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NEWSLETTER

No. 5

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I am grateful to those who have sent in items for the NEWSLETTER. Is there a volunteer out there who would be prepared to go through *The Ringing World* and pick out "Snippets" and "Congratulations" (mainly from the quarter peal columns)? Or do you think the former should be dropped as some "snippets" are rather dated by the time they get into the NEWSLETTER. Don't forget to return your dinner questionnaires ASAP. Finally, may I take this opportunity, on behalf of the Association Officers, to wish ringers throughout Essex a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

AFC

ANNUAL DINNER

The dinner this year was a very enjoyable occasion in spite of the low numbers (76). Round tables were used to help "spread everyone out more" and these were very successful. We were pleased to welcome Harold Rogers ("Mr London County"? and member of the Central Council P.R. Committee) who proposed the toast to the Association, and the Venerable Roger Sainsbury, Archdeacon of West Ham, who replied to the Master's toast to the Church. Dancing was to a disco this year which wasn't too loud - at least I didn't lose my voice as I have done over the last couple of years! The proceeds from the raffle will go to help defray the dinner costs as we shall make a loss. It was very disappointing to have so many of the regulars unable to come. Although the date had to be changed, there was about 6 months notice of it.

Return of the dinner questionnaires would be appreciated (especially from SV members) - they do give me a better idea of the type of event the majority of members would like.

SEMINAR

A very successful seminar was held at Danbury on Saturday 11th November for representatives from churches within the Association boundaries with unringable bells. Ten people representing 6 parishes attended and we were also pleased to welcome John Barnes (Central Council B.R.F. Committee) and Alan Hughes (Managing Director, Whitechapel Bell Foundry) as guest speakers. The Association speakers were Canon Anthony Abbey, David Sloman, Peter Sloman, David Childs, Adrian Semken and Peter Knight. Paul Cammiade introduced the seminar and explained the purpose behind it.

Before the seminar some of the delegates viewed the Danbury bell installation and listened to some ringing. The topics covered during the afternoon were: "Why ring the bells?", "What's wrong with your tower?", "Some Essex unringables", "Launching an appeal and fund-raising", "Financial aspects", "Recruiting ringers" and "How Eastwood did it". Slides complemented some of the talks, there was an exhibition in the entrance hall and a video giving an overview of what ringing involves was shown. The afternoon concluded with tea and an informal chat.

All those who attended thought the seminar was worthwhile but it was extremely difficult persuading people to come, mainly because they felt the cost of a restoration project would be prohibitive and there were other, more important repairs to be done in the church before bells could even be considered. Some of the enthusiasm expressed by one of the delegates needs to be passed on to other unringable parishes: "When I watched the video and saw the bells actually ringing, I thought 'This is what we could have in our tower!' It's very exciting."

Old Reports

If anyone would like recent back copies of the Annual Report, please let me know as I have several available, particularly 1984, 1986, 1987 and 1988.

Is there anyone who has a spare copy of the 1952 or 1972 Annual Reports as the Central Council Librarian is missing these two years from his collection? If you do please let me know. AFC

Children in Need

This year the support for this appeal does not seem to have been as widespread as last year, although there may be towers we don't know about which took part. Even so, we have still managed to raise about £4,000 to date which is a very good effort. When all the money has been collected in within the tower, please send cheques through to me (preferably made out to the Essex Association). An Association cheque will then be presented to BBC Essex when all the money has been collected.

Thanks again Simon for organising it - he certainly had plenty of publicity in the 'Essex Chronicle' and hopefully other towers contacted their local papers. There have been one or two comments that publicity material was circulated late which is mainly due to it not being received from BBC Essex until late! However, the date has been in the calendar for the last year so there are no excuses for not knowing about it. Simon and I apologise for not putting a reminder in the last NEWSLETTER - I completely forgot!

SPONSORSHIP

It has been agreed by the Committee that a pilot scheme will be initiated whereby money will be made available to young people in full-time education to assist towards the fees for attending ringing courses. If you are interested in applying for a grant, please submit an application in writing, to your district master, detailing the type of course you wish to attend and the approximate cost (if known), by the end of January. These requests will then be considered at the February Committee Meeting.

