

Biographical Record

Peter Neville BOND (1922 – 1981)

Represented represented the Society of Royal Cumberland Youths on the Central Council from 1950 to 1962, and attended 12 Central Council meetings

Peter Neville Bond was born in 1922 at Brasted in Kent. During the war he served in the RAF, worked for a while at the Inland Revenue and then trained to be a teacher at King Alfred's College, Winchester. He taught at a secondary school in Kent, and while there became a licensed lay-reader to the parish of Fordcombe. He was an active churchman in the Anglo-Catholic tradition, and later trained at Rochester Theological College, being ordained priest in the cathedral in 1962. He served as curate at Gillingham, Kent, and then as chaplain to the Missions to Seamen at Tilbury Docks. In 1966 he became priest-in-charge of St. James's, Yarmouth, and subsequently moved to Beetley (and East Bilney) in 1971, and later to Brisley. He suffered ill health for most of the '70s, which in 1978 forced him to take early retirement, living in Norwich, near the Cathedral, until he died at the age of 58.

He learned to ring as a boy, in spring 1938, taught by Edwin H Lewis and after the war rang at Bosham. He also rang with the Portsea band, and developed Surprise Major ringing. In 1947 he moved to London and joined the band of St Martin-in-the-Fields. His first peal as conductor was for the Boy Scouts Association in May 1949 at Henfield, Sussex. He rang at Sevenoaks in the early 1950s. He joined the Guild of Clerical ringers in 1963, and the Cumberland Youths while in London. When his calling took him to Norfolk he continued ringing and was instrumental in the augmentation to six and then to eight at his parish in Beetley.

He was an inveterate tower grabber, and usually carried a portable tape recorder to record the ringing. He was a less frequent peal ringer. He rang at least 98 (exact total uncertain). His first was Plain Bob Minor in hand, at Cheshunt, Herts on 4 December 1943. His first peal as conductor is unknown, but in 1956 he conducted his first in 7 methods. He rang his first of Maximus at St Nicholas, Great Yarmouth in 1967.

He was Ringing Master of the Norwich Diocesan Association for five years, and later briefly chairman of the Western Branch before his retirement. He developed a keen interest in bell restoration, and examined around a hundred rings of bells. Together with David Cawley, he was responsible for several restorations and augmentations in Norfolk. He served for several years as Diocesan Bells Adviser.

Peter never married. He was a big, jovial man – gregarious, talkative and enthusiastic. He died on 4th February 1981 and his funeral took place at St George's Tombland, Norwich, with which he had close connections in his final years.

Tributes appeared in The Ringing World in 1981 on pages 185, 204, 216, 276, 340

