



ANNUAL REPORT AND NEWSLETTER OF THE ANCIENT SOCIETY OF COLLEGE YOUTHS

MAY 2006



Past Masters of the Society assembled at Southwark for the dedication of the new bell installed in memory of Jim Prior.

The year since the last Newsletter has been another busy and successful one for the Society.

Last year's Newsletter featured a piece on Southwark Cathedral, in anticipation of the celebration there last May to mark the centenary of the Diocese and the dedication of a new sharp 2nd in memory of Jim Prior (Past Master and Secretary of the Society). There was a heavy Society focus at this splendid event; no less than 21 Past Masters and many other Members were present, a band of Past Masters rang the first touch on the new light eight (conducted by our senior Past Master, John Chilcott, defying his recent illness) and another Past Master, Brooke Lunn, preached the sermon in his inimitable style. The day was rounded off with a delicious buffet in the Cathedral Refectory.

The following Saturday saw the first all-Society 12-bell striking contest at Evesham. Unfortunately the sun didn't shine on us; indeed, at one point the rain was lashing down so hard that the judges could hardly hear the bells. Despite this, everyone thoroughly enjoyed the day and the knock-out format added a degree of interest. Unsurprisingly, the Birmingham band came out on top and collected the "Linford

Cup". The Brummies repeated their success in the "official" National 12-Bell Contest at Towcester, where (having finished a close second in the last two years) the Society's band came a creditable third, behind a delighted local band.

The Evesham contest was one of a number of "good ideas" promoted by our innovative and energetic Master, Simon Linford, whose drive and enthusiasm kept us going through a daunting schedule of activities. The summer passed in a whirl with peal weekends in Scotland, Manchester and the Channel Islands, followed by three big events - the UK05 tour, the Ringing Roadshow and the Society's Peal Weekend (all of which are featured later in this Newsletter) - and a successful Out of Town practice at Guildford Cathedral. Simon's contribution to UK05 and the Roadshow in particular was immense, and it was largely through his rare combination of vision and hard work that both events turned out to be such a success.

The centrepiece of UK05 was the Country Meeting, which this year was based in Nottingham. As usual the weekend began with several peals, Chris Kippin arrived on foot from Birmingham and we enjoyed general ringing at

several Nottingham towers on Saturday. The Business Meeting was held at Clifton, where the Society's second Master (Lord Clifford Clifton) is buried, and was followed by a very convivial dinner for 100 people in the Park Plaza Hotel. Our thanks to Richard Allton for arranging towers and to Peter Hayward for making us so welcome at Clifton.



Members of the UK05 party at Fettes College, Edinburgh

The Peal Weekend was a triumph of organisation, masterminded and led by the Junior Steward, Chris Kippin. The final tally of 45 peals is probably the most ever rung by the Society in a single weekend, and this contributed significantly towards the record total of 275 peals rung during the year. Simon's personal peal total (76) is also a record, rung with a remarkable 287 different Members. Highlights included the Cambridge handbell band's peal in 1053 Minor methods (unfortunately their attempt to ring 72,000 Minor came to grief after "only" 17 hours), the four peals of Maximus in a day by the same band at the Society's four 12-bell towers and the peal of 100 all the work Spliced S Major at Loughborough Bell Foundry in October.

As always, the Master's year was rounded off with the Anniversary Dinner, which this year was once again held at the Thistle (now Guoman) Tower Hotel on Tower Bridge. The weekend began with the usual series of peal attempts (the success rate being lower than usual, with only 5 scored) and a convivial Friday evening gathering in the Paternoster. Dinner Day morning saw Jim Phillips lead a very enjoyable walking tour of various places of historical interest to the Society, including St Sepulchre, St Bartholomew (Smithfield) and St Bride's, Fleet Street.

The Dinner itself was a grand occasion, with 295 people present. We were delighted that our Treasurer, Andrew Stubbs, was fit enough to take his customary place as Master of Ceremonies following his recent major operation. The Sub-Dean of Southwark (Canon Andrew Nunn) had us in stitches with his brilliant reply to the toast to the Church, more a stand-up routine than a speech in the usual sense. Other speakers included Bernard Taylor and the new Master of the Cumberlands, Simon Holden. We were also pleased to ring a touch on the (very pretty) handbells which had been generously donated to the Society by John and Ina Owen in May. It was a bonus that John and Ina were there to hear it.

The following Tuesday saw Simon hand over the reins as Master to Stephanie (Stef) Warboys. As well as being our first lady Master, Stef is a well-known ringer in her own right and has taken part in many of the Society's leading performances over recent years. She has thrown herself enthusiastically into her year as Master and has followed Simon's example with several new initiatives, some of which

are featured elsewhere in this Newsletter. Simon has moved to the Midlands and is devoting his considerable energies to running his family building firm, although he is still a regular visitor to London on Tuesdays. The top table was joined by Mark Humphreys, our new Junior Steward, who continues the trend of strong candidates willing to make the heavy commitment which the "ladder of office" now entails. We congratulate Mark and Emma on their recent wedding.

The November meeting also saw Chris Ridley elected as Librarian in place of Jim Phillips, who shocked us all in June by announcing his resignation after 13 years of magnificent service. Chris' election has provided an opportunity for a wide-ranging review of the direction and purpose of the Society's library, and a sub-group has been set up to support Chris in this exercise. Further details can be found on page 3.

The past 12 months have seen the launch of three major projects in which the Society has an interest. The first is the installation of a new sharp 2nd at Cripplegate, to provide a light 8 for service and peal ringing. This scheme has been masterminded by our Tower Secretary (Gwen Rogers) and I am pleased to report that it is now almost fully funded. The second is the plan to hang a new ring of 12 at St Magnus the Martyr, featured in Dickon Love's article on page 4. Finally, the project to replace the current bells at Cornhill (which are widely considered to be of inferior quality and too large for the tower) with a new 32 cwt ring of 12, funded by Past Master Dill Faulkes, has been approved by the PCC and is currently going through the faculty process. These are all exciting projects and we look forward to ringing on the new bells in the near future.

Other highlights of the last year have included the publication of a revised and updated version of Bill Cook's History of the Society, co-ordinated by Dickon Love; another very successful Advent Carol Service and Ringers' Social, this year hosted by the Society and expertly organised by Gwen Rogers; and a highly enjoyable Past Masters' Lunch in April. We have also celebrated three more all-Society weddings, with Past Masters Tony Kench, Paul Carless and John White marrying Enid, Janet and Ann respectively.

So the Society remains in excellent heart. We have another busy year ahead, with events such as the Master's Challenge in Bristol on 20th May and the Country Meeting in Birmingham on 15th July to look forward to. We hope to see many of you at Society events in 2006.

John Hughes-D'Aeth



Last year's Master, Simon Linford, flanked by his Stewards at the 368th Anniversary Dinner in November.

MASTER'S MESSAGE 2006 by *Stephanie Warboys*

I have been fortunate to become Master at a time when the Society is continuing to flourish. My job is to build on the firm foundations laid by my predecessors. We have elected a good number of members in recent years, many of whom will no doubt play a key role in the future of the Society. I have been trying to ring with as many recently elected members as possible during my year of office and to encourage them to take part in Society activities.

It is hard to believe that I am halfway through my year as Master. I certainly did not expect one of my duties to be a guest of honour at the Lord Mayor of Westminster's Annual Banquet, sitting between The Lord Mayor (Tim Joiner, who is a ringer) and the Duke of Westminster. A suitable new gown was purchased for the occasion!

I am pleased with our Tuesday night practices. They have generally been well attended and good striking has been achieved. The method repertoire is flexible to accommodate all members attending, including those who aspire to ring complicated methods and spliced.

