

Around and about

Opening of St. Saviour's, Pimlico

Easter Monday was as bright and sunny as one could wish for the dedication and opening of the ring of eight bells and teaching centre at St. Saviour's Church, St. George's Square, Pimlico, London. The church was full for a cheerful and inspiring service. The Rt. Rev. David Hope, the Bishop of London, dedicated the bells and opened the Ringing Centre, naming it the "James Prior Teaching Centre" - rather to the astonishment of Jim Prior who was innocently present. A course of Grandsire Triples was rung immediately after the dedication, and the service continued with the Purcell "Bell" Anthem and an address from the Bishop pointing to the provision of the bells and teaching centre as new life for the church.

The bells were then rung by representative bands and generally until gone 4 o'clock in the afternoon, aided by liberal refreshments provided in the Church Hall adjacent.

The ring are a bright peal and are very easy to handle - ideal for teaching. The simulator provided continual interest, and as many said "quite a challenge". It was put to immediate practical use teaching novice visitors handling and how to cover, as well as providing a stimulus to the supposedly more proficient. The back six bells came from St. Mary's, Peterborough, and were cast by John Warner & Sons in 1887. The two treble bells are ex-The Gosport 8 and were cast at Whitechapel in 1890.

To Alan Hughes and the Whitechapel Bell Foundry, to F. & I.B. of Northampton (Nigel Brewer and Staff) and to the Towcester Ringers and many others are accorded thanks for an extremely successful installation, and one that it is hoped will be much used in the immediate and far future for the development of ringing in London. R.J.C.

Congratulations to Marjory and Douglas Hughes who celebrate their Golden Wedding on May 2nd, and also to Bill Hughes who celebrated his 80th birthday on 29th April.

The little Somerset village church at Rowberrow will be hosting a **ringing competition with a difference** on Saturday, 16 May.

It will be an open competition for teams of six to rise, ring rounds for two minutes and then lower. Such competitions are well known to ringers deeper in the West Country but will be something of a novelty for ringers around the Mendips.

Entries will be accepted from any tower, anywhere in the country, and the rules are quite relaxed. Points will be awarded for striking and for artistic interpretation. The start to the rise and the final blows of the lower will be left to the discretion of each band.

Rowberrow has an excellent ground-floor ring of six (tenor 7 cwt). Proceeds from the competition will go towards the Rowberrow Church Tower Restoration Fund. Repointing work will cost about £5,000 later this year.

Entry fee for the competition is 25p per rope. Paul Ebsworth (0934 852884) or Brian Cooper (0934 852072) will be delighted to hear from teams wishing to enter.

On July 29th, 1967, Wymondham Abbey bells were rededicated, after the eight bells were recast and two trebles added to make a fine ring of ten.

Ringers of the Abbey are planning to celebrate this event on Sunday, 2nd August, 1992, and would like to meet bellringers who have been members of the Abbey company during the last 25 years.

Anyone wishing to attend please contact John Dowe (Secretary), Holly Farm, Silfield, Wymondham, Norfolk. Tel: 603273.

The bells at Chapel-en-le-Frith Parish Church (St. Thomas-à-Becket) are to be overhauled and re-hung by Eayre & Smith Ltd, and will be out of action until late July.

We hear that Yatton's bells are currently out of action while repairs are carried out.

Rosamund Jones, a ringer of Damerham dressed as a pirate, complete with parrot on her shoulder, has completed the London Marathon in 4 hrs 40 mins, raising around £500 for the Wessex Cancer Appeal.

On Sunday, April 19th, Mike Little (Birchington) and Sally Sayers (Minster) announced their engagement. Unknown to them a little bat had spoken to the rest of the Quex quarter peal band who, with the one exception of Terry Streeter, met at Birchington to ring a peal in honour of the occasion, with some other "non-resident" accomplices making the band.

Best wishes go to Mike and Sally and, who knows, 30 quarters for the wedding? S.A.W.

Our best wishes to Stan Ruddlesden of Long Buckby, Northants, who recently underwent his second hip replacement in six months. He is recovering well and hopes to be back in the peal columns before long.

We hear that "Praise Be" has a snippet from the Ringers' Songs of Praise this week, and another will probably be included in four weeks' time.

Due to the Abingdon band being unavailable to ring for a wedding on their annual outing day (advised to the Vicar well in advance!), the bride's mother wrote to the BBC's "Jim'll Fix It" asking if it could be "fixed" for the bells to be rung. I was contacted by the BBC via Jon Chamberlain, the Abingdon tower captain, and was very pleased to arrange a band. The wedding took place last year, but we have only just recorded the studio part when the badges were presented. The programme is to be broadcast on May 9th, when a shortened version of what was actually recorded can be seen. Please excuse seeing us ring rounds when you hear Grandsire Triples!

On a more serious note, it must be very disappointing for a bride to be unable to have the bells in a situation like this; and although nearby towers often help out, it may be impossible for them to provide a complete band. To avoid this problem and also the possibility of bad publicity for ringers, I feel that it falls to the Branch Ringing Master to arrange a band. This has been publicised in our Branch Newsletter. MIKE HARRISON (Oxford Diocesan Guild, Old North Berks Branch, Ringing Master)

Corrections and amendments

p. 406 Peal at Hatfield - delete all detail - funny folk at work again.

Chalford has a ring of Vickers' steel bells dating from 1857-9 which have long had a bad reputation for tone and go. However, Ted Cribley has recently made very many great improvements in both belfry and bells - amongst other things he has designed and had made a new stained-glass window in the ringing chamber, and by fitting clapper springs has actually made the bells hum. He is now teaching a band to ring on bells which now go much better than they have for years. A 720 was rung, as part of an unsuccessful quarter-peal attempt, at his invitation, and enabled him to ring treble bob for what he claimed was the first time for some 20 years.

The Northavon Branch Striking Competition was held on Saturday 11th April on the newly restored bells of Siston. Nine bands took part representing seven towers with judging by David Kelly of Bath. In his comments he remarked that it had been a very entertaining competition, not least because he had watched eight hot air balloons pass during the event. One had even landed in the field behind the Church, and he wondered if it could be a late entry! The competition was won by Frampton Cotterell "A" with 33 faults, second was Dyrham with 40, and third Warmley "A" with 44.

At St. Mary's, Diss, on 6th June, a quarter peal is planned to celebrate my life. On 23rd May, 1991, while ringing Grandsire on the third, I suffered a brain haemorrhage, blacked out and slid slowly down the wall. If I hadn't been with the bellringers at Diss, the chances are I would not be here.

I can remember none of this, and woke a few days later to find myself in intensive care at Addenbrooks in Cambridge, where I was told that I was very seriously ill. The operation was carried out on 6th June and, apart from slight complications, has been totally successful. I rang my first bell in November under the watchful eyes of Geoffrey Tebble and Bob Crowe, because I intended to ring the old year out and the New Year in.

I realise that I have been extremely lucky to have come out of this experience with nothing more than a bad memory. Thanks must go to Addenbrooks because of their undoubted skills, but my deepest thanks must go to my fellow bellringers, because without them and their support during and after, I might not be ringing this quarter peal now.

When I asked for the quarter, Betty Baines suggested that it might be sponsored and any donations would then go to Addenbrooks Neurological Department. She asked me to write an article for *The Ringing World* which might encourage others, who may have been touched by a similar experience, to join in the sponsorship.

I should be pleased to receive any donations, from individuals or towers, and it will give me great pleasure to send the proceeds to Addenbrooks.

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