

Bath and Wells Association of Change Ringers

I am happy to offer my name for the position of Master to the Association of change Ringers for Bath and Wells. I have been ringing bells since I was about 9/10 ringing first within the Llandaff and Monmouth Association, followed by some time in the Salisbury Association and various towers and tours in between. As a clergyman, I have actively encouraged the art of bellringing and the love of bells throughout my ministry. At Yeovilton, I redeveloped the ringing chamber, maintenance of the tower and actively encouraged the widest use of the bells for visitors.

I have just returned from my final tour as the Royal Naval Chaplain to the military community in Gibraltar, having spent 32 years in diverse service to the Fleet, at sea, at home and abroad. My experience as a Chaplain and Priest is part of that greater vision of 'a friend and advisor to all', working with young dynamic people as trainees and engineers to senior officers. I have gained experience working with the Fleet Air Arm, Submariners, the Commando Helicopter Force, Fishery Protection and Mine Clearance, the RFA, Port Chaplaincies, the Military Academy of Great Britain, as well as tours in Northern Ireland, the former Yugoslavia and Bosnia and the Gulf. I have tried to develop good listening skills and practice across the Fleet, encouraging and teaching in a variety of ways, believing that education and personal development is the key to an individual's success, benefitting the wider community.

I believe that we are all called to service and to encourage and develop life enhancing skills for the next generation. Bellringing can and should be of considerable influence to building not only self-reliance, but tolerance, confidence and a sense of partnership. It teaches skills of working with others, reliance and respect. At its heart is trying to get the balance right between the art and its skill, within the wider application of the church community, all pulling together.

Bellringing has a long and fascinating history and I used this subject for my submitted thesis to St George's Clergy Course at Windsor Castle, where it is now lodged. There is a much greater influence in the role of church bells than many realise, and nothing comes closer to the tracking of the historical element reflecting the changes in Church politics and theology.

I fully recognise that there are many more experienced, talented and accomplished ringers within the Diocese and I count myself as a keen but simple enthusiast. I do however think, that we should develop considerable outreach to the next generation, as well as looking after those faithful members who have given so much dedicated service over the years. I believe there is a vibrant future ahead and it needs every encouragement it can get. The greater liaison we can offer the greater our influence.

Mark Jackson