I was delighted that the November Business Meeting approved my proposal that the Society should enter two bands in the 2006 National 12 Bell Striking Contest. The "A" band finished a close 4th at the Mancroft eliminator, having rung much better in practice. Several members of this band indicated that they had found the opportunity to take part extremely valuable in enhancing their ringing and I hope that the Contest Committee will allow my successor to build on this development. My thanks to David Hilling and Chris Rogers, who led the "A" band on my behalf.

The Society's other band put in a strong performance at the Southwark eliminator and won by a clear margin. The

final at Worcester Cathedral will be a challenge, but I am confident that we will rise to it. 24 June promises to be an excellent day and I would like to wish good luck to all Society members taking part.

My ringing roots are in Northamptonshire and I am trying to ring with as many Northamptonshire-resident members as possible during my year. My thanks to Robin Rogers for assisting with this. We have also visited Wales and Ireland so far this year and have received a very warm reception; the Welsh weekend in particular was a fantastic success, with good ringing and fellowship all weekend. I am grateful to David Llewellyn and our Welsh members for making such super bells available to us and to Gwen Rogers for her assistance in arranging all the peal attempts.

Following the hugely successful UK05 tour, I am pleased that our North American members have increased their activity levels. A number of UK members will be visiting Toronto in August to ring with many of our members resident in the USA and Canada. Although the Society's Business Meeting and main ringing base is in London, as someone who lives and rings in the Midlands, I think it is very important that we never overlook that we are a genuinely national and international ringing Society.

The social side of the Society's activities is integral to our culture and our continued success. Given my Birmingham connections, it is no surprise that this year's Country Meeting is being held there and I hope that many of you will be able to join us. I am also very much looking forward to the 369th Anniversary Dinner in November.

If you are ever in London on a Tuesday, please come and ring or join us in the pub – you will be most welcome.

LIBRARY UPDATE by *Chris Ridley*

After 13 years of sterling service as Librarian, Jim Phillips decided to stand down in 2005. Chris Ridley was subsequently elected as the new Librarian in November. Chris brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the post, having served on the Central Council's Library Committee for the past 10 years.

At present the Library comprises around 600 books, plus archive material and other property accumulated over many years, the majority of items having been donated. As such the information held on Society activities and traditions is not comprehensive, especially following the loss of material when the Coffee Pot was bombed in 1940.

An early job has been to review the purpose of the Library and the role of the Librarian. To help with this task, and make recommendations back to the Society, a Library Sub-group comprised of the Librarian, Secretary, Trustees, Chris Pickford and Steve Waters has been established. They intend to produce their first discussion paper around June 2006, with additional papers to follow as further decisions are required.

Various issues have already been considered by the Sub-group. For example, should activity in the future concentrate on developing the Library as an information source on the activities and traditions of the Society? At present complete records are only held on the membership and peals. Members will have seen the index of members prepared by Chris Pickford, which is on the Society's web

site. Whilst the peal books are impressive, both in content and for their art work, only details from 1968 have been entered on the impressive database maintained by Philip Saddleton (which can again be viewed on the web site). As a consequence, it is not yet possible to provide a full analysis of peal ringing activity over the last 300 years, nor to easily search for information.

There are both original and copy minute books going back to 1884, photograph albums of Past Masters from the late 19th century and other archival material. The Library also has some interesting early books on ringing and the personal papers of some famous ringers. How can best use be made of these items and what should the Library's acquisition policy be for the future? Work is already in hand to prepare a new detailed Library catalogue. When complete this should provide members with the opportunity to identify the scope of material already held, as well as those gaps in the archive which the Society might wish to fill in the longer term.

At the outset it is important to agree the future direction of the Library and to put in place any changes required. Later work will include the agreement of a programme of projects that members may be willing to assist with delivering. Meanwhile, Chris is happy to answer questions on the Library and to help with research enquiries. Please see the Society's web site for the necessary contact details.

RETURNING TO ST MAGNUS THE MARTYR

by Dickon R Love

It was a tower where the Society practised regularly, rang peals and kept some of its property. Ever since Annable and the College Youths rang the first peal on the ten bells in 1725, St Magnus had been a popular Society venue. Nobody present at the practice on 17 August 1939 could have known that they would never ring on those bells again.

The church was built at one end of London Bridge. As traffic increased, the walls under the tower were knocked through to allow a pavement to pass beneath it. The bridge has been moved a few metres westwards, but the old approach to the bridge is clearly marked, passing as it does next to the Monument. The bells were taken out of the tower to keep them safe from Hitler's bombers – a sensible course of action that had also been followed at Southwark Cathedral, the two St Bartholomew towers and St Andrew Undershaft. However, while the church escaped the bombing, the bells never made it back up the tower.

The loss of many of the Society's rings of bells during bombing raids was matched by the decline in the number of London members. The bells at St Paul's and Cornhill escaped untouched and were sufficient to occupy those who were left. One by one, other rings of bells were restored: the twelve at Southwark returned from storage; new rings were provided for Cripplegate, St Andrew's Holborn, St Lawrence Jewry and finally St Mary-le-Bow. With all these bells appearing, it is little wonder that there was no enthusiasm to restore the ten at St Magnus, which must have seemed mediocre by comparison. However, links with the church were maintained and the Rector was invited to attend the Anniversary Dinner each year.

The church sent the bells to Whitechapel in 1951, where they were cleaned and prepared for refitting and rehangings. While there, four of them were found to be cracked, and what was initially a simple rehangings job became much more serious. The Rector, Fr Fynes-Clinton, worked hard to raise the necessary money, but after his death, interest waned and even the College Youths forgot that they were a tower missing. The church struck a deal with the foundry; all debts were settled in exchange for the bell metal. Thus, after years of cluttering up the foundry yard, the ten bells were finally broken up in autumn 1976.

The inside of the tower had remained untouched since 1940, allowing the memory of the ring to live on as one by one those who had rung them passed away. I first visited in 2001 and saw for myself the old ringing room, the bell frame, the internal trap doors still open, the peal boards on the walls, the collection of spare stays and the top hat and coat racks. Some may have read my report in the *Ringings World* at the time. It all seemed such a shame. A few years later, I approached the new Priest in Charge (Fr Philip Warner). He and the PCC agreed that something should be done and asked the College Youths to help.

In July 2005 the Society agreed to lend its name to the project. A committee of six trustees was assembled: Paul Mounsey (Chairman), myself (Secretary), David Hilling (Treasurer), John Hughes-D'Aeth, Fr Philip Warner and Graham Ralph, a former director of the Charity Commission. By the end of the year, the Fund had been registered with the Charity Commission and a Fundraising Committee appointed. Quotations have been sought and an appeal for £200,000 is now being launched.

The original plan was to install a second hand ring in the old frame, and consideration was given to acquiring the 21 cwt ring of eight from All Saints, Northampton. However, it became clear that the frame was no longer suitable, and that there would be more interest from donors in a new ring in a new frame. There was also a clear preference for a ring of 12 bells. It is well known that all the rings of twelve in the City of London have their own difficulties and none is easy to ring. The prospect of a new, easy to handle, clear and available 25 cwt twelve on one level is appealing. Such a resource would be valuable, not only to the Society,



but to London and the south generally. Since the church is not interested in Sunday Service ringing, this will not put pressure on the already stretched Sunday bands in the City. Service ringing could be carried out in the week when more people are around to hear the bells, and indeed to ring them. It is envisaged that, once the bells are in and dedicated, the Society will be formally invited to look after the tower.

Although no one lives there, more people pass through the Parish of St Magnus every day than any other parish in the City; it truly is the Gateway to the City of London. This attempt to restore a lost piece of the City's heritage will also be an important part of the ministry of St Magnus. In doing so the ancient art of bellringing will be promoted in the City as we create a useful training ground for new and improving 12-bell ringers.

