

Biographical Record

Howard William EGGLESTONE (1936 – 2013)

Represented the Suffolk Guild from 1966 to 1978, was an honorary member from 1978 to 1984, represented the Oxford Diocesan Guild from 1984 to 1993, was a life member from 1993 and attended 43 meetings

Howard Egglestone was born in Letterstone, Pembrokeshire, on April 22nd, 1936. However, by 1950 he had moved to Boreham in Essex where he learnt to ring. He was taught bell handling and basic change ringing by Sam Everett who was also secretary of the South Eastern District of the Essex Association. For the next eleven years he remained in the Essex association, but in 1961 he moved to Henley, Suffolk and became a member of the Suffolk Association.

In 1962 Howard became Ringing Master of the South East District of the Suffolk Guild, and became Central Council Representative of the Suffolk Guild in 1966. Howard was a Central Council Rep for a further 43 years, including 11 years as a Life Member. During his time as a CC Rep he had a 25 years association with The Ringing World, from 1974 to 1999. Initially he was Convenor of The Ringing World Committee of the Central Council for three years, seeing through the change to Limited Company status. He then served as Managing Director for a further 12 years. Over this 25 years Howard played a big part in The Ringing World's development, helping to steer a small, niche, publication through a period of great change.

Howard's first peal was at Boreham in 1952 and was half-muffled in memory of King George VI, Plain Bob Major. Although he was not a prolific peal ringer (only 1400 in total) those peals which he rang include some great performances, including a number of record lengths (when rung) and numbers of methods. During this time Howard met another ringer, Margaret Panton, who he subsequently married. He conducted Margaret's first peal in April 1959.

He was in the band which rang the record length peal of 22400 changes at Kirkby-le-Soken in 11 hours 45 minutes, longest length on church bells at the time. He also rang record peals (at the time they were rung) at Birmingham Cathedral (12144 Bristol S Maximums), Daventry (15120 Bristol S Royal), All Saints Worcester (10560 Spliced S Maximus – 20 methods) and Shoreditch – twice (8000 Spliced S Maximus – 170 methods, tenor, and 8000 Spliced S Royal – 204 methods, tenor). Other long lengths were 10080 Plain Bob Major at Debenham as conductor, and 11111 Stedman Cinques at St Martin's Birmingham. Another notable peal took place at Henley, Suffolk, in December 1977 when Howard conducted 5120 Superlative S Major; he had taught the other 7 members of the band from scratch. He was also proud to have rung peals at Liverpool Cathedral, St Paul's Cathedral, York Minster (4) and Exeter Cathedral (18).

In 1960 he joined the Society of Royal Cumberland Youths, the start of an association which lasted the rest of his ringing career.

Following his marriage to Margaret, they moved to Suffolk. This led to a large contribution to ringing in Suffolk during the period 1962 to 1977, including teaching a band from scratch at Henley – a previously silent tower, culminating in the peal of Superlative.

In 1977 Howard moved to Newbury, where the association with the Cumberland Youths strengthened, and then in 1992 he moved to Crediton. Initially Crediton was a Devon call change tower, so he initially rang at Exeter Cathedral. However, by the late 1990s work was needed at Crediton, so fundraising began for a new ring of bells, and 10 bells were hung in a 12 bell frame. Two new bells were given in 2007 to complete the 12. Howard is credited as the driving force behind the augmentation, and also with the subsequent decision to hold the National 12 bell contest at Crediton in 2010 as a result of his serious selling job.

Aside from ringing, he was a great walker and during the 1970s he was an Ipswich Town season ticket holder. Howard played golf, and in recent years he and Margaret were keen followers of Somerset County Cricket at Taunton.

Howard died on 17th February 2013, and his funeral was held at Holy Cross, Crediton on 1st March 2013.

Tributes appeared in The Ringing World, 2013 pages 194, 325-30, 347 and 403

