



# LEWISHAM DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

THE KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS [www.kcacr.org.uk](http://www.kcacr.org.uk)

APRIL 2001

## DARTFORD QUIZ



Saturday 12th May 2001

Holy Trinity Church Hall, Dartford

7.15 for 7.45pm start

£18 for a table of 6, others £3.50

Bring your own eats and (cold) drinks.

There will be hot drinks in the interval.

To book a table contact:  
Esther Correia



## Forthcoming Events

- 19<sup>th</sup> May District Practice: Greenwich, 7.00 - 9.00 p.m.  
Special Methods: Call changes, Stedman Caters,  
Yorkshire Royal, Little Bob Royal.
- 16<sup>th</sup> June District Practice: Horton Kirby, 7.00 - 9.00 p.m.  
Special Methods: Call Changes, Plain Hunting,  
Plain Bob D&M, Wells Surprise Minor.
- 23<sup>rd</sup> June County 8-bell Striking Contest: Hoo St Werburgh,.
- 14<sup>th</sup> July Quarterly Meeting: Eynsford/Farningham,  
4.30p.m. Service

The practices are specifically aimed at all abilities, so please come along. The purpose of listing "special methods" is to encourage as many people as possible to look at the same thing in order to reduce the demand for different requests during practices which are subject to time limitations. Please do not be discouraged, in any way, from attending a practice simply because you don't know the special method(s) Practices will, as far as possible, be tailored to suit those who attend.

## Striking Competition

**Penge**

**on**

**Saturday 28th April.**

Draw 11 a.m.

Ring 240 changes of a method  
of your choice

## Next District Meeting

**Deptford**

**on**

**Saturday 28th April.**

Service 4.30 p.m.

Names for tea to...

your mum or whoever else makes your  
packed lunch. Yes, it's bring your own  
food folks! Tea and coffee will be  
available.

# Web sites reviewed

## Campanophile

Tired of waiting three months for quarters to be printed in the Ringing World?

Tired of having to resubmit peals because the editor has lost them again?

Campanophile could be the answer!

Regular browsers through the Internet ringing sites will probably be aware of Tony Parry's Campanophile site. For those who haven't come across it yet, it is, very simply, a website to which you can submit peals and quarter peals for instantaneous appearance. This eliminates the long delays associated with submission to the Ringing World. Persons are of course free to submit to both, but Campanophile does allow for performances to be recorded while they are still news. And it's free!

At this early stage in its existence, Campanophile is unlikely to replace the Ringing World as the main repository of ringing records, but the more people use it, the more comprehensive it will become. And with ex-Ringing World staff Tina Stoecklin and Anne Carpenter managing the content of the site, there is plenty of experience in dealing with peals and quarters. Submissions are checked to eliminate obvious errors, duplicate entries and hoaxes - such as the quarter of Plain Bob Minor on the back six at St Paul's Cathedral!

So why not give it a go? The address is:

[www.campanophile.co.uk](http://www.campanophile.co.uk)

David Holdridge

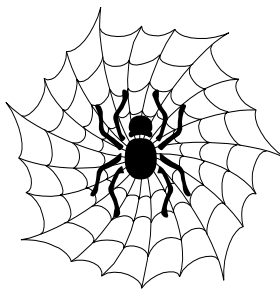


## New E-group for Lewisham District

Dickon Love has now set up an E-mail group for our district, through which we can all send and receive group 'mails, news and gossip. To find out more and become a member log onto [www.smartgroups.com/groups/Lewisham\\_District](http://www.smartgroups.com/groups/Lewisham_District)

## County and District Web Sites

For the latest county and district news see the KCACR website at [www.kcacr.org.uk](http://www.kcacr.org.uk) This has links to other ringing websites including James' district one at: [www.callnetuk.com/home/jameshardy/lewishamdistrictnews.htm](http://www.callnetuk.com/home/jameshardy/lewishamdistrictnews.htm)



# What's been happening - News from the Website

## District Practice at Foots Cray.

The Practice at Foots Cray on the 17th of March was well attended (27 people) and whilst the bells proved somewhat tricky, much of the ringing was useful. We rang Call Changes, Plain bob, Grandsire, Stedman, All Saints and several attempts at Foots Cray T.P., two of which were mostly successful. Thanks for coming!