The money for this project will be raised from City businesses, livery companies, foundations and trusts, as well as from ringers and ringing organisations. The appeal will be launched on 22nd June with an event in the church. Individuals or companies will have the option to sponsor individual bells and dedicate them as they see fit, and a number of bells have so far been sponsored. An appeal for general donations from members and other ringers will be issued once the appeal is in progress.

I very much look forward to the day (in early 2008) when the Society will return to St Magnus for a Tuesday night practice, except that instead of Caters and Royal, the Master will be placing bands for Cinques and Maximus!

To enquire about bell sponsorship, contact:
Dickon Love, 10 Wharton Road, Bromley, Kent
BR1 3LF. Tel 07733 310459.
Email secretary@magnusbells.com.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

COUNTRY MEETING 2006

This year's Country Meeting is to be held on Saturday 15 July, in the Master's stamping ground of Birmingham. As well as being England's second city, it is of course a leading centre of ringing on 12 (and more) bells.

As has become the custom, there will be a programme of peals on the Thursday and Friday beforehand, mainly in Staffordshire (please contact the Junior Steward if you are interested). General ringing will be available at various Birmingham towers on Saturday, including the new ring of 10 at St Paul's in the Jewellery Quarter.

PEAL WEEKEND

Last year's Peal Weekend saw no less than 58 peals attempted, of which 45 were successful - probably a record. The plan, devised by the Junior Steward (Chris Kippin), was to arrange peal attempts in every English county, plus England and Wales. Even Chris' patient yet firm coaxing couldn't quite achieve this, but he did succeed in mobilising a large number of Members around the country, some of whom had not previously participated in Society activities. In the process we were able to renew contact with many "lost" Members.

The following comments from Ian Unsworth (our man in Gloucestershire) are typical of many received since:

When you first approached me about arranging a Gloucestershire attempt I could only think of about 5 or 6 active members living in the county... After talking to some of those the list grew to about a dozen, plus 3 or 4 who no longer ring peals. When your list arrived it contained some names that I knew but was unaware of their membership and others that I have never encountered...

I decided to write to everyone on the composite list to tell them of the "grand plan" and to invite them to express

The Business Meeting will be held in the Council Chamber, followed by the Dinner in the sumptuous surroundings of the Council House next door. This venue is well known to Members who have attended the Henry Johnson Dinner and we are looking forward to a splendid evening with our Brummie hosts. We are also proposing to use the Dinner as an opportunity to mark Andrew Stubbs' 25 years as Treasurer, again in his home city.

Full details of the weekend (including accommodation details) can be found on the Society's Web Site.

their interest. I had a total of 31 replies! ... I had three very interesting letters from older members who are no longer able to take part in extended ringing but who were grateful for the contact made and hoped to be able to... join with other members for a drink/lunch sometime...

As one of the "lost" members put it, "The Society, in the past, did not have formal contact with individual members. Any contact one might have had was with other members that one knew or through the very occasional visit to a London practice... Since getting back on to the mailing list I have very much enjoyed reading of the exploits and activities of the Society."

Chris will be organising the 2006 event also, over the weekend of 15-17 September. The plan is similar to last year, but this time based on Dioceses. Invitations to arrange bands will shortly go out to all those who were identified as organisers last year. Anyone who wishes to volunteer to arrange an attempt, or would like to be put in touch with his or her local organiser, should contact Chris on 01256 381308 or at thekippins@btinternet.com. Let's see if we can beat last year's record!

OUT OF TOWN PRACTICE

In recent years we have started holding one of our Tuesday night practices outside our usual area of the City of London and Southwark.

We are intending to hold another Out of Town Practice this year, on Tuesday 25 July at Great St Mary's, Cambridge. Please come and join us if you can.

369th ANNIVERSARY DINNER

Following two successful years, the Anniversary Dinner will once again be held at the Thistle Tower Hotel (close to Tower Bridge) on Saturday 4th November.

Last year's Dinner was the largest since the 350th Anniversary in 1987, with 295 people present, but there is still plenty of room for more. Almost all the arrangements worked well last year, and this time we are hoping to get the pre-dinner drinking and wine pre-ordering right as well! We have secured Derek Sibson, the current

President of the Central Council and a Past Master of the "other Society", as our principal guest speaker.

As last year, the seating plan will consist of round tables of 10. Members are invited to make up their own tables and to encourage "occasional" and prospective new members to join them.

Accommodation at the Thistle Tower and other hotels in the area is available at competitive prices through Reservations 2000 (see below for details).

ACCOMMODATION FOR SOCIETY EVENTS

Special accommodation rates for the Country Meeting and the Anniversary Dinner are once again available through Reservations 2000. For details please contact them on 020

8547 0601, quoting the Society, or obtain an online booking form by e-mail from res2000@res2000.co.uk or from the Society's Web Site.

