

# Biographical Record

## George William (Bill) CRITCHLEY (1924 - 2006)

Represented the Hertfordshire County Association on the Central Council from 1957 to 1966 and the Middlesex County Association from 1967 to 1971.

He attended 14 meetings

George William Critchley was born on March 18th 1924 in Sutton Coldfield. He learned to ring at Boldmere in 1938, being taught by W. Anker and, later, George Fearn. His first peal, Grandsire Doubles, was on 17th February 1945 at Keresley in Warwickshire and his first as conductor was on 26th August 1946 when he called Cambridge Surprise Major at St. Chad's Cathedral in Birmingham. He rang his 1000th peal on 19th December 1970 in Birmingham. He stopped keeping records of his peal total after that, but rang 1120 peals in all. All his peals were rung on tower bells and he conducted many of them.

He took part in a peal of silent and non-conducted 6-Spliced Surprise Major at Silverdale in Staffordshire rung by members of the Central Council during the Council weekend at Stoke on Trent in 1961. On February 26th 1971 he rang in a silent and non-conducted peal of Londinium Surprise Maximus at Cripplegate.

Bill was attached to many towers during his long ringing career: Boldmere 1938-1945 also Sutton Coldfield 1938-1945. Then to both St. Martin's Birmingham and St. Philip's Birmingham 1945-1953. From 1954-1965 he was attached to both Knebworth and Benington in Hertfordshire; from 1965-1971 he rang at Hillingdon in Middlesex; 1971-1973 he rang at High Wycombe; 1984-1997 he rang at Truro Cathedral. He also rang at Westminster Abbey from 1961-1984, starting as a supernumerary then becoming a principal and eventually secretary and conductor. There was an article about him in *The Ringing World* on page 115 in 1971.

He was Ringing Master of St. Martin's Guild, Birmingham 1951-1953, President of the Hertford County Association in 1964 and Ringing Master of Knebworth 1956-1965.

Bill and his wife Claudia retired to Cornwall in 1984 living in the village of Ruan Lanihorne. Bill became a stalwart of the church there and served the church as a church warden, server and Treasurer of the PCC.

Bill worked in the railway industry, starting in the LMS Goods department in the Midlands, later moving to London. He then worked for National Carriers.

Ill health forced him to give up ringing in 1997. He died in hospital on 23rd February 2006 and his funeral was on March 3rd at Ruan Lanihorne, followed by cremation at Truro.

*Obituaries: The Ringing World 2006, pp 221, 388.*