1989 Annual Report

Work on the 1989 Report starts early in the New Year. If there are any amendments to your tower details - practice night, service times or correspondent - or to your membership entry, please let your district secretary and the Report Editor know as soon as possible. If you wish to submit details of your tower's quarter peals for the year, in case any have not been included in *The Ringing World*, please send them to Colin Chapman who will be preparing the quarter peal analysis this year. A volunteer is needed to prepare future quarter peal reports - any offers?

Committee Meeting

Main points from the October Committee Meeting:

1. The motion restricting the number of Life Vice-Presidents to 12 which was left on the table at the AGM, was discussed further at the meeting. It was agreed that a Masters' meeting would be arranged to discuss the criteria for nomination to Life Vice-Presidency.
2. There will be no increase in subscriptions for 1990 so they remain at £4 ringing members, £2.50 Friends and £1 non-residents. Subs are due on 1st January!
3. It was agreed to continue producing the NEWSLETTER in its present format.
4. Grants were agreed as follows:
Rettendon: a further £79 towards the increased cost of having the ceiling of the ringing chamber re-done. Ingrave: £150 towards a new floor in the ringing chamber. Broomfield: £1000 towards the cost of strengthening the frame, re-bush clappers and replace pulleys. Downham: £750 towards re-bushing clappers and replacing bearings.
5. It was agreed to set up a pilot sponsorship scheme (details appear elsewhere).
6. It was agreed that the Association would hold a stock of lubricants suitable for bells. Further details will be supplied in due course.

Church Urban Fund

As many of you know, the Church Urban Fund was launched in April 1988 with a target of £18 million to be raised by the dioceses. The Bishop of Chelmsford, when launching the Chelmsford Diocesan appeal, aimed to raise £2 million, partly from the parishes and partly from industry and commerce. Although some of you will already have been involved in fundraising projects within your own parishes, it would be nice to have a contribution from "the ringers". Therefore, over the weekend of 2nd/3rd March 1990 we would like as many towers as possible to ring quarters in support of the Church Urban Fund and to make a donation towards the appeal. Cheques should be made payable to The Essex Association and we will submit one cheque to the Bishop. Please let me have donations and details of quarters by the end of March 1990. AFC

DINNER 1990

The 1990 dinner will be held on SATURDAY 13th OCTOBER so put the date in your diary NOW and start saving because we have decided to make it a fund-raising event so the tickets will be priced at £20 each. If you want to pay in instalments you may do so! The venue is not yet finally confirmed but will probably either be the County Hall or the Rivenhall Resort Motel. (If the latter, numbers will be restricted to 120.)

Life Members

The following has been nominated as a Life Member:

Bert Goddard (Chelmsford Cathedral)

- proposed by Ann Chapman, seconded by David Rothera.
(also proposed Paul Cammiade, seconded Roger Dorking
at Southern District Meeting.)

Around the Districts

South-East District practices on the usual practice night of towers, have been successful and will be continued next year. The call-change competition at Little Waltham in November attracted five entries with the Little Waltham band winning the trophy.

At the North-East District meeting at Tendring in October, it was Harry J. Millatt's 74th birthday and at tea he was presented with a birthday cake, suitably edged with the famous 'Stedman' belt in icing. We wish him many more happy years of ringing. Also at Tendring, the service was taken by Mrs Wendy More, Layreader, the first time a lady has taken a ringing service in the district.

Mr Dick Furminger joined us and took part in a little ringing, the first time since heart surgery. Also ringing with us was Mrs Violet Hales of Tendring, now in her 80th year.

C. C. SURVEY

The following questions appeared in *The Ringing World* arising from the survey undertaken in November last year. It is intended to include this subject on the February Committee agenda so if you have any strong opinions on any of these questions, discuss them at your ADMs or speak to your Committee Rep.

