

# Biographical Record

## Frederick Ernest DUKES C.Eng., F.I.E.E., F.I.E.I. (Fred) (1912 – 1998)

Represented the Irish Association on the Central Council from 1945-1989,  
was a Life member from 1989-1998 and attended 52 Council meetings

Frederick Ernest Dukes was born in Dublin on 23 May 1912. He learned to ring at St. George's Church in Dublin in October 1928. His first peal was Grandsire Triples at St. Mary's Cathedral Limerick on 1 August 1938. He rang several notable peals: one was a family peal of Grandsire Doubles which he conducted on handbells with his wife and his sister. He conducted the first peal of Plain Bob Minor rung in Ireland at St. George's Dublin in 1944; this was the first in the method by all the band. In October 1943 Fred cycled 110 miles and called a peal of Grandsire Doubles at Arklow. He was the first Irishman to ring a peal of Surprise Maximus in his own country.

He was attached to several different Irish towers during his long ringing career: St George's, Dublin 1928-1932; St. Patrick's Cathedral Dublin in 1933 and 1936-1946; St. Fin Barre's Cathedral Cork 1934-1936. For a while his work took him to Dundalk, where there are no bells, but in 1950 he moved to Drogheda where he rang for the rest of his life. While he was in Cork he taught a new band as the bells as been silent when he arrived there.

Fred was a member of the Central Council Public Relation Committee – co-opted in 1982 and a full member of the committee until his death in 1998. He was also on the Standing Committee from 1954-1972 and in the Administrative Committee from 1972-1981. He worked tirelessly as the Overseas Liaison Officer for the Council. He kept in touch with many overseas ringing outposts and kept them informed about ringing in the rest of the world and kept the Council informed about what was going on in the various towers abroad.

Fred's contribution to ringing in Ireland was immense. He was the General Secretary of the Irish Association for 44 years and the Editor of Irish Bell News for 37 years. He was the first Irishman to ring 100 peals. During his time as Secretary of the Association he visited many Irish towers and helped train the local bands. He was Ringing Master at St. Peter's Drogheda for many years, a post he still held at his death. He was also the first person to ring 100 peals in Ireland and apparently in order to do that, he had travelled an average of 158 miles per peal! He rang a total of 166 peals, 84 as conductor and one in which he shared the conducting. 102 of his peals were on handbells.

Fred worked in the electrical industry. He was Treasurer of the Electrical Division Board of the Institution of Engineers of Ireland. He was elected a member of the National Wiring Rules Committee of the Electro-Technical Council of Ireland in 1976.



He was the author of a book: Campanology in Ireland and was working on a second book at the time of his death.

Fred died on 27th December 1998 and his funeral was held on December 30th at St. Peter's Drogheda.

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