

Biographical Record

Geoffrey DODDS, M.A. (1925 - 2011)

**Represented the Hertford County Association on the Central Council
from 1960 – 1990 and attended 30 meetings**

Geoffrey Dodds was born at Isleworth, Middlesex on 31st October 1925.

Olive Ashbrook, later Olive Rogers, wife of Harold Rogers, taught him to ring at Isleworth, his first lesson being on 1st October 1937, shortly before his 12th birthday. He rang at Isleworth until about 1945 when he became attached to Brentford. In 1952 he moved to St. Albans where he rang at St. Michaels' until 1953, when he joined the band at St Albans Cathedral, ringing here for the rest of his life. In addition to ringing at the Cathedral he rang at St. Peter's, St. Stephen's and St. Michael's in St. Albans and also at Lemsford and Sandridge.

Geoffrey's first peal was Plain Bob Minor at Somersham in Huntingdonshire on 12th September 1944 and his first as conductor was also Plain Bob Minor at Norwood Green on 2nd November 1946, this being the first peal for the London University Society. On 1st June 1950 he conducted a peal of 6 Spliced Plain Major on handbells, the first for the Cambridge University Guild. On 2nd May 1948 he rang a 10,000 of Plain Bob Royal. His 300th peal was at St. Albans Abbey on 29th July 1981.

He rang in an 80th birthday compliment peal to himself on 6th November 2005 and on 12th October 2007 he rang a peal at Isleworth to celebrate the 70th anniversary of his introduction to ringing. He rang a total of 438 peals: 319 were on tower bells and the remaining 119 were on handbells.

He held a variety of different offices in the societies of which he was a member: District Secretary of the Middlesex County Association; Librarian (1947-1948) and Master (1949-1950) of the Cambridge University Guild; President of the Hertford County Association 1977-1978. He became a Life member of the Hertford County Association in 1995.

Whilst a member of the Central Council, Geoffrey served on the Records Committee 1968-1984 and on the Computer Co-ordination Committee 1984-1990.

At one time he was a paid instructor in 'Campanology' in the RAF. He helped in restoration projects at Brentford, South Mimms, Studham, Caddington and Sandridge. He and his wife taught many ringers and helped install a ring of six bells in Lemsford. They also wrote a new edition of *The Church Bells of Hertfordshire*.

Geoff read Natural Sciences at Emmanuel College Cambridge, being sponsored by the RAF. Whilst in the RAF he trained as a wireless operator and navigator. He later worked as a technical engineer for various companies.

His other interests included railways and canals.

He died on 30th January 2011. A memorial service for him took place at St. Albans Cathedral on 11th March.

Obituary: 'The Ringing World' on April 29th 2011.