## District Practice at Bickley.

The practice at Bickley on the 17th February was very well attended and we rang plenty of call-changes and several touches of Stedman Triples, most of which were successful. Whilst the bells are very good, I think it was clear that nothing but the very best effort provides good ringing here - they are not easy to strike well and can be unforgiving. Another worthwhile practice - thanks for coming.

## District Practice at Beckenham.

The District practice at Beckenham on 20th January was very well attended (32 people) and some very good ringing was achieved. Methods rung included Grandsire Caters, Plain bob Doubles and Triples, Stedman Caters (un-successful), Cambridge Major & Royal, Plain Hunt on 9, and 5-spliced S. Major (B,S,L,C,Y). The attendees then adjourned to the Jolly Woodman, and then to the Curry house. Thankyou to all who attended.

## District Meeting at Christ Church, Erith.

The meeting held at Erith began with general ringing at 3.00 p.m. where methods included Grandsire Triples, Plain Bob Triples and Major, Call Changes, Cambridge S. Major and a service touch of Stedman Triples. This was followed by the service, based on the A.S.B. evening prayer, and the an excellent tea prepared by the Erith band. The meeting came next and was short - not much was discussed!

After the meeting, more general ringing was enjoyed until 8.00 p.m., and methods included all those rung before the service, and also 4-spliced (C,Y,N,S) and 8-spliced (std.8) S. Major. The bells at Erith are now much improved thanks to the work that Mark Backhouse has done with new pulleys etc. and they are a great deal better than I ever remember them - I'm looking forward to the next practice there.

Thanks to everyone who worked to make the afternoon a very enjoyable one.

From The Lewisham District Web Site

# Editorial

My doesn't time fly, it seems like only yesterday that I was struggling to get out my first newsletter but here we are 3 months later and edition 2 is about to roll off the presses, well off the photocopier anyway.

And what has the district done in this time? Quite a bit really, as can be seen in the 'News from the towers' and the District event reports. Attendance at the practices has been high with a wide variety of methods rung from call changes to spliced surprise. If you haven't been to one yet then put 19th May in your diary for a trip to Greenwich.

The next district event is the 6 bell striking competition on the challenging ring at Penge. This choice should certainly sort out the men from the boys!

In the afternoon the quarterly meeting is at Deptford. Don't forget to bring something to eat as, unlike at Erith where people turned up without booking their teas and still expected to be fed, you will go hungry this time.

And finally, thank you again for all the material that you have sent me this time. Please keep it coming.



## OPEN DAY

Date: Saturday 1st September 2001  
Open from 1000 - last admission 1600 hrs

The Whitechapel Bell Foundry Ltd.  
34 Whitechapel Rd.,  
London E1 1DY

All welcome

Admission: £7 adult / £4 child

Visit the historic foundry where Big Ben and the original Liberty Bell were cast and learn how bells are made.

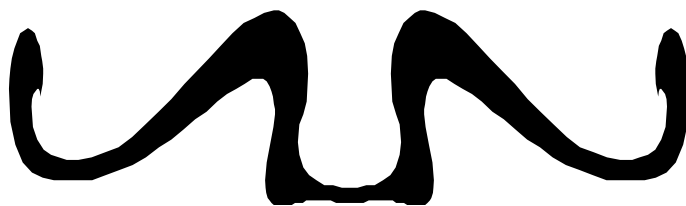
Due to the age of the Foundry, it is regretted that disabled access is not available

All children under the age of 16 should be accompanied by an adult who will be responsible for their conduct and safety.

Coach parties are requested to contact us directly so we can stagger their suggested arrival times in order to prevent visitor

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I am as always seeking articles and would like as much copy as possible for the next issue - get writing!!!!

**COPY DEADLINE -  
24th June 2001**

to  
Rupert Cheeseman  
\*\* Church Road  
Erith  
Kent  
DA8 \*PG

☎ 01322 439\*\*\*

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✉ [cathy.cheeseman@virgin.net](mailto:cathy.cheeseman@virgin.net)

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# The 'Real' Millennium Dinner

The St. Nicholas, Chislehurst and St. John the Baptist, Eltham bellringing societies celebrated the 'Real' Millennium with a dinner at Camden Place, Chislehurst on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> January. Seventy-odd ringers, their families and friends which included a large representation from the Lewisham District sat down to an excellent meal. The grace before and after the meal was said by The Revd. John Neal, vicar of Eltham.

