



HEADSTOCK

The Newsletter of the
Bedford District of the
Bedfordshire Association of Church Bell Ringers

April 2015

Web Version

This version of Headstock has photographs with reduced quality.

It also has contact details of people removed.
Personal contact details can be found in your Tower's copy of
Headstock, or in the latest Annual Report.

From the Chairman

The 70th Anniversary of the Victory in Europe falls on Friday 8th May. A variety of events have been arranged to mark the occasion and churches have been particularly invited to contribute to the commemoration with the ringing of bells. 11am on Saturday 9th May is the proposed time, although any time over the weekend from the Friday through to the Sunday would be welcomed. There is of course a long tradition of church bells being rung for such moments of national significance, one that I hope we can proudly continue.

More locally, the District Striking Contest is coming up on 6th June. It is being held on the newly restored bells at Bletsoe. There are two competitions held at the same time: one is for bands ringing a method and the other for bands ringing rounds (which can include call changes). Each band should be of six Sunday service ringers from the tower they are representing and the test pieces are of 120 changes. All bands are welcome to take part and extra listeners are always welcome. It can be interesting to listen carefully to the striking and see if you agree with the judged outcome. Striking is an aspect of ringing we may not always pay as much attention to as we should so it does no harm at all to be a listener outside now and again. Happily we certainly have some bands locally capable of some high standard striking so there should be some good ringing to listen to and, dare I say, aspire to match.

Alex Nash
District Chairman

Subscriptions

Subscriptions are now due for payment, which has to be made before the Association Annual General Meeting on 16 May. The subscription for resident ringing members over the age of 19 is £10 per year, the rate for under-19s is £2.50.

If you are a UK taxpayer and pay the full £10 annual subscription, please consider signing a "Gift Aid Declaration" so that the Association can claim back the tax on it. A form for doing this can be downloaded from the Association website www.bacr.co.uk.

Bedford District Programme of Meetings and Events 2015

This is a provisional programme, for confirmation see The Ringing World or phone the Secretary, Bob Jones.

- 18 Apr 2015: Riseley 3.30 – 6.30 pm
Quarterly District Meeting
Afternoon Ringing, Service, Tea,
6.00 pm Business Meeting
Sharnbrook: Evening Ringing 7.00 – 9.00 pm
- 2 May 2015: District Outing; details not yet available
- 16 May 2015: Leighton Buzzard
Bedfordshire Association
Annual General Meeting at 6.00 pm
Further details not yet available
- 6 June 2015: Bletsoe 5.00 pm
District Striking Contest
- 6 June 2015: Ridgman Trophy at Wisbech
- 4 July 2015: Turvey 3.30 – 8.30 pm
Quarterly District Meeting
Afternoon Ringing, Picnic Tea,
6.00 pm Business Meeting
Evening Ringing

Future Events

- 19 Sept 2015: Haynes; Association Striking Contests
Contenders from the other Districts are
Biggleswade: Biggleswade and Eaton Socon;
Luton: Linslade and Dunstable

Young Ringers' Events

- August 2015: Various Towers in the Bedford District
Young Ringers' Practices
- 11 July 2015: Oxford
National Young Ringers' Striking Competition
For details of eligibility and practices being held in the
run-up to this event, see the Association website
www.bacr.co.uk or contact Sue Silver
president@bacr.co.uk.

Ronald E J Freeman 1933 - 2015

Ron Freeman, a former ringer at Kempston and Wootton, died on 11th March 2015 aged 81 years.

Ron was born and brought up at Box End, Kempston and as a teenager he learned to ring the bells at All Saints, Church, Kempston where his father, Ernest Freeman, was a ringer. He was a member of the Bedfordshire Association of Church Bell Ringers from 1948 to 1959 and from 1976 to 1979, and he rang three peals for the Bedfordshire Association – in 1949 (at Kempston), 1950 (at Stagsden), and 1953 (at Kempston for the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II).

Ron served his apprenticeship as a pattern maker at W H Allen in Bedford and he subsequently worked as a pattern maker at Hobkirk's foundry in Kempston. When the Kempston bells were rehung in a new frame, Ron was a member of the Kempston Parish Church Bells Appeal Committee from 1976 to 1979. He played a valuable part in the rehanging scheme, including making the pattern for the 15 frame castings and (together with the late Jim Routledge) arranging for the castings to be machined and drilled, thus resulting in a considerable financial saving.