THE 275 PEALS RUNG IN 2004/2005

Information compiled by Philip Saddleton, Peal Recorder

Date	Tower	Method	Cond
2/4/05	S Sepulchre, Newgate	Spliced Maximus (6m)	JNH-D
3/4/05	Shoreditch, S Leonard	Spliced S Major (8m)	SAC
4/4/05	Mandurah, W Australia	Spliced S Major (8m)	PCR
4/4/05	Mosman Park, W Australia	Uxbridge S Major	FRS
5/4/05	Bishopstoke, S Mary	Stedman Triples	RL
6/4/05	Perth, Swan Tower	Cambridge S Sixteen	SJLL
6/4/05	(H) Perth Cath (Vestry)	Plain Bob Major	AFB
7/4/05	Claremont, W Australia	TD Minor (7m)	BHT
8/4/05	Claremont, W Australia	TD Minor (7m)	SJLL
8/4/05	(H) Perth, Chifley Terrace	Stedman Cinques	PNM
9/4/05	Ipswich, S Mary-le-Tower	Stedman Cinques	CHR
14/4/05	South Croydon, S Peter	Stedman Cinques	MJU
14/4/05	Willesden, Middx	Spliced S Major (64m)	SJLL
16/4/05	Croydon, S John	Stedman Cinques	BHT
16/4/05	S Giles, Cripplegate	Orion S Maximus	PNM
16/4/05	Guildford Cathedral	Cambridge S Maximus	SJLL
17/4/05	Walworth, S Peter	Spliced S Major (23m)	AJG
18/4/05	Willesden, Middx	Spliced S Major (101m)	SJLL
20/4/05	(H) Cornhill Vestry	Stedman Cinques	DCB
23/4/05	St Martin-in-the-Fields	Spliced Maximus (2m)	JNH-D
24/4/05	Towcester, Northants	Bristol S Maximus	JNH-D
24/4/05	Birmingham S Martin	Stedman Cinques	DEH
30/4/05	Saffron Walden	Bristol S Maximus	DER
30/4/05	Inveraray, All Saints	Stedman Caters	DPH
30/4/05	Chewton Mendip, Som	Bristol S Major	SJLL
30/4/05	Ditcheat, Som	Spliced S Major (8m)	SJLL
1/5/05	Edinburgh, S Cuthbert	Cat's-Eye S Royal	MJH
2/5/05	Bristol, S Mary Redcliffe	Stedman Cinques	DEH
2/5/05	Edinburgh Cathedral	London No.3 S Royal	JC
3/5/05	Bishopstoke, S Mary	Spliced D Royal (4m)	RL
7/5/05	Milford on Sea, Hants	Stedman Triples	JRP
7/5/05	Ipswich S Mary-le-Tower	Bristol S Maximus	AJG
11/5/05	(H) Cambridge, Victoria St	Spliced TD Minor	AJWT
12/5/05	(H) Cornhill Vestry	Stedman Cinques	DJS
12/5/05	(H) Cambridge, Victoria St	Spliced TB Minor (29m)	AJWT
14/5/05	S Sepulchre, Newgate	Cambridge S Maximus	JNH-D
14/5/05	South Croydon, S Peter	Stedman Cinques	DEH
16/5/05	S Sepulchre, Newgate	Stedman Cinques	PNM
17/5/05	Bishopstoke, S Mary	Anglia S Royal	RL
23/5/05	Eardisland, Herefords	Yarkhill S Major	BHT
24/5/05	Kingstone, Herefords	Spliced S Major (8m)	FRS
25/5/05	(H) Cornhill Vestry	Stedman Cinques	PNM
25/5/05	Hanbury, Worcs	London S Major	FRS
26/5/05	Great Hampton, Worcs	Lincolnshire S Major	SWB
28/5/05	Shepton Beauchamp, Som	Bristol S Maximus	DGH
28/5/05	Sherborne, Dorset	London S Major	RCK
28/5/05	Doncaster, S Yorks	Spliced S Major (8m)	SJLL
28/5/05	Dodderhill, Worcs	Yorkshire S Major	CJP
30/5/05	Peterborough Cathedral	Stedman Cinques	DJB
30/5/05	South Petherton, Som	Stedman Cinques	DJP
1/6/05	(H) Cambridge, Victoria St	Spliced TD Minor (1053m)	AJWT
4/6/05	S Sepulchre, Newgate	Spliced Maximus (6m)	JNH-D
5/6/05	Birmingham, S Martin	Spliced S Sixteen (3m)	RWP
6/6/05	Maidstone, All Saints	Spliced S Royal (4m)	JBK
8/6/05	(H) Cornhill Vestry	Stedman Caters	PCR
8/6/05	(H) Cambridge, Victoria St	S Minor (15m)	AJWT
11/6/05	S Giles, Cripplegate	Spliced S Maximus (4m)	PNM
11/6/05	S Mary-le-Bow, Cheapside	Barford S Maximus	ROH
11/6/05	S Sepulchre, Newgate	Bristol S Maximus	AJG
11/6/05	S Michael, Cornhill	Cambridge S Maximus	SJLL
18/6/05	Amersham, Bucks	Cambridge S Maximus	SJLL
22/6/05	(H) Cornhill Vestry	Stedman Cinques	PNM
23/6/05	S Giles, Cripplegate	Bristol S Maximus	MJC
29/6/05	(H) Willingham, Cambs	TD Minor (59m)	AJWT
3/7/05	Reading, S Laurence	Orion S Maximus	JSW
8/7/05	Inverness Cathedral	Cambridge S Royal	SJLL
9/7/05	Amersham, Bucks	Bristol S Maximus	JNH-D
9/7/05	Inveraray, All Saints	London No.3 S Royal	MJC
9/7/05	Glasgow Cathedral	Grandsire Caters	PJS
9/7/05	Haddington, E Lothian	Uxbridge S Major	DH
10/7/05	Westminster Abbey	Stedman Caters	NT
10/7/05	Alloa, S John Evan.	Bristol S Major	JSW
10/7/05	Edinburgh, S Cuthbert	Spliced S Royal (4m)	JEA
10/7/05	Edinburgh, Fettes College	S Minor (7m)	CJB
13/7/05	(H) Cambridge, Victoria St	TD Minor (43m)	AJWT
16/7/05	Cottered, Herts	Stedman Doubles	JNH-D
16/7/05	Hyde, Manchester	Yorkshire S Major	SJLL
16/7/05	Ashton under Lyne, S Peter	Spliced S Major (8m)	JSW