Roger Long proposed the Loyal Toast and ensured the progress of the dinner.

Len Morley gave *'The Review of 2000'*. He dissected the character and appearance of your typical ringer and summarised the year 2000 up to the end of December, which he pointed out was actually the true millennium. What he had noticed over the years was that your established ringer had impaired hearing (from bells going off), a strong voice (for calling so that all in the band might hear), a rather curious peering expression (from looking round ropes), a distinct tendency to talk bellringing shop, and to constantly use technical terms in conversation.

Reviewing activities during 2000, Len thanked all ringers present for supporting the ringing competition and for the quarter peals and peals that had been rung through the year. He also recalled the undoubted success of the September outing to Sheldwich, Wye, Lympne, New Romney, Burmarsh and Saltwood. Len ended with particular mention of the importance of bands growing new ringers and said that the two societies were well set to do so.

Jean Pailing proposed *'The Church of England'*. She reminded everybody that the *next* hundred years would see the resolution of the current pressure for disestablishment on the church. These pressures came from secular sources which were

expected, and some from within the church, which were not expected.



This speech gave Jean the chance to use *'antidisestablishmentarianism'* legitimately. Solid applause met her as the company sat down, which expressed something of its agreement with her on the need to secure the Church of England's position in the fabric and structure of Britain.

Our speaker for the evening was the Revd. Ron Smith, assistant priest at St. Nicholas, Chislehurst. His speech was entitled *'Brushes with Bells'*. He recalled an early memory of when, at four years of age, he came across the village bellringing band in his grandmother's kitchen just as they had been dismissed by the vicar for refusing to ring on Sundays. Ron touched amusingly on some incidents with bells he had had during his long career as a parson and some of his encounters with hostile neighbours of the belfry. Ron reminded us all that bellringing is a Christian activity and must remain so, otherwise becoming a quaint pastime just like Morris Dancing.



The evening ended with the chairman, Roger Long, thanking Ron for his splendid speech. A special thank you was made to Len Dumper who had organised this very enjoyable annual event. Hilary Smith presented Len with chocolates and his wife Susan with a bouquet of flowers.



Ireen Jones  
St. Nicholas, Chislehurst

This space, or preferably a bigger one, could have had your article in it!

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# NEWS FROM THE TOWERS

## BECKENHAM

Beckenham practices have been on the up lately - surprise major and caters have been the tunes thanks to the many regular visitors. Please keep coming.

Unfortunately, May is not a good ringing month for Beckenham. So far, four of the May practices have been cancelled due to other commitments in the church. The practices will be rearranged at other venues. Please phone James & Sara Hardy (020 8659 2\*\*\*) or Jeremy Byers (020 8289 5\*\*\*) for details. Also, the timing of Beckenham practices has altered and is now 7:50-9:30 on Thursdays.

Finally, on 12th May the St Georges Arts Festival is being held in the church. It has been advertised that there will be tower tours to the top of the tower. If you would like a trip to the top to see the surrounding area please come along. Anyone feeling keen enough to help out on the day please give Jim Hardy a call.

Jeremy Byers

## BROMLEY PARISH

Tuesday practices had been suspended for over a year but are now being resumed. Please check beforehand if thinking of joining us on a Tuesday.

We have three youngsters to teach and it is the intention to get their ringing to a high enough standard to ring for weddings in the summer.

David Kingston

## CRAYFORD

The Crayford band has continued to ring regularly on Sundays and practice nights. We rely on the help of occasional visitors, who are always most welcome, to ring more advanced doubles methods which have included Stedman and St. Simons.

Unfortunately we lost an attempted quarter of Grandsire Doubles with a local band this year but we have successfully scored two quarters with district bands. One of those was Cambridge S Major, in memory of my Dad, and the other was Crayford S Major for a bit of variety!

Rupert Cheeseman

## ELTHAM

Things have been fairly quiet at Eltham since the last newsletter. Steady progress continues to be made on the ringing front, the only excitement being a broken stay on the fifth. Tactfully, I shall refrain from mentioning the culprit by name (but it wasn't me!). The bells have been rung every Sunday for the morning service: only rarely have we failed to ring all eight. Of non-ringing activities, the joint dinner with Chislehurst was very successful: a report appears elsewhere.