Ron is survived by his wife, Dorothy, who he married at Wootton Church in 1966. His funeral service took place at Norse Road Crematorium, Bedford on 26th March 2015.

Richard Hillson

Ron Freeman in 1977 at Hobkirk's foundry with the first two castings for the new bell frame at Kempston



Report of Bedford Annual District Meeting on 17 January 2015

The meeting took place at St Mary's, Cardington with Alex Nash in the Chair. He welcomed all those present, including Association President Sue Silver, Association Secretary Terry Brown and Association Treasurer Barbara Fraser. He then thanked Revd Stephen Smith for conducting the service and for the use of the bells, Derek Hammond for playing the organ, and Jim Framp and his team for the tea.

No deceased members were reported but a minute's silence was observed for Dennis Hobbs, father of Lin Barratt, who attended Tailenders.

Alex thanked Sarah Ward for her part at the River Festival. The Diocesan Centennial Celebration at Keysoe and the success of the Bedfordshire Young Ringers at Oxford, with Melissa Nash in the team, were also reported on. Sue Silver said that young ringers meet on the 4th Sunday of the month at different towers and all youngsters are welcome.

The C Edward Jeffries Memorial Trophy for a Young Ringer was awarded to Jonathan Nash of St Andrews, Bedford.



The District report, BRF report and Membership report, which stated that membership was 19 down on the previous year, were presented

and accepted. The programme up to May 2016 was circulated and accepted.

The election of District Officers was as follows:

Chairman; Alex Nash;

Secretary: Bob Jones; Treasurer: Jenny Thompson;

BRF Treasurer and RJ Sharp Bell Fund Rep: Andrew Dennison;

Central Bell Fund District Rep: Andrew Dennison;

Committee Members:

Ann Desics, Jim Framp, Adrienne Sharp, Barbara Woplin;
Ringing Master: James Saunders;
BRF Independent Examiner: Richard Hillson;
District Accts Independent Examiner: Tim Blunt;
Striking Contest Organiser: Andrew Dennison;
District Outing Organiser: Adrienne Sharp;
Two Association Committee Reps are to be appointed by the Committee.

Caroline Nash and Jonathan Nash of St Andrew's, as well as Anna Townsend and Ian Townsend of Kempston, were elected as new members.

Terry Brown and Sue Silver gave updates on various Association matters including the Association AGM, striking contests, meetings of the General Committee, and the 2014 Annual Report. She also mentioned Gift Aid on subscriptions, and the fact that subscriptions can be paid by standing order.

District Quarter Peal Week 1-8 March 2015

Oakley, Beds, St Mary, Saturday, 28 February 2015 in 48 mins (12 cwt)

1320 Norfolk Surprise Minor

1 Jenny Thompson, 2 Sarah-Louise Ward, 3 Anna R Townsend,
4 Andrew J Spencer, 5 Richard A Horne, 6 Stephen H Stanford (C)
First of Norfolk S Minor 2,3,4; For Bedford District QP Week

Elstow, Beds, Abbey Church of SS Mary and Helena

Saturday, 28 February 2015 in 43 mins (9 cwt)

1320 Norfolk Surprise Minor

1 Sarah-Louise Ward, 2 Ann M Fletcher, 3 Ann Desics,
4 Patrick J S Albon, 5 Derek A Hammond, 6 Stephen H Stanford (C)
First of Norfolk S Minor; 3,5; For Bedford District QP Week

Elstow, Beds, Abbey Church of SS Mary and Helena

Friday, 6 March 2015 in 44 mins (9 cwt)

1320 Norfolk Surprise Minor

1 Sarah-Louise Ward, 2 Melvyn J Potts, 3 Patrick J S Albon,
4 Richard A Horne, 5 Richard J Hillson, 6 Stephen H Stanford (C)
First Norfolk; 2, 5; For Bedford District QP Week

Bedford, St Andrew, Sunday, 8 March 2015 in 43 mins (5-2-22)

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

1 Gareth Burrows, 2 Jonathan Nash, 3 Barbara Woplin,
4 Melissa Nash, 5 Alex Nash (C), 6 Philip Kino
First inside: 2. Rung during Bedford District Quarter Peal Week.