Date	Tower	Method	Cond	Date	Tower	Method	Cond
16/7/05	Prestwich, Lancs	Spliced S Major (23m)	JEA	17/9/05	Wroxham, Norfolk	Minor (7m)	RPJC
16/7/05	Pendleton, Lancs	Spliced S Major (4m)	PDH	17/9/05	St Albans, S Michael	Bristol S Major	SWP
16/7/05	Swinton, Lancs	Crewkerne S Major	GRB	17/9/05	Milverton, Som	Bristol S Major	TMP
16/7/05	Walkden, Lancs	Grandsire Triples	PLF	17/9/05	King's Norton, Leics	London S Major	RHC
17/7/05	Burnley, Lancs	Bristol S Royal	GHC	17/9/05	Burnley, Lancs	Spliced S Major (8m)	PCR
17/7/05	Heywood, Lancs	Yorkshire S Major	PCR	17/9/05	High Wycombe, Bucks	Cambridge S Major	RHN
17/7/05	Stand, Lancs, Whitefield	Bristol S Major	JB	17/9/05	Bury St Edmunds Cath	Cambridge S Royal	JAS
22/7/05	(H) Cambridge, Victoria St	TD Minor (35m)	AJWT	17/9/05	Withycombe Raleigh	London No.3 S Royal	MJH
24/7/05	Wadenhoe, Northants	Spliced TD Minor (147m)	JSW	17/9/05	Kendal, Cumbria	Cambridge S Royal	JEA
25/7/05	(H) Cambridge, Victoria St	Spliced TD Minor	AJWT	17/9/05	Thorverton, Devon	Cambridge S Royal	MECM
26/7/05	(H) Willingham, Cambs	Spliced TD Minor (147m)	AJWT	17/9/05	West Kirby, Cheshire	Yorkshire S Major	PDH
27/7/05	S Giles, Cripplegate	Stedman Cinques	DJB	17/9/05	Kilkhampton, Cornwall	Cornwall S Major	FMSS
30/7/05	Guernsey, St Peter Port	Spliced S Major (4m)	RCK	17/9/05	Bisley, Glos	Lincolnshire S Major	PGH
30/7/05	Guernsey, S Marguerite	Spliced S Major (30m)	BHT	17/9/05	Cambridge, S Andrew	Spliced S Major (4m)	JRJ
31/7/05	Jersey, S John in the Oaks	Spliced S Major (8m)	SJLL	17/9/05	Brighton, S Nicholas	Stedman Triples	DEH
2/8/05	Purton, Wilts, S Mary	London S Major	FRS	18/9/05	Crewe, Cheshire	Cambridge S Royal	PDH
5/8/05	Buckland, Oxon	Cambridge S Major	JAA	18/9/05	Staindrop, Durham	Pudsey S Major	DH
6/8/05	Adelaide, S Aus, S Peter	Spliced S Major (8m)	JNH-D	18/9/05	Gloucester, S Mary	Stedman Triples	JHN
6/8/05	Shrewsbury, S Chad	Spliced S Maximus (4m)	PNM	18/9/05	Huntsham, Devon	Superlative S Major	RAMN
6/8/05	Manchester Cathedral	Cambridge S Royal	JB	18/9/05	Wakefield Cathedral	Stedman Cinques	AMM
9/8/05	Sutton Courtenay, Oxon	Stedman Triples	JP	18/9/05	Newport, Isle of Wight	Cambridge S Maximus	RL
9/8/05	Drayton, Oxon	Stedman Triples	JP	18/9/05	Mavesyn Ridware, Staffs	Spliced S Major (8m)	JSW
12/8/05	Christchurch, NZ, Cath	Bristol S Maximus	MPAW	19/9/05	Rotherham, S Yorks	Bristol S Maximus	MST
13/8/05	Worcester Cathedral	Spliced Maximus (4m)	PNM	19/9/05	(H) Willingham, Cambs	TD Minor (45m)	AJWT
13/8/05	Portsmouth Cathedral	London No.3 S Royal	SJLL	19/9/05	(H) Thatcham, Berks	Plain Bob Maximus	WFB
13/8/05	S Lawrence, Jewry	Erin Triples	DCB	20/9/05	Bishopstoke, S Mary	Spliced S Royal (6m)	RL
24/8/05	Caversham, Berks	Superlative S Major	SJLL	21/9/05	(H) Cornhill Vestry	Stedman Caters	PABS
24/8/05	S Giles, Cripplegate	Stedman Cinques	PNM	24/9/05	Shoreditch, S Leonard	London No.3 S Royal	JSW
25/8/05	Clifton, Notts, Holy Trinity	Bristol S Major	JAA	24/9/05	Sedgley, W Mids	Yorkshire S Major	SJLL
25/8/05	Clifton, Notts, S Mary	Rutland S Major	ND	27/9/05	(H) Willingham, Cambs	TD Minor (31m)	AJWT
25/8/05	Beeston, Notts	Spliced S Royal (5m)	PNM	28/9/05	South Croxdon, S Peter	Stedman Cinques	DCB
25/8/05	Nottingham, S Peter	Yorkshire S Maximus	RIA	30/9/05	Shoreditch, S Leonard	Spliced S Major (99m)	SJLL
26/8/05	Radcliffe on Trent, Notts	Spliced S Major (5m)	JNH-D	1/10/05	Sherborne, Dorset	Spliced S Major (8m)	SAC
26/8/05	Colston Bassett, Notts	London S Major	PNM	1/10/05	Southwark Cathedral	Stedman Cinques	JSW
27/8/05	Lockington, Leics	Stedman Cinques	RHC	2/10/05	(H) Willingham, Cambs	TD Minor (25m)	AJWT
27/8/05	Hucknall, Notts	Bristol S Major	PABS	3/10/05	(H) Barrow upon Soar	Diwali S Royal	JMJ
28/8/05	Wakefield Cathedral	Spliced S Maximus (4m)	JSW	4/10/05	(H) Willingham, Cambs	TD Minor (26m)	AJWT
28/8/05	Nottingham, S Mary	Stedman Cinques	RCK	5/10/05	(H) The Counting House	Stedman Cinques	PCR
29/8/05	Manchester Town Hall	Bristol S Maximus	PJS	6/10/05	S Giles, Cripplegate	Spliced S Major (100m)	SJLL
6/9/05	Bishopstoke, S Mary	Spliced S Royal (4m)	RL	13/10/05	Westminster Abbey	London No.3 S Royal	RHB
10/9/05	(H) Newbury Racecourse	TD Minor (7m)	AJWT	13/10/05	(H) Willingham, Cambs	Spliced TD Minor	AJWT
14/9/05	S Mary-le-Bow, Cheapside	Stedman Cinques	JNH-D	15/10/05	Worcester Cathedral	Bristol S Maximus	JC
15/9/05	Burghill, Herefords	Belfast S Major	FRS	15/10/05	S Mary-le-Bow, Cheapside	Stedman Cinques	PNM
16/9/05	Ormesby, Cleveland	Cambridge S Major	PJS	15/10/05	Leicester, S Margaret	Stedman Cinques	DEH
16/9/05	Catherington, Hants	Trafalgar S Major	RME	16/10/05	Walworth, S Peter	Spliced S Major (20m)	AJG
16/9/05	Thorverton, Devon	Yorkshire S Major	MECM	16/10/05	Gloucester, S Mary	Stedman Triples	JRR
16/9/05	Towcester, Northants	Lincolnshire S Maximus	AWRW	16/10/05	S Giles, Cripplegate	S Minor (7m)	CJP
16/9/05	Lincoln, S Giles	Yorkshire S Major	CPT	22/10/05	Chelmsford Cathedral	Stedman Cinques	PNM
16/9/05	Elloughton, Yorks	S Minor (7m)	FNP	23/10/05	S George-in-the-East	Spliced S Major (8m)	SAC
16/9/05	(H) Dorridge, W Mids	Plain Bob Major	JSW	23/10/05	Skipton, N Yorks	Superlative S Major	SJLL
17/9/05	Helions Bumpstead, Essex	Covingham S Major	AMB	26/10/05	Hurstbourne Priors, Hants	Stedman Triples	PABS
17/9/05	Wareham, Dorset	Stedman Caters	TFC	28/10/05	Loughborough Bellfoundry	Spliced S Major (100m)	SJLL
17/9/05	Bristol Cathedral	Spliced S Major (6m)	KWS	29/10/05	Bishopstoke, S Mary	Bristol S Royal	RL
17/9/05	Bermondsey, S James	Lincolnshire S Major	JWH	29/10/05	Wigan, All Saints	London No.3 S Royal	SJLL
17/9/05	Wellesbourne, Warks	Cambridge S Major	GWR	30/10/05	Liverpool, Pier Head	Bristol S Maximus	PDH
17/9/05	S Giles, Cripplegate	Spliced S Maximus (4m)	JNH-D	31/10/05	Stoke Poges, Bucks	Bristol S Major	SJLL
17/9/05	Hodnet, Salop	Bristol S Major	NB	4/11/05	S Giles, Cripplegate	Bristol S Maximus	RCK
17/9/05	Northallerton, N Yorks	Yorkshire S Royal	PJS	5/11/05	S Mary-le-Bow, Cheapside	Stedman Cinques	RCK
17/9/05	Farnham, Surrey	Stedman Caters	CHR	5/11/05	Shoreditch, S Leonard	Yorkshire S Maximus	PJS
17/9/05	Basingstoke, All Saints	Grandsire Caters	CJD	5/11/05	St Neots, Cambs	Spliced S Major (4m)	TWG
17/9/05	Bishopstoke, S Mary	Yorkshire S Royal	RL	5/11/05	Limehouse, S Anne	Cambridge S Royal	RL
17/9/05	East Ilsley, Berks	Berkshire S Major	WFB				

545 Members took part, led by

Total	Cond	Tower	Cond	Hand	Cond	
76	32	76	32			Simon J L Linford
45		44		1		Stephanie J Warboys
42	15	34	11	8	4	Paul N Mounsey
40	7	40	7			Andrew J Graham
38	15	38	15			John N Hughes-D'Aeth
37		16		21		Philip J Earis
36	17	35	16	1	1	John S Warboys
35		35				Eleanor J Linford
33	2	33	2			David J Baverstock
31	1	10	1	21		David J Pipe
26	1	26	1			Robin O Hall

Peals rung at 164 Towers, led by

London, St Giles, Cripplegate	14
Bishopstoke, Hants, St Mary	12
London, St Sepulchre without Newgate	10
London, St Mary le Bow	6
11 Handbell venues, led by	
Cambridge, 12 Victoria St	12
Cornhill Vestry	8
Willingham, Cambs, 53 Covent Garden	8
Simon Linford rang the most changes in the year (403,506), followed by Philip Earis (351,243) and David Pipe (313,632).	

