

Biographical Record

Valhalla Vivienne Hepworth Hill (Val) GROSSMITH (nee Hill) (1923 - 2012)

Represented the Zimbabwe Guild on the Central Council
from 1989 to 2004 and attended 13 meetings

Val was born Valhalla Vivienne Hepworth Hill in Liphook in Hampshire on March 19th 1923. She was taught to ring in June 1939 by Jack Adams, sexton of the church at Bramshott,. She rang there until the outbreak of war. Between 1943 and 1944 she rang at Christ Church Oxford, and at St. Martin and All Saints, Oxford. In 1945 she rang for a short while at St. Mary, Walthamstow, after which she returned to Bramshott where she rang until 1948, ringing at Holy Trinity Guildford during that period also. From November 1961 to October 1991 she rang at Salisbury/Harare in Zimbabwe.

Val's first quarter peal was Grandsire Triples and she rang it at Kidlington on August 29th 1943; this was quickly followed by her first peal, Plain Bob Major, at Burford on 11th September 1943. She rang a total of 35 peals, the last being in 1998.

She was a founder member and Vice-President of the Zimbabwe Guild between 1961 and 1991. The Guild had several different names while she was a member: Mashonaland Diocesan Guild, Central African Provincial Guild, then Rhodesian Guild and finally Zimbabwe Guild. At the time she was a member, ringing opportunities were limited due to the fact that she lived between 60 and 80 miles north of Harare.

Val was a true ringing character: she arranged both change ringing and tune ringing on handbells when she was in Zimbabwe. She travelled to local practices on her bicycle on her return to England and enjoyed her pint in the pub afterwards.

An article about Val appeared in *The Ringing World* on April 18th 2003, when her fellow ringers from Hampshire arranged for her to have her first flying lesson her 80th birthday. She also rang a quarter peal of Double Norwich Court Bob Major to celebrate that day.

Val was a midwife by profession, although she had spent part of her life farming in Zimbabwe.

She died on March 18th 2012, the day before her 89th birthday. Her funeral was held at St. Michael the Archangel, Aldershot on March 29th.

Her obituary appeared in The Ringing World on 18th May 2012

