

## Arthur J. Gould



Arthur Gould, who died on 7th January in his 98th year, had been a stalwart of bell-ringing in Portishead for over sixty years. Born in 1911 in the village of Wapley, near Yate, he was employed by the Bristol shipping firm of Charles Hill & Sons for all his working life (49 years), apart from his wartime service, which was mainly with searchlight units throughout the South West of England.

He and his wife Marjorie moved to Portishead in October 1947 and bought a house through the good offices of Revd William (Bill) Coombes who was Rector there. The house had previously belonged to a missionary couple who had called the property Belo Horizonte: Arthur, a traditionalist to the core, quickly restored the name to its original form, St Ives!

He joined the tower band at St Peter's Parish Church and became a member of the Bath & Wells DACR in 1948, remaining a member until his death sixty-one years later. He became secretary and served for many years, in partnership with tower captain Ron Gale. He organised many outings, throughout Somerset, Devon, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire, as well as booking the ringers for weddings and other services. One of the memorable trips made was to the practice night at Winford, where the visitors were royally entertained by local captain Monty Ball and arrived home after midnight. The band was joined in 1964 by the new Rector, Revd Roger Fry, and they moved on to Stedman Triples and Plain Bob Major, and rang a full peal of Grandsire Triples in 1965 to commemorate the life of Sir Winston Churchill. Another achievement was to ring a quarter-peal of Cambridge Surprise Minor, with an all-local band for the Midnight Mass in 1972. On New Year's Eve 2008 although seriously ill in hospital, Arthur was recalling many New Years spent in the bell tower and quoting the old rhyme 'Ring out the old, ring in the new, ring out the false, ring in the true'.

He served for many years on Church Council and attended morning service regularly until the final illness of Marjorie, who died in 2007 after 69 years of marriage. His advancing years prevented his participation in bell ringing but certainly not his interest – highlight of the week was Friday morning, when *The Ringing World* dropped onto his doorstep. He was proud of the fact that the magazine was founded in 1911, the year of his birth, and he studied it from cover to cover. Carolyn Dawson, the current Portishead team captain, kept in touch with him and last visited him just before Christmas.

On the occasion of his memorial service on 19th January at his beloved parish church, the local ringers, joined by family member David Chiles, rang a peal for him – a gesture that would have delighted him.

Chris Gould