Peals - Year to November:

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997
Sixteen	2	1	6	2	1				
Septuples		3							
Septuples/16	1								
Fourteen		1	1						
Sextuples							1		
Maximus	49	50	67	57	37	28	16	16	20
Cinques/Max	1	1	1	2	1				
Cinques	25	20	25	22	14	15	12	10	10
Royal	33	30	28	29	23	25	12	10	12
Caters/Royal	1		1		1				
Caters	13	9	9	12	14	20	11	5	10
Major	84	37	43	52	50	27	21	13	19
Triples	14	5	4	7	8	9	6	4	2
Minor	15	6	8	5	6	5	3	3	
Doubles	1	1			1	1	2		1
Total Tower	239	164	193	188	156	130	84	61	74
Sixteen					1				
Fourteen				1	1				
Maximus	1		2		1	5	6	1	1
Cinques	7	9	12	7	9	9	11	15	14
Royal	1		3	4				1	
Caters	3		3	3	2	1	2	3	2
Major	3	3	3	2	4		1		1
Triples		1	1		1				
Minor	21	15		1					
Doubles		2							
Total Hand	36	30	24	18	19	15	20	20	18
Total	275	194	217	206	175	145	104	81	92

THE RINGING ROADSHOW by *Simon Linford*

Not everyone supported the Master's initiative of taking a stand at last year's Ringing Roadshow. Do we need to do it? What are we trying to prove? But some of us saw the Roadshow as an opportunity to showcase the activities of the Society, to show ringers in general why we are proud to be members, and to give existing members attending the Roadshow something to feel part of and to associate with.

With this in mind, a small group led by Simon and Eleanor Linford, Stephanie Warboys, Andrew Kelso and a family of Hughes-D'Aeths planned, created and executed what turned out to be an excellent presence at the Roadshow. The stand was designed to make visitors aware of the Society's history, to showcase its ringing achievements and to display many of the items of property which are rarely seen other than by members on Meeting Nights. But the two pieces de resistance were the plasma screen and the beer.

Showing continuously on a 42" screen (kindly supplied by Laith Reynolds) was film of a course of Bristol Maximus at St Paul's Cathedral, rung by the St Paul's Guild on a Sunday afternoon a few weeks earlier. On average there were between half a dozen and 20 people watching it, many never having heard Bristol Maximus rung properly if at all, others not having seen inside such a fabled ringing chamber. We could have sold 50 copies of the DVD there and then. It put the slide show on the neighbouring SRCY stand in its place. Then there was the beer. Free beer for members and invited guests provided a focal point on the CY stand long after the beer tent had stopped serving.

And that was where we scored highly. Our stand provided a focus for members, a chance to meet, have a beer and be part of something special. It proved the doubters wrong, it was well worth the effort and it is well worth doing again.

THE SOCIETY'S BELL RESTORATION FUND

by *Andrew Stubbs*

Income to the Bell Restoration Fund has recently been running at a level of around £7,000 per annum. In the last two years we have spent nearly as much as we have received, most of the expenditure being at Cripplegate and Cornhill. For 2006, we have already granted £5,000 towards the new sharp second at Cripplegate and the Society is supporting the project for the new 12 at St Magnus the Martyr, although the extent of our financial contribution is not yet determined.

Although the Fund is in a healthy state, we need to replace the capital we are spending. One significant source of income is the Annual Steepleage scheme, where Members pay an annual amount to the BRF under Gift Aid instead of paying £1 (which goes into the General Fund) each time they attend a practice or Business Meeting. Whilst this scheme is primarily aimed at the regular Tuesday nighters, a number of other Members have elected to join as a way of supporting the Society, even though they are unable to attend many of our activities.

If you would be interested in helping the Society through this scheme, please contact the Treasurer who will supply the necessary Gift Aid form. The current rate of Annual Steepleage is £40 per annum, although higher rate taxpayers are encouraged to pay at least £52 as they can claim back the difference as tax relief. But donations of any size are always welcome.

Please help us to maintain the heritage of which we are the current custodians.

MEMBERSHIP PROPOSALS

We welcome proposals for new members, either in person at a Business Meeting or by letter or e-mail to the Secretary. Proposals should be accompanied by the full postal address (including post code) of the candidate.

The Rules state that candidates should be over the age of 14, not members of the Cumberlands, have rung at least a quarter peal in a standard method and be "suitable persons who will uphold the traditions and standards of the Society". In practice potential members will usually have achieved much more than this, since membership of the Society is rightly seen as a privilege accorded only to ringers who have reached an excellent standard or who otherwise command respect in their local area.

It is always useful to have advance notice of membership proposals, so that further enquiries can be made if necessary. Ideally at least one of the sponsors should be a long-standing and active member of the Society. Failing this, support for the candidate from other members in the local area will be helpful. Candidates and their sponsors are encouraged to be present at their election meeting if possible, but we recognise that distance will rule this out in some cases.

Every new member is entitled to receive a copy of the updated edition of Bill Cook's "History of the Society" when he (or she) is elected. The membership fee (a once only payment) is £30, payable on election.

NEW MEMBERS

The following were elected and welcomed as new Members in the year to November 2005:

Andrew P F Bradford of St Olave, Hart Street
Charles W G Herriott of St Olave, Hart Street
Ashley C Fortey of Stoke Edith, Herefordshire
Clyde W Wallbanks of Glasgow
Jennifer E Butler of Cambridge
Roger G R Collins of Saffron Walden
James A Forster of Stevenage
Edward N Hughes-D'Aeth of St Albans
Owen J Borlase of St Anns Chapel, Cornwall
Pleasance W Purser of Wellington, New Zealand
Keith P Tompsett of Llandeilo, Carmarthen)
Anthea S Edwards of Birmingham
Malcolm P Taylor of Tewkesbury
James A Haseldine of Long Crendon, Bucks
Ashley B Wilson of Preston
Christopher C P Woodcock of Potterhanworth, Lincoln
John A Smith of Hobart, Tasmania
Joanna Wenborne of Bradford Peverell, Dorset

Mary S Faircloth of Bottesford, Leics
D J Rhys Greenhalgh of Perth, Western Australia
Michael R Harrison of Washington DC
Richard D Blagrove of Shrewsbury
Valdeane W Brown of Victoria, BC
Dr Michelle Greener of York
Matthew D Hardy of Market Deeping, Lincs
Nicholas T Smith of Great Shelford, Cambridge
Rosemary H K Brooke of Cambridge
Mark W Sayers of Leek Wootton, Warwicks
Annie Hall of Warwick
Peter Dawson of Newcastle upon Tyne
Anne L Kleiser of Brecon
Alison Alcock of Clifford, Herefords
Anne D Jones of Radyr, Cardiff
Mary E Hardy of Cardiff
John R Fisher of Cubbington, Warwicks

OBITUARY

The following are the Members to whom tribute was paid at Society Business Meetings in the year to November 2005:

Derek Jewell of Combe Martin, Devon, elected 1954
Robert J Lindsell of Braintree, elected 1971
G Leslie A Lunn of Lea (Lincs), elected 1985
Francis P G (Peter) Flack of Baldock, elected 1986
John R (Dick) Chaundy of Oxford, elected 1959
Leslie D Duguid of Copnor, Hants, elected 1953
David J Buckley of Wells, elected 1976
Alan F Thirst of Ashford (Middlesex), elected 1956
John J F Roper of Melbourne (Australia), elected 1965
Ralph G Edwards of Long Ashton, elected 1953

Frank C Price of Newmarket, elected 1953
Brian J Willett, formerly of Baldock, elected 1972
James H Pailing of Orpington, elected 1958
Thomas W Lewis of Worcester, elected 1978
Roger E L Burbery of Ashdon, Essex, elected 1970
Arthur S Stracey, formerly of Stepney, elected 1939
Raymond F Overy, formerly of Balcombe, elected 1930
John W T Taylor of Allesley (Coventry), elected 1962
Harold V Frost, formerly of St Albans, elected 1934
Trevor N J Bailey of Beccles, elected 1957

MILESTONES

We congratulate the following Members who celebrated 50 years' membership in 2005:

Brian Bladon
Geoffrey F Bryant MBE
Tudor P Edwards
George Francis
Stephen J Ivin
Clement W Jose

Alan F Lee
David J Marshall
George W Pipe
William J Ridgman
Brian A Tomlinson

And the following Members who celebrated 60 years' membership:

Jeffrey C Birt
G William Critchley
John R Mayne

Arthur Newton
Donald C Price

Congratulations also to Frederick N Smeaton who achieved the even greater distinction of 70 years' Membership.

