

Biographical Record

Andrew Nicholas STUBBS (1939 – 2020)

Represented the Ancient Society of College Youths on the Central Council from 1975 to 2008, Life Member from 2008 to 2018, Fellow from 2018 to 2020 and attended 43 meetings

Andrew Stubbs was born on 9th October 1939 in Handsworth, Birmingham where he grew up. He gained a scholarship to King Edward's School, Birmingham and went on to Hertford College, Oxford in 1958 to study Maths and French, graduating in 1961. He then moved to London, living in Ruislip, and joined Equity and Law Life Assurance Company where he had a successful career, working at their head offices in London and High Wycombe. The company opened another decentralised head office in Coventry in the early 1980s and Andrew returned to the Midlands, to a flat in Solihull where he lived for the rest of his life.

Andrew learnt to ring at St Mary's, Handsworth in 1954, taught by Ian Thompson. He was extremely talented, an accurate striker, and he became a prolific peal ringer. His first peal was at Shirley on 8th January 1959, ringing the Treble to Cambridge S Major. He went on to ring 2184 peals between 1959 and 2014, and was a great supporter of the peals at St Philip's Cathedral Birmingham, where he rang 235 peals between 1960 and 2005, often on the sixth. He rang 687 peals on 12 or more, including the first peal of Orion in February 1982. He rang in five long lengths and identified three of these as his most notable peals: 15,699 Stedman Cinques at Birmingham Cathedral in 1966 (which was then a record length), 16,559 Grandsire Caters at Appleton in 1968 (also then a record length), and 13,968 Spliced Surprise Maximus (11 methods) at Bradford Cathedral in 1980. However, he only conducted 4 peals, including 2 Surprise Major, mostly early in his peal ringing career. He considered himself to be a "light end" specialist, and was not often to be found on heavier bells in peals.

After arriving in Oxford in 1958 he became a long-serving and dedicated member of the Oxford University Society (OUS), becoming Master in 1959 and serving for four terms. He was proud of the fact that during his period as Master, the Society had ensured that all of the bells in the City Churches were rung every Sunday during University Terms. After leaving Oxford he continued to be an active non-resident OUS member, and when he became Master of the College Youths in 1968, he was elected a Vice-President of the OUS, and from 1982 to 1999 he served with distinction as OUS President. He rang 137 peals for the OUS between 1959 and 2013, a good number of them from his later years.

Andrew was a dedicated member of the Ancient Society of College Youths (ASCY), elected in 1961 and serving as Master in 1968-1969. He became Treasurer in 1981, serving an impressive term of 25 years before standing down in November 2006. For many years he also served as Toastmaster at the Society's annual dinners. He rang 404 peals for the ASCY between 1961 and 2011, many being of Cinques or Maximus.

Andrew joined the St Paul's Cathedral band in the 1960s and remained a full member until 2000, long after moving to Solihull, driving to London every fortnight for service ringing.

On returning to the Midlands Andrew became active in the St Martin's Guild, serving as Master from 1985 to 1997 and as a Life Vice-President from 2001. He was Bell Advisor for

the Birmingham Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches, Trustee of the Guild's Bell Restoration Fund, and Tower Secretary at St Chad's Cathedral in Birmingham.

Andrew's 47 years on the Central Council included serving on The Ringing World Committee from 1978 to 1984, on the Board of The Ringing World Ltd from 1984 to 2002 (Chairman 1998 to 2002), and as Steward of the Rolls of Honour from 1999 to 2008.

In all the roles he undertook for various organisations, Andrew would aim to ensure that things were carefully considered and done properly. He was conservative by nature, held strong and bold views, and stood his ground when he felt it necessary, but his concern was always to do his best by the ringing organisations he served. His contributions were always wise and measured, but often given with a dry touch of humour.

After emergency abdominal surgery in 2004 Andrew found that he could no longer drink real ale, which along with smoking had been one of his passions. He joined the Birmingham Ileostomy Association in 2008 and soon afterwards joined the Association's local committee and became its Treasurer, a role that he fulfilled until his death. Needless to say, he carried out this office with his usual conscientiousness, and was regarded as an important member of the committee with his keen understanding of the law, of company procedures and of finance. He was also heavily involved in supporting patients in challenging times.

Andrew was a bachelor all his life but he was devoted to his brother and sister in law's family, including their children and grandchildren, and supporting all they did. Music was one of his main interest outside ringing, and he frequently attended CBSO's concerts in Birmingham. He greatly enjoyed travelling, and explored the world with a number of long-haul trips and cruises, especially in his later years. Closer to home, he organised an annual narrow boat trip with friends around canals in the Midlands and Yorkshire, and also regular holidays with OUS friends to Lynton over the first May Bank Holiday, and a weekend in November to take part in a Devon call change competition at Molland.

Andrew regularly attended the Henry Johnson Dinner in Birmingham over many years, with what proved to be his last at the end of February 2020. Sadly, he died of Covid-19 just over a month later on 2nd April 2020.

His obituary appeared in The Ringing World 2020, page 494