1. One-third of British bells are silent on Sundays. Does this matter? If so, should there be (a) a national recruitment drive, (b) more effort put into recruitment at the Association level, or (c) something else?
2. The more bells there are in a tower the more likely they are to be rung on Sundays. Should (a) all rings of bells be augmented to 12!, (b) recruitment drives be concentrated on Associations with a preponderance of 5's and 6's, (c) more effort put into promoting 5- and 6-bell ringing, or (d) something else?
3. Nearly one-third of all new recruits give up ringing in the first 12 months. What can be done to retain a greater proportion of these?
4. There was a clear request from tower captains for more information on belfry maintenance, yet only 16% had a copy of the Maintenance Handbook and 6% had the Towers and Bells Handbook. How can this need for more training in the skills of bells and belfry maintenance be met?
5. Some 35% of clergy reported that they visited the ringing chamber infrequently and 8% not at all. How can closer relationships be made between ringers and local church officials?
6. There is still a great need to train the ringing teachers. 55% of tower captains found courses on how to teach learners the most useful. The Beginners' Handbook and One per Learner book are provided or encouraged widely. What more should be done?
7. Ringers come from a narrow social base. Should anything be done to widen this and, if so, what?
8. Ringing is healthier in many large city suburbs and other densely populated areas. Should more effort be put into providing new rings of bells in these areas?
9. Many areas, particularly inner cities and some rural parts, possess bands serving several churches. Should this be encouraged more and what can be done to make it easier?
10. Most "average" ringers perceive that their Association has very little impact on their ringing. Is this perception accurate and, if so, what can be done to improve the effectiveness of the Association?

If ringing is not to become a dying art, we all need to think about these questions NOW.

Snippets

Snippets picked out of *The Ringing World* over the last few months:

Four ex-pupils of Bentley Church of England Primary School + two others rang a quarter at Bentley Common on 9th July to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the founding of the school.

The Matching band featured in the 1st September issue. Fund-raising to have the bells restored is continuing.

Seven quarter peals were rung during the N.E. district quarter peal week.

A quarter was rung at Castle Hedingham in August to celebrate the golden weddings of four local couples married at Castle Hedingham within a few weeks in 1939.

The first ladies quarter at Hornchurch of Grandeire Triples was rung in September.

Rowena Marshall achieved her 1000th quarter and first as conductor at Great Totham in September.

CONGRATULATIONS

- Weddings: Paul Bray and Alexandra Perks (Great Bromley)
Timothy Foster and Karen Middlebrook (Mistley)
- Births: Victoria May to Mark and Lynne Button (Little Baddow)
Benjamin Edward to John and Hazel Steed (Chelmsford)
- Silver weddings: Chris and Margaret Pain (Hornchurch)
Roger and Gill Jamieson (Downham)
- Golden wedding: Ernie and Mary Brown (Castle Hedingham)
- Diamond wedding: Mr and Mrs Wilf Sharp (Great Bentley)
- 70 years Association membership: Ted Leggett (Wormingford)

Calendar of Events

January	6	Little Baddow & Boreham - ADM	South-East
	6	Pebmarsh & Halstead - ADM	Northern
	13	Ilford - ADM	South-West
	13	Colchester (St Peter) - ADM	North-East
	20	South Weald - ADM	Southern
	27	Sawbridgeworth - ADM	North-West
February	3	Executive Committee Meeting	
	7	Danbury - District Practice	South-East
	10	Feering (TBC) - District Practice	Northern
	10	Romford - Evening Ringing	South-West
March	3	Pleshey (TBC) - Meeting	South-East
	3	Stebbing & Felsted (TBC) - Meeting	Northern
	10	Walthamstow (St Saviour) - Evening	South-West
	26	Springfield - District Practice	South-East
April	7	Sandon - Striking Competition	South-East
	7	Loughton - Meeting	South-West
May	7	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - CHELMSFORD (Tea at Chigwell)	
	12	District Outing	South-West
	28	OPEN DAY	South-East

Check *The Ringing World* for full details of meetings and practices.

Shenfield practice: To gain access to the tower please go round to the north of the tower and ring the bell by the vestry door. The ringers will let you in as soon as they can.

ITALY

If anyone fancies a holiday to Italy from 17th-26th August 1990, please contact Stephen Pettman, 42 Mill View Close, Woodbridge, Suffolk (Tel: 03943 3023) for further details. The price is £315 per person and the trip includes visits to Verona, Bologna, Lake Garda, Mantova, Vicenza and Venice with some ringing organised.

The next issue of the **NEWSLETTER** is planned for **APRIL**. Any news, views or articles please to Mrs. Ann Chapman, 20 Mews Court, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 9PF (0245 358040) by 17th March 1990.