We were very pleased that Jeff Birt, Don Price, Brian Bladon, Clem Jose and George Pipe were able to attend the 368th Anniversary Dinner last November. Other Members present with over 50 years' membership included Jim Bullock (64), Philip Hudson (55), David Kingston (54), Bill Butler (54), Jim Phillips (53) and Basil Jones (52).

IMPRESSIONS OF UK05

Much has already been said and written about UK05, the tour of the UK arranged by Simon Linford for overseas Members. Rather than another tour report, we decided to invite a number of participants to pen their impressions of UK05 and the Society. Here are their offerings...

Cecily Rock (Washington) writes:

"The UK 05 tour fittingly opened in a pub called The Back of Beyond. Hadn't we just come from the back of beyond? Over dinner, the tour participants finally met each other and the energetic organiser, Simon Linford. None of us knew more than a few of the others, but that quickly changed as we began to ring together, catch trains and coaches as a group, and compete with each other for the bathrooms at the university accommodation.

The international character of the group was nicely captured when a quarter peal was rung late in the tour with band members from Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada, the US and Britain. The tour also included ringers from Malta and Switzerland. There were 22 of us in total, plus many British ringers who appeared at every stop to help out. International relations were advanced at the Country Meeting Dinner, in numerous pubs, and especially through the kind hospitality of Heather and Chris Kippin, the Towcester ringers, the Northallerton ringers and the London College Youths, all of whom hosted our large, hungry group and provided a hearty welcome.

Except for those few who were knocking the rust off long disused skills, the tour was an eye-opening experience for most of us. Among the many things we learned was that both acceptable striking and acceptable beer are much narrower categories than one might think. The beer part came much more easily. Many of us rang new methods and on larger numbers of bells than at home. Seven quarters and 4 peals were scored by tour members.

The number of towers (67 in two weeks) tested the stair-climbing proclivities of some. There were subdued rumblings in favour of ground-floor rings. The variety of bells rung touched the extremes, from the 63-pound campanile at the Taylor Bell Foundry to the 62-hundredweight 12 of St. Paul's Cathedral. Geographically, the tour extended from Bristol, Bath and Wells in the west through London, Loughborough, Coventry, Nottingham, Lincoln, Oxford, Durham, Newcastle, York and the Dales, with a lightning strike as far north as Edinburgh.

Naturally, a lot of transportation was involved. This may have been the most character-revealing aspect of the tour. Some became giddy during the two rollicking trips between Northallerton and York in Ian's bus, a London Routemaster which drew stares doubtless because it was so far from its stated destination, Notting Hill Gate.

After months of anticipation, tour members may have wondered whether the tour could live up to our expectations. It is safe to say that it far exceeded them."

Vicki Hodgkin (Perth) writes:

"The first time I heard about the Ancient Society of College Youths was when it was suggested to me that I could be nominated for membership. I was somewhat daunted by the description of this grand society and suspected that I wasn't really a worthy candidate. However, it seemed that my credentials were acceptable and a member I became.

My first encounter with Society members en masse was during the Australia and New Zealand tour in 2003 and they turned out not to be intimidating, as I had feared, but in fact very friendly and helpful to us disadvantaged colonials. Following that, I jumped at the chance to go on a Society tour of the UK and I wasn't disappointed.

The UK05 tour was a fantastic experience and left me wanting to drop everything and move to the UK to become more involved in Society activities. Unfortunately practicalities make this difficult, although I dream that one day it may be possible.

I am still astounded by how much was crammed into that fortnight. We travelled literally from one end of the country to the other and rang in a huge number of places and on a wide variety of bells. The brief glimpses of the towns, cities and countryside we passed through were a great bonus (not to mention the regular pub stops which were of great value to the Australians who can't get real beer at home!). The friendly and hospitable people who assisted with the tour and joined in at various places along the way really topped it off.

I can never thank Simon enough for making it all happen and giving me the opportunity to play a small part in the history of this fine Society."

Eve Munns (Vancouver) wrote the Ringing World report of the tour. Some extracts are reproduced below:

"The announcement that a two week tour of many of the great towers in the UK was being planned for "out of country" members drew an enthusiastic response from all corners of the globe.

It took a great leap of faith both for Simon Linford, who had spent an immense amount of time and effort preparing for the tour, and for the ancient tourists who had to turn up at Reading station not knowing whether to turn left or right to find their accommodation! However Simon and his band of helpers were there, equipped with GPS to take us to our lodgings. Ringers are a faithful bunch.

We travelled the length and breadth of England (plus an important bit of Scotland) by train and coach, staying in Reading, Nottingham (where we joined the ASCY Country Meeting) and York. The only decisions to make were what to wear, which beer to drink and which methods to ring. We sat back and left the rest to Simon (and the bus driver). It was a very relaxing experience, allowing us to do what ringers to best - to ring and be sociable.

The group's abilities varied from expert to extremely rusty. When asked on the first day "did you know what you were letting yourself in for?", Simon replied "I didn't think it would be quite like this!" However, with so much daily ringing everyone improved rapidly. The theme method (Bristol) was rung at every opportunity, balanced by rounds and call changes on 10 and 12 for those not used to higher numbers. Many in the group progressed - to Stedman and Grandsire Cinques, Cambridge Maximus and Spliced Surprise.

Highlights included ringing at St Mary Redcliffe, York Minster, anti-clockwise Bath Abbey, tiny Ault Hucknall and 9 Cathedrals; seeing bells being cast at Loughborough; Joselyn took great delight in tolling the great bell at Newcastle Cathedral, and who can forget climbing the 330 steps to the tower at Durham Cathedral?...

Our thanks go to the literally dozens of ringers who turned out to ring with us, let us in, feed and water us and

generally make us feel welcome and very much at home. This was the tour of a lifetime... A special thank you to Simon for conceiving, co-ordinating and delivering this wonderful tour. Same time next year Simon?"

O RARE BEN by Chris Ridley



The handbell peal band at St Bride's: Stephanie Warboys, John Hughes-D'Aeth, David Brown and Dickon Love.

No history of the Society would be complete without reference to Benjamin Annable, who was a leading light of the early Exercise.

Parish records suggest that Annable may have been christened at Cripplegate on 28 August 1702. A year later he moved with his parents to Dove Court, Gutter Lane off Cheapside. Sadly his father died while he was still young, leaving his mother and two brothers, Samuel and Robert. She remarried Edmund Smith and the young Annable became a baker's apprentice. He grew up to be someone who knew his own mind, was a born leader and insisted on the highest standards of ringing. These traits led both to personal success and notoriety during his ringing career.

At the age of 19 he joined the Society, at a time when peal ringing was in its infancy. It was also a time when the culture of the Society was changing, with an influx of members drawn from the professional and working classes. Ringing practices became more important and there appears to have been some resentment from the older members who in general were not as technically competent and had joined for social rather than ringing purposes.

Although a fine ringer (especially on heavy bells) and a skilled composer and conductor, his domineering character appears to have annoyed some members. It is therefore not surprising to find that the majority of new members admitted to membership between 1722 and 1725 were directly recruited to form the basis of Annable's peal band.

The first peal in the Society's peal book records this band's performance of 5060 Grandsire Cinques at St Bride's, Fleet Street on 19th January 1725 (or 1724/25 old style). They were either unaware of the earlier peal performance at St Sepulchre, Newgate in 1690 or chose to ignore it. Interestingly, Annable only rang the 2nd bell in this peal and did not conduct it. This was soon to change.

