

Sandwich – encouraging progress

Canon David Naumann, the Rector of Sandwich, has suggested I write an account of what is happening at Sandwich, with regard to the installation of the six bells from Kirk Heaton in Yorkshire into the Church of St. Clement.

After an extremely slow start, things are now happening very rapidly. Since the bells were first delivered to Kent, almost two years ago, Ted Kingsland, who runs a local Agricultural Engineers, has, with the help of members of the KCACR, interested local people or just bullied relatives, moved the bells and the frame; from his works yard (to where they were originally delivered) to the redundant church of St. Peter (where they were stored for many months and got in everyone's way and where some other volunteers put the frame together so that the architect could measure it); from St. Peter's Church to St. Clement's; from St. Clement's up to Whitechapel (for refurbishment) and he has just brought the frame and fittings back and will bring the bells back in due course.

Whilst the bells were being moved about all over the town, work has been going on in the tower. Once the architect had given the go ahead and the necessary faculties had been obtained, the builders moved in and have, at the time of writing, finished the ringing room floor. Peter Romney and Brian Butcher, with some local help, have lowered the only remaining bell of a ring which was sold in 1866, to the ringing room floor and removed the large tubular bells which have been the voice of St. Clement's for many years. Now that the building work is almost complete Peter Romney is 'masterminding' the erection of the frame and the hanging of the bells.

In the late summer of '89, Nick Davies of Lydd, who succeeded Richard Offen as Diocesan Adviser on bells, suggested that as I was on the spot I should undertake to train a band. I wasn't at all keen on the idea! Far from being a bored housewife, I find more than enough to fill my time. Not only am I General



Trainee ringers at Sandwich.

[Photo courtesy East Kent Mercury]

Secretary to the KCACR, I edit the Canterbury District Newsletter, attend at least four practices a week, ring twice at Canterbury Cathedral on Sundays and I also work as a laboratory technician for a local pharmaceutical firm. Any hours left over are spent doing housework.

However, at the service held in late November 1989 to begin the appeal to raise the remaining money needed to complete the work, Peter Romney had arranged to have the Association display stand on show, on this, along with information about the history and organisation of the KCACR there is a small section which invites anyone who is interested in learning more about ringing to get in touch with the County Secretary and gives my name and address. On the following Saturday afternoon I was doing some long overdue housework when the door bell rang. It turned out to be a young lad, a boarder at the local Grammar School. He said he wanted to know more about ringing. I thought that he must have been sent by Canon Naumann, but on close questioning it turned out that he had read my name on the display stand and decided to come and find out more. This pricked my conscience!

Fortunately, after almost a year out of action for repairs to the tower, the bells of Ash (the next village) were ringable once again and so I approached Derek Chatfield, the local Captain and Chairman of the Canterbury District, to see if it would be possible to hold tied bell practices there, also fortunately Wednes-

day evenings became 'free' (young son having grown too old for cubs!). As it was by this time very near to Christmas it seemed inopportune to try to arrange anything over the festive season but I wrote to Canon Naumann to explain that I had arranged the use of Ash bells (for which we are extremely grateful) and I thought we should hold an inaugural meeting. The Rector wrote a letter to anyone he thought would be remotely interested inviting them to a meeting on the following Wednesday.

The response was very encouraging, some 15 people turned up with the promise of more who had not been able to come on the appointed Wednesday. The potential ringers are a mix of ages and occupations, from school children to people in retirement.

Malcolm Lodwick attended the initial meeting, as convener of the Association Training Committee, and we both stressed that ringing is a commitment not to be taken on lightly!

On the following Wednesday, with the invaluable help of my husband Ian, Nicky Jakeman and Nigel Wilkinson, we tied four bells at Ash and the training began. At the first meeting four of the recruits admitted to having had 'a go' before. Unfortunately, two of those failed subsequently to show up. Of the other two, one was promoted to the Ash practice on Friday nights because he can ring rounds and the other is rapidly getting her confidence back.

The 'raw' recruits are doing very well, some more well than others, but that is only to be expected. It is hoped that in the very near future it will be possible for us to have the use of Quex Park bells so that our pupils will actually have the opportunity to ring a bell that makes a noise, and to see and hear what bell ringing is all about.

We have currently 17 potential ringers in training, they I think are still enjoying themselves (I hope they continue to do so) and we look forward to when we can hold practices at Sandwich. The way things are moving that time is not far off! Chapter 2 in a few weeks?

PHIL YOUNG 1/3/90.

P.S. The bells have now been returned to Sandwich and it is hoped to get them hung in the next four weeks. All fingers crossed and a following wind!

After eight celebration

Father and daughter do it together. What? Complete the standard eight Surprise methods to quarter peals together.

The bells of Stokesley in North Yorkshire were augmented to eight in July 1988. Since then the band have converted to 8-bell ringing: quarter peals of Surprise Major have become a regular feature on Sunday evenings. Several of the band had very little experience on more than six bells, so the progress that has been made has been particularly pleasing.

A feature of ringing at Stokesley has been the number of family groups that have rung together. It was therefore perhaps not surprising that on Sunday, 25th February, Nicola and her father John Groom should complete the standard eight Surprise methods to quarter peals together. Bristol had been rung the previous Sunday to allow Dad to catch up, and then Pudsey had to be rung that evening to allow Nicola to complete the eight before her 16th birthday. Congratulations to both Nicola and John.

JOHN HALLETT
(Tower Captain)

Stokesley, N. Yorks. 25 Feb, 1250 Pudsey S. Major: R Brown 1, Rachel Parsons 2, Jean Hallett 3, Nicola Groom 4, J G Hallett 5, J E Groom 6, Christine Mills 7, P D A Mills (C) 8. Completes the standard eight-4, 6. For Evensong. 50p

1344				
Spliced Yorkshire and Plain Bob Major				
W	M	H		
-	-	-	P.Y.P.P.Y.	45236
-	-	s	Y.Y.Y.P.s	26534
-	-	-	P.Y.P.P.Y.	53264
-	-	-	Y.Y.Y.P.	42365
-	-	-	Y.P.Y.P.P.	34265
-	-	-	Y.P.Y.P.P.	23465
Repeat				PJR Bevis