (2 outside the district), with 13 scored, and 2 lost.

Co-ordinator Maurice Downs writes "All the ringing I know about was of a high standard, and I am sure that also applies to the other quarters rung."

"I was pleased to see how ringers reacted to the terrorist bombs in London, and the attitude they took in condolence for the families affected, and the determination to carry on."

As is the tradition with this kind of event, there were a number of firsts:

Braintree: Jake Suett, 1st of Yorkshire.

Rayne: 1st Treble Bob, David Learmonth.

Wethersfield: 1st on 8, Libby Laurence, 1st on 8 inside, David Learmonth,

Rayne: 1st minor inside: John Slater.

Witham: 1st Little Bob Major: Di Carpenter, Sue Stephens, Jean Lewis, Jake Suett.

Tollesbury: 1st on 8: Nan Gibson, 1st Triples inside: Marion Barrett

Some were specially arranged for the Friday 8-bell group - which overlaps the district boundary!

44 ringers in total took part - 40 from the Northern district.

7 members conducted - Maurice Downs 4; Peter Wood, 3; Roy Threadgold 2; with 1 each by Andy Smith, Ian Hamilton, Sue Stephens, and Alistair Donaldson.

60th Anniversary of the end of WW2

The MoD asked that all church bells be rung on Sunday 10th July at 5pm to commemorate the end of the Second World War - just as the Queen took the flypast at Buckingham Palace.

(The Lancaster & escort fighters also treated the ringers at Gestingthorpe, Rayne, Pebmarsh and Halstead to an early flypast!)

Well done to: Black Notley, Braintree, Colne Engaine, Earls Colne, Felsted, Finchingfield, Great Dunmow, Great Yeldham, Pebmarsh, Rayne, Shalford, Stebbing, Wethersfield, Witham for ringing at 5pm;

Well done to Bocking, Gestingthorpe, and Halstead for ringing a Quarter Peal at that time, and Coggeshall for ringing a full Peal at that time.

Alphamstone was chimed.

What's On

District Events

Sat 30th July: District Practice at Feering, 7:30 to 9pm

Sat 13th August: District Meeting at Coggeshall starting at 7pm; with District 10-bell practice afterwards from approx. 7:30 to 9pm

Sat 29th October: Service and District Meeting at Halstead. Service at 4:30pm with ringing from 3:30pm; Meeting at c.6pm. Evening ringing is at Sible Hedingham from 7:30 to 9pm.

Association Events

Bank Holiday Monday 29th August: Tower Open Day in the North Eastern District - 22 towers open for ringing!

Starting at Harwich at 9am, and finishing at St. Peter's Colchester at 6pm it promises to be a fun day of ringing on a variety of bells.

Sat 1st October: Annual Dinner at the County Hotel, Chelmsford. Time: 7 for 7:30pm; Cost: £25-27ea.

If you are intending to go please send a deposit of £15 to Mary Bone, Secretary, at 11 Bullfields, Sawbridgeworth, CM21 9DB to reserve your place as soon as possible please.

Even better - why not get together a group and reserve a table of 7 or 8?

The Ringing Roadshow

On Saturday 10th September, there will be the bi-annual national Ringing Roadshow, this year to be held at Newbury Racecourse, Berkshire.

A District coach load are already going to Newbury - why not join us there?