A few weeks later on 15 February he called 5058 Grandsire Caters at St Magnus the Martyr, using his own composition which was a few changes longer than the

Well, maybe not this year, but plans are already being hatched for UK08 (guess when?), which will be timed to coincide with the Country Meeting in Liverpool. More details will follow, but get planning (and saving) now!

previous peal rung by the London Scholars. This was followed by the first peals of Plain Bob Major and Royal at St Bride's, on 26 April and 22 November respectively, with Bob Maximus following the year after.

Annable introduced two great innovations into his compositions, which greatly improved their musical qualities. The first was to use the tenors (rather than the front bells) as the observation bells in Plain Bob, and the second was the use of the tittums position in Grandsire.

The first known long length was 6,832 changes of Bob Major, conducted by Annable at Lambeth in 1726. This was beaten in 1728 by 10,800 Bob Major at Bermondsey, which was the greatest number of changes then rung. An entry from diarist Thomas Hearne of Oxford around 1733 states that '*One Annables is now putting out a new edition of [Campanalogia Improved 3rd edition] which tis said, will be the best of its kind ever yet printed on that subject. The said Annable ... is judged to understand ringing as well as, if not better than, any man in the world*'.

Between 1725 and 1729 Annable became the leading member of the Society, conducting the majority of the peals rung. However, dissent over his leadership role led to fewer peals in later years. It was not until 1737 that he was elected Steward, and he was finally elevated to the position of Master in 1746.

Around this time a number of other able ringers, including John Holt, joined the College Youths. This saw Annable's prominence as the leading all round ringer diminish. Unfortunately, John Holt's membership proved to be brief; he died aged 27, before the publication of his classic composition as a broadsheet in 1753. Soon after Annable encouraged a number of prominent ringers from the Eastern Scholars to join the Society, presumably to reaffirm the position of his peal band. This ultimately led to the split in the Society in 1756 which resulted in the establishment of the Ancient Society based at St Martin-in-the-Fields, with Annable's supporters remaining as the College Youths, or what is now frequently called the First Junior Society. It was not until 1788 that the two groups re-united and adopted the now familiar ASCY title.

Annable died in 1756 and was buried at the foot of the tower of St Bride's. A cutting from a contemporary newspaper is quoted in Dr Mason's manuscript:

"A few nights ago was buried, under the Tower of St Bride's Mr Benjamin Annable, the best ringer that ever was known in the world. Till his time ringing was only called an art, but from the strength of his great genius, he married it to the mathematics and tis now a science. This man in figures and ringing was like a Newton in philosophy, a Ratcliff in physic, a Hardwick in wisdom, a Handel in music, a Shakespeare in writing and a Garrick in acting. O rare Ben!"

The Society marked the 250th anniversary of his death on 1 February 2006 with three peals, including a handbell peal in the former ringing chamber at St Bride's, Fleet Street.

PRACTICE SCHEDULE 2006

Practices are normally advertised in the last Ringing World of each month and on the Society's Web Site.

May	2:N	9:B*	16:C	23:B	30:D
Jun	6:N	13:B*	20:P	27:B	
Jul	4:C	11:P*	18:N	25:O	
Aug	1:P	8:N*	15:G	22:B	29:S
Sep	5:M	12:C*	19:G	26:N	
Oct	3:P	10:B*	17:N	24:G	31:S
Nov	7:G	14:B*	21:N	28:S	
Dec	5:P	12:C*	19:G	26:B	

B = St Mary-le-Bow N = St Sepulchre, Newgate
C = St Michael's Cornhill P = St Paul's Cathedral
G = St Giles, Cripplegate S = Southwark Cathedral
D = St Leonard, Shoreditch M = St Martin-in-the-Fields
O = Out of Town, Cambridge
* Denotes Meeting Night

The normal venue for Business Meetings and post-practice drinks (except when the practice is at Southwark) is The Counting House, 50 Cornhill, London EC3.

SOCIETY OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS 2005/6

Master	Stephanie J Warboys
Secretary	John N Hughes-D'Aeth
Treasurer	Andrew N Stubbs
Senior Steward	Robert C Kippin
Junior Steward	Mark A Humphreys
Librarian	Christopher J Ridley
Trustees	David E House Christopher H Rogers
Peal Recorder	Philip A B Saddleton
Webmaster	Dickon R Love

TOWER SECRETARIES

St Mary-le-Bow: Mark Regan, 31 Park Street, Worcester WR5 1AD. Tel 0797 157 3688

E-mail: markregan@arcubus.com

St Michael's Cornhill: Tony Kench, 75 Little Britain Apt 51, London EC1A 7BT. Tel 020 7796 2656

E-mail: tony.kench@btinternet.com

St Giles Cripplegate: Gwen Rogers, 193 Lennard Road, Beckenham, Kent BR3 1QN. Tel 020 8778 6308

E-mail: gbm.rogers@ntlworld.com

St Lawrence Jewry: David Baverstock, Flat 3, St George in the East, Cannon Street Road, London E1 OBH. Tel 020 8980 0562

E-mail: david.baverstock@kcl.ac.uk

St Sepulchre: Katie Town, 43 Weavers Way, Camden, London NW1 0XF. Tel 020 7387 0810

E-mail: katie.town@roh.org.uk

MAILING LIST

If you know of any members who are no longer in touch with the Society, please let us know. Thanks to all those members who have identified "lost members" and sent in their details.

CORRESPONDENCE

Please send to the Secretary, John Hughes-D'Aeth, 9 Falstaff Gardens, St Albans, Herts AL1 2AL. Tel 01727 863470. E-mail: secretary@ascy.org.uk. Items for the Web Site should be e-mailed to the Webmaster, Dickon Love (webmaster@ascy.org.uk).

ASCY ON THE WEB

The Society's website is at www.ascy.org.uk. The website gives regular updates on Society activities as well as contact details for Members, Society peals back to 1968 and much other information. Pictures of Society events are particularly popular and occasionally controversial.

SOCIETY E-MAIL NEWS SERVICE

The Society maintains an e-mail news service, which is free to Members. Subscription is via the web site or by sending an e-mail request to the Secretary or the Webmaster. Members are encouraged to subscribe to the group and to provide their e-mail address for inclusion on the (spam-proof) website list.

PEAL FEES

The peal fee remains £1.50 per rope and should be forwarded to the Secretary or Treasurer within 2 months, together with details including composition. Advance notice of peals is given at Society Meetings if advised in time. The Society's Peal Book, which was about 7 years behind, is currently being written up to date.

NEWSLETTER FINANCE

This Newsletter is made possible by the contributions made by Members. Total production and postage costs of last year's Newsletter were in the region of £1,350 and Members' contributions totalled just over £900. We are very grateful to the many Members who contributed.

In order to save costs, it has been suggested that the Newsletter be issued in future as an electronic (pdf) copy for those who wish to receive it in this form. An invitation to indicate a preference has been issued to subscribers to the Society's e-mail news service, and a significant number of Members have expressed a willingness to receive a pdf copy. We recognise that not all Members will wish (or be able) to do so, but would urge you at least to consider it. Please e-mail the Secretary (address above) if you have not already done so and would like a pdf copy next year.

The use of pdf (particularly for overseas Members) is likely to lead to a slight decrease in production and postage costs from last year. However, the remaining costs (in particular printing and UK postage) continue to rise. We would therefore particularly welcome donations from those who have chosen not to contribute in the past. We regret that it is not possible to acknowledge donations individually, but they are very much appreciated.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A big thank you to all those who have helped to put this Newsletter together, including all the contributors, Dickon Love (technical support), Chris Rogers for investigating printing options and my family for stuffing envelopes and putting up with me! Your efforts are much appreciated.