David Holdrge

## ERITH, CHRIST CHURCH

Following on from claims in the last newsletter of Crayford and Eltham to be the best light 8's in the district, Christchurch, Erith would like to vie for the title of hardest going of the heavier 8's! However, as those who came to the district meeting in January will know, they are a lot better than they used to be, following the work in the autumn to replace the pulleys (they go round now!) and to adjust the position of some of the garter holes. We also had the clappers rebushed and quarter turned and are grateful for financial support from the BRF.

We have about a dozen regular members of the band including three who were recruited from the pre-millennium district open day that we hosted. We were very pleased to be able to enter two complete bands in the district call change striking competition last November. On the change ringing front, we are mostly restricted to six bells but steady progress is being made. We will be a little restricted for the next three months as Christopher Backhouse is out of ringing following an accident when he severed several tendons in the back of his right hand. The Backhouse family had learnt the method ready for the district practice at Foots Cray. Instead, we found ourselves at the Royal Victoria Hospital in East Grinstead waiting for Christopher to come round from his three and a half-hour operation (we could have rung a peal while we were waiting!). He should get quite good at standing behind though!

We did recently have a very pleasing lower of all eight (we usually ring four or eight down in peal) with an entirely local band, half of whom had never tried an eight bell lower before.

## EYNSFORD AND FARNINGHAM

We continue to hold our Friday practices at Eynsford, which

are generally well attended. We also hold a mid-week practice at Farningham on the first and third Wednesdays of the month whenever possible. We are concentrating on Bob Doubles with our less experienced ringers.

In addition to these, the Eynsford first Friday in the month practice is devoted to Major ringing, and we welcome visitors from other towers to these, and all our other practices.

Sundays continue to keep us busy at the two churches with three services requiring bells.

We are planning to hold our tower outing on 22nd September which is likely to be in East Kent.

Elizabeth Stoneham

## FOOTS CRAY



ALL SAINTS, FOOTS CRAY

Not a great deal has happened at Foots Cray since our last offering in the newsletter. Attendance at practice has been spasmodic - always someone with exams to study for, a bad shoulder or too much to do!! With only nine members of the local band this can prove a problem, however with the occasional visitor to help us out or a visit to another tower which practices on a Wednesday we have only had to cancel one practice. Most of our new ringers are working hard to master Plain Hunt on different bells and sometimes to a method, depending on who is at the practice. We would like to think that before Simon goes off to University some of our newer ringers are tackling Bob Doubles but this will require a lot of hard work on everyone's part and some help from more experienced ringers. So if you are one of the latter and can spare some time on a Wednesday, you will be more than welcome at our practices.

It was good to see so many ringers at the District practice on

17th March, I only wish a few more of our ringers had been able to attend.

We hope to challenge some of you at the quiz night at Dartford on Saturday May 12th. Foots Cray are entering at least one team and we hope that you are doing the same.

Margaret Macey

## HAYES

We have nothing really exciting to report. We are a tower of six bells the oldest of which is the tenor 1602 and the 5th 1670. The band has been sadly depleted over the last few years through removal to university and retirement to Dorset but we manage to ring for both morning and evening services each Sunday. We have many weddings at our church and most of them want the bells rung so that's a great incentive to improve our ringing. We are struggling to ring Grandsire and Bob Doubles with only two experienced ringers and we would very much appreciate some help on Tuesday nights at 8.00pm.

P.S. Thanks Rupert for taking over the Newsletter, it can be a soul destroying job. I know how difficult it is to get copy of any interest - I am the editor of the church magazine!

Mary Rowedder

## HORTON KIRBY

Not much to say although training continues for our 15 learners with 2 weekly practices often followed by a post mortem in the Fighting Cocks.

What is so nice is how enthusiastic everyone is and we have quite a lot of fun too! Frank to Amy ... "why didn't you look to see who was in front"..... in reply..... "I've got something in my eye". Lesley tries to get it out while Amy carries on ringing!!

Trainers are brilliant - Philippa & Jim Rooke and Frank Rogers ably supported by our own rising star Lesley.

Hopefully we will be able to start visiting other towers soon if anyone will have us!

Our quiz in January raised £340 for the Kent Bell Fund - a target for other towers.