Tailenders' Report 2015

Tailenders' February meeting was at Maulden on a grey February day. We were lucky that there was some heating on in the church so the non-ringers were quite comfortable. The bells didn't seem as easy going as in the past and the ringing reflected this. After three attempts, a touch of Plain Bob triples was abandoned. There was more success with Grandsire triples and the



Stedman triples was successful on the second attempt. Rounds and call changes were also rung.

Lunch was at the Dog and Badger where we were made to feel extremely welcome. The very tasty food was served promptly and was good value at £7.95 for two courses.

Many thanks to Lynn and Martin Goodwin for organising everything so well.

In March we were ringing at Milton Ernest. It was a beautiful sunny, crisp day. The six bells did not go easily, possibly due to lack of lubrication, and most people found the back four extremely hard to ring. In spite of this we managed to ring a course of Cambridge minor, and touches of Plain Bob minor, Plain Bob doubles and Grandsire doubles as



well as call changes. We finished with a course of Stedman doubles and down.

We ate at The Falcon in Bletsoe. The food was slightly more expensive than usual but generally it was of a very high standard and worth the money. Many thanks to Ann and Graham Boyle for organising everything this month.

Our April meeting was on a lovely Spring day but unfortunately a lot of people were away and unable to attend. This meant that we only had 11 ringers, rather disappointing for the organisers who had gone to so much trouble to find new and interesting towers.



Our first tower was St Stephen's in St Albans, a ground floor six. The tenor did drop a bit when in a method but otherwise they went well and we enjoyed ringing them. We rang Cambridge minor, Plain Bob doubles and minor and some Grandsire doubles.

Lunch was at the Chequers Inn in Redbourn. We hadn't booked in advance but despite this our meals were served quite swiftly and everyone enjoyed their selection from an extensive menu.



After lunch we drove to St Leonard's church in Flamstead. We had been given instructions so we let ourselves in and after dealing with the clock hammer we rang the bells up. This was not an easy task, the bells are long draught and the rope guides are very high. The third

and the fifth were very difficult to ring and generally it was not a pleasant

experience. By general consent we rang for half an hour to grab the tower and then rang down and drove home.

Many thanks to Bob Jones and Graham Ridgway for organising the towers and the lunch.

Tailenders' Programme for 2nd Quarter of 2015

Tuesday 14 April

St Albans

11.00 am – 12 noon, The Church of St Stephen
6 bells, 8-2-4 cwt in A (ground floor)

Lunch at The Chequers Inn, Redbourn

Flamstead

2.30 – 3.30 pm, The Church of St Leonard
6 bells, 13-1-14 cwt in E (ground floor)

Arranged by Bob Jones and Graham Ridgway
Ringing Master: Martin Barratt

Tuesday 12 May

Odell

11.00 am – 12 noon, The Church of All Saints
6 bells, 13-1-8 in F#

Lunch at The Queen's Head, Milton Ernest

Arranged by Barbara Woplin
Ringing Master: Richard Entwistle

Tuesday 9 June

Buckden

11.00 am – 12 noon, The Church of St Mary
6 bells, 13-0-12 in E

Lunch at The Lion, Buckden

Arranged by Humphrey Chetwynd-Talbot
Ringing Master: Barbara Woplin

If you have previously indicated that you will attend a monthly meeting and find that you are unable to do so, please let the organiser know.

From the Editor

If in any article the only contact details are a website or email address, and you do not have internet access, then in case of difficulty making contact please ask the Editor to make an initial contact on your behalf.

Views expressed in an article are those of its author. Articles may be edited.

Thanks go to the 'regular' contributors, as well as to Alex Nash for his Chairman's report, and Richard Hillson for the obituary of Ronald Freeman.

The next Headstock will be distributed at the Quarterly District Meeting taking place on 4 July 2015 at Turvey.

Please send your articles, announcements etc by 24 June 2015. Your input is what makes Headstock what it is.

Maureen Hall

Email: maureensgpost@gmail.com

Headstock

Headstock is issued quarterly and is available to all towers in the Bedford District at a cost of £1 per calendar year as a contribution towards printing costs, payable in January each year. The money is not being collected at present but contributions may be given to the District Bell Restoration Fund. Headstock is also available on the website of the Bedfordshire Association of Church Bell Ringers www.bacr.co.uk but the web version has all personal contact details as well as surnames of young ringers removed. If your tower does not currently receive Headstock then please contact the Editor at the address above.

