

*The Weekly Journal for
Church Bell Ringers since 1911*

No. 5259 February 10, 2012 Price £1.95
Editor: Robert Lewis

50th anniversary of the opening of the new Bow bells *by Mark Regan, former Steeplekeeper*

If you watch the Ealing Comedy *The Ladykillers*, many of the car chases were in Cheapside. It was filmed in 1955: then Cheapside and most of the City was still bomb damaged and derelict. Quite different from what we can see today.

However, one building is distinctly recognisable: the damaged and scaffolded tower of this church. In 1955 Wren's famous steeple was being rebuilt: but what of its bells?

They had been destroyed in May 1941. And just over 20 years later, on 20th December 1961, they were heard once more over the City of London.

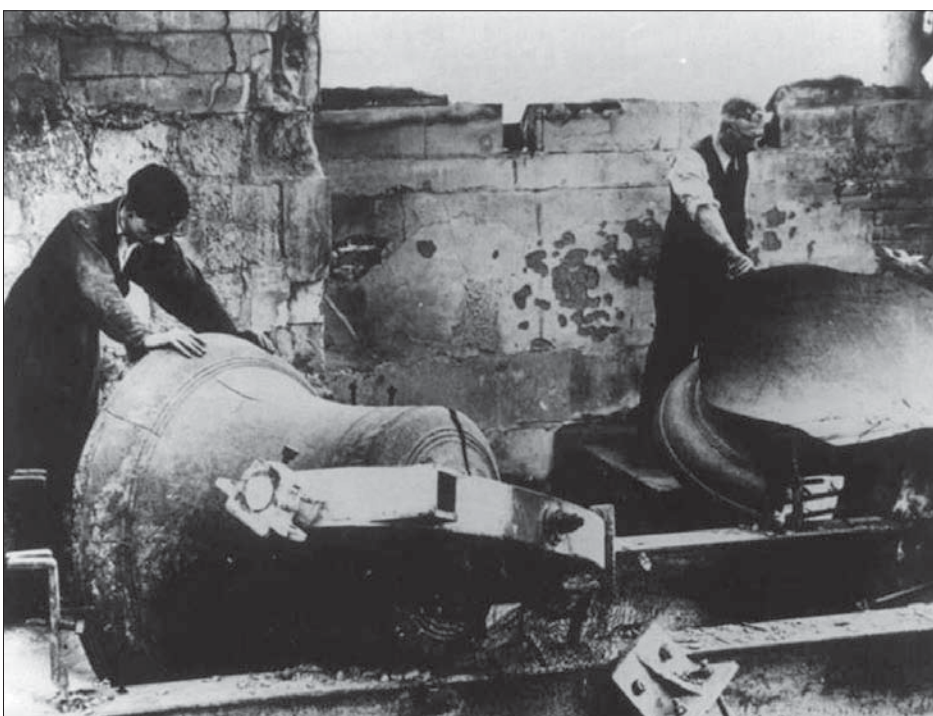
In 1955, the Rector, Hugh Evan Hopkins, and the new Lord Mayor, Alderman Sir Cuthbert Ackroyd, were plotting the

restoration of Bow Bells. The Mayor of the City of London made Bow Bells his charitable enterprise for his year in office. What an endorsement of the importance of these bells. And another chapter in their remarkable story.

As well as their association with Dick Whittington and *Oranges and Lemons*, Bow bells had been broadcast on the BBC's World Service to the free people of Europe during the war. Their sound became a symbol of freedom and hope. The Mayor and the Rector asked members of the Armed Forces to help raise money for the new bells. Broken pieces of Bow bells went on tour in the newly liberated Europe. Speeches were made and money was raised.



The new bells in 1961 – Bill Theobald and Douglas Hughes of Whitechapel on the right



The War damaged Gillett & Johnston bells in May 1941

In the City, the Mayor and the Rector were busy. In 1956 they asked the Pearly Kings and Queens of Cockney London to raise money in 'Bow Bells week'. This they did in force, with enthusiasm and great success.

Soon, Ackroyd and Hopkins had raised enough money and the new bells were cast at the Whitechapel Bellfoundry. After they were tuned, the bells were turned upside down and the special chiming system was fitted so Ackroyd could hear Bow bells in his year as Mayor.