David Crowhurst

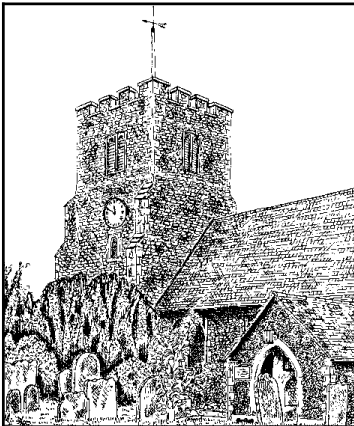


## Beware- Novice Bell Ringer at Large!



There is a universal truth in the expression ‘God moves in a mysterious way’. For indeed he does, and I suppose it is to him I owe a debt of gratitude, in the discovery of my interest in the gentle art of bellringing. At this stage of the game, while my gratitude is great, others might and probably do view this with modified rapture! And did I say gentle art? For while it is without doubt an art form, it is anything but gentle!

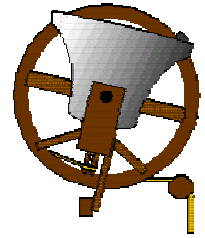
I moved to Crayford two weeks before the Millennium and live close to St. Paulinus church. The first Sunday in my new home while reading the papers in bed, the bells started ringing for the morning service and I remember feeling a real pinch of pleasure on hearing them. Several weeks passed and my curiosity increased, so much that one Sunday evening I wandered up to Evensong. Then, little by little, I began a regular attendance, which eventually resulted in my confirmation last Easter Sunday. The bells continued to give me much pleasure and it was a privilege to be able to listen to them out in the garden, on warm summer evenings. Then one day our vicar, Anthony Lane, asked me if there was any particular church activity I would be interested in, and of course, I leapt at the chance of having a go at bell ringing.



The first evening was a complete revelation. Like so many, I believed it was just a case of pulling a rope; I knew nothing about the fact that the bells had to be raised before ringing could begin. I was humbled immediately by my lack of knowledge. It surprised me at how long it takes just to be able to handle a bell on your own but this did not deter me. Nor have the humiliations: crashing bells, wobbly ropes, the pursuit of the uncontrollable and elusive sally and generally being to bell-ringing what Les Dawson was to piano-playing! At present, I have managed to reach the point of blundering about on Plain Hunt on five and call changes still scramble my brain completely. If called to follow a bell, I have no problem but as soon as the bell I am following is called to follow another, then memory, logic and all my sensory perceptions desert me, while my eyes search frantically for guidance on the faces of the other ringers.

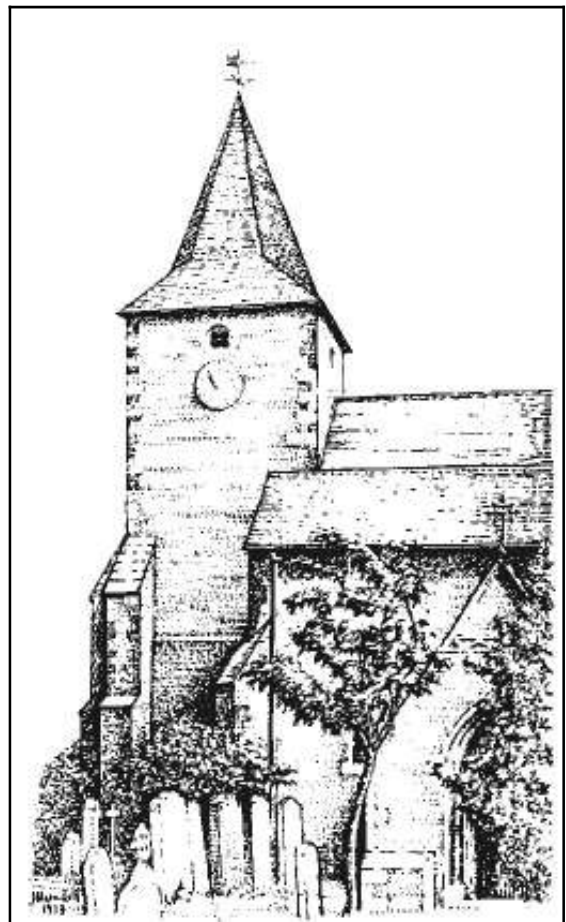
The patience and sheer generosity of spirit that I have

encountered while trying to master this ‘gentle’ art must be mentioned and it is an experience that does much to restore one’s faith in human nature. For patience worthy of Job himself in their efforts to guide me, a special mention must go to David Osenton and Rupert Cheeseman. This generosity is evident at other towers too; I attend Dartford’s practice night where I am always made welcome and where I get the chance to ring their wonderful bells. There we go Esther, I promised I would plug Dartford’s bells and I don’t mean that in the way it sounds!