Ackroyd had done it: Bow bells would be heard once more in the City of London. However, the restoration of the church would take another five years to complete. The new Rector, Joe McCulloch, successfully continued Ackroyd's and Hopkin's work. The bells arrived were hoisted into the restored tower. They were installed under the careful



(Founded by John S Goldsmith)
**Official Journal of the
 Central Council of Church Bell Ringers**

35A High Street, Andover, SP10 1LJ
 Telephone: 01264 366 620 Fax: 01264 360 594

Editor: Robert A Lewis

General Manager: Chris Darvill, 01264 366 646

E-mail addresses – editorial:

editor@ringingworld.co.uk
 letters@ringingworld.co.uk
 snippets@ringingworld.co.uk
 news@ringingworld.co.uk

E-mail addresses – administrative support:

manager@ringingworld.co.uk
 notices@ringingworld.co.uk
 subs@ringingworld.co.uk
 peals@ringingworld.co.uk
 quarters@ringingworld.co.uk

RW Web Pages: <http://www.ringingworld.co.uk>

ONLINE-ONLY SUBSCRIPTION

available worldwide

12 months, by UK Direct Debit **£42.00**
 12 months, paid by other means **£45.00**

POSTAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

One copy, 3 months **£20.00**
 One copy, 6 months **£34.00**
 One copy, 12 months **£63.00**
 One copy, 12 months, by Direct Debit **£59.00**

Overseas

Western Europe (incl. Eire) **£89.00**
 Rest of World (Surface) **£79.00**
 Rest of World (Air Mail) **£116.00**

Remittances, payable to *The Ringing World*,
 should be addressed to the RW office.

The Ringing World Bankers: CAF Bank
 Sort Code 40-52-40. Account No. 00095085

Copyright

Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office.
 Published by The Ringing World Ltd. © The
 Ringing World Ltd. 2012. All Rights Reserved.
 The copyright in this newspaper may not be used,
 sold, transferred, copied or reproduced in whole
 or in part in any manner or form or in or on any
 media to any person without the prior written
 consent of the publisher. Photographs and
 manuscripts submitted to the newspaper are lent
 at the owner's risk; neither the publisher nor its
 agents accept liability for any loss or damage.

The Ringing World Limited

Registered Office:

35A High Street, Andover, SP10 1LJ

Directors:

W N G Herriott (*Chairman*)

Penca, Mill Lane, Romsey, SO51 8EQ

F J P Bone, J E Earis, W A Hibbert, C F Mew,

J Roberts, A R Udal, R J Wallis

Company Secretary:

Ian H Oram, The Cottage, School Hill,

Warnham, Horsham RH12 3QN

ihoram@hotmail.com

Registered in England Co. Number 1722963

Registered as a Charity in London under No.287182

RW sponsors

Details of our sponsors, Whitechapel,
 Taylors, Nicholson's and Whites appear
 this week on p.145

**Officers of the Central Council of
 Church Bell Ringers**

President: Kate Flavell

Vice-President: Chris Mew

Hon. Treasurer: Derek Harbottle

Hon. Secretary: Mary Bone,

11 Bullfields, Sawbridgeworth CM21 9DB

(01279 726159) secretary@ccbr.org.uk

Website address: www.ccbr.org.uk



Members of the Armed Forces asking for support for the new bells in 1956

supervision of Bill and Douglas Hughes and
 Bill Theobald. A young boy called Alan
 Hughes had watched their most famous bells
 being cast in Whitechapel. Today, Alan
 Hughes, is the managing director of the
 Whitechapel Bellfoundry.

On the evening of 20th December 1961, the
 Duke of Edinburgh was welcomed to St Mary
 le Bow by the Rector and the Lord Mayor for
 the opening of the new bells. The Duke of
 Edinburgh tolled one of the bells. Then, they
 were rung by members of the Ancient Society
 of College Youths who share an historic and
 much-valued association with this church.

In 1941 many will have wondered if Bow
 bells would ever be heard again. Today we
 have to thank Hugh Evan Hopkins, Cuthbert
 Ackroyd, Joe McCulloch, the Wardens and
 Parish Council, the Whitechapel Bellfoundry,
 members of the Armed forces, the Bernard
 Sunley Foundation, the Pearly Kings and
 Queens and *all* those who contributed to the
 restoration of these most famous of bells.

MARK REGAN

*Taken from Mark Regan's address at the
 service beneath the tower on Wednesday, 21st
 December 2011. See also report on p.140.*



The new Great Bell of Bow arrives in the belfry

50 Years Ago

The Ringing World, 9 February, 1962

Are we receding?

Is the number of bellringers in the service
 of the Church receding? The question is
 prompted by the figures 'The Ringing World'
 published last week, culled from 'Facts and
 Figures' relating to the Church of England for
 the year ending December 31st, 1958. These
 parochial returns for the Provinces of
 Canterbury and York give the total number of
 ringers at 42,446. A return compiled two years
 previously gave a total of 46,848; in other
 words there was a decline of over 4,000.

**YOUR RINGING WORLD
 NEEDS YOU!**

To contribute articles, news items,
 cartoons, reports, snippets, letters,
 poems and suggestions. Remember high
 quality photographs and illustrations
 make all the difference. Please send to:

ROBERT LEWIS,

Editor, The Ringing World,

35A High Street,

ANDOVER, Hampshire, SP10 1LJ

Tel: 01264 366620

Email: editor@ringingworld.co.uk

See article submission guidelines on p.131