Whether I’ll ever be a good ringer remains to be seen and time will tell, but it is a wonderful hobby and there is nothing that can compare with the sound of church bells ringing out on a bright and frosty morning, except of course, muffled bells, that have a sound that is so beautiful, it is almost not of this world. To have the opportunity of taking part in this ancient art really is a privilege and needless to say, I am completely hooked!

Andrew Sinclair.  
St. Paulinus, Crayford.



ST MARY, ST MARY CRAY

# Radio Masts

Donald King writes:

“Some towers are concerned about the impact of communication transceiver equipment installed in and on bell towers. The financial rewards can make this seem tempting.

Almost all the opinions voiced so far centre on the possibility of radiation hazard. Very little has been said or written about the physical and aesthetic impact of the tower building. From limited knowledge to date, this may be considerable.

It behoves us all to share any information widely so anyone who has experience of an installation, favourable or unfavourable, would do us all good service if they published this through these pages.”

Ed says: “I agree and if anyone has any comments on the subject that they’d like to share with a wider audience then please contact me.”

Nancy Gay from Biggin Hill has first hand experience of radio masts in the belfrey and she has the following to say about it:

Many questions have been asked about the advantages and disadvantages of having telecommunications aerials on church towers. After the experiences of the past year, I say don't!

If you must, make sure that the incumbent and the churchwarden concerned with the work has a good knowledge of what happens in the ringing room and the bell-chamber. Even the best-willed and most concerned outsider will not think of everything - nor will you! Then make sure that your tower captain and / or steeplekeeper see the plans at every step of the way.

Most importantly, don't let them get away with inaction! Nag, nag, nag. (My churchwarden turns pale and runs whenever he sees me coming!)

The problems we have experienced are legion. Some are correctable, others more difficult (hence the need to be in on the ground floor, literally and figuratively). They range from loss of floor space to light bulbs placed within inches of ropes, from great holes in the floors between the bell-chamber and the ringing room, to stairs only a wizened mountain goat could mount. The mess and inconvenience has been indescribable, and our now even more tiny ringing room has been made scruffy and cluttered.

We have benefited, though, and not just financially. The roof,

pointing and louvres have been repaired. Our ancient and lethal electrics are being replaced, there is better lighting in the bell-chamber (if not what I asked for), and - best of all - the publicity (seeing me accost the churchwarden and members of the PCC every Sunday!) has brought us some new ringers!

At Biggin Hill the aerials are a fait accompli, so all I can do is try to get the best conditions I can for the ringers. All are welcome to come to see for themselves - preferably on a Wednesday practice night, ready to pull a rope!



The following is part of a much longer article in The Ringing World No. 4690 p267.

We are not engineers and cannot give technical advice, but here are some general tips, based on our experience:-

1. Make sure you have ringers on the PCC -you cannot hope to influence developments in your church otherwise. There are plenty of churches that do not liase with their ringers. Please look after any towers near you with unringable bells or no ringers, if the idea of a transmitter arises there.
2. Involve a good church solicitor of your own from the start - Diocesan authorities that have an indirect pecuniary interest in the scheme proceeding, may not understand the intricacies of your own church very well - they may sell your tower too cheaply,
3. Make sure the phone company undertakes to pay all





expenses incurred right from the start -if they want the site badly enough, they will pay. It should cost your church nothing.

4. Find out what the local 'going rates' for mast site rentals are before your solicitors negotiate rental with the company. Again, if they want the site badly enough, they will pay -these are not large sums of money for companies of this size. Some towers seem to have been badly undersold, particularly by Diocesan officers. Ball-park figures of £10,000 p.a. are not uncommon now, depending on the site and type of mast.

5. Obtain as much independent advice as possible. Your own church architect may be of some help, but may have little experience in this area. Independent civil engineers may be more useful to you.

6. Be prepared to be persistent and bloodyminded if necessary. Remember, the phone company is paying. If bells need to be moved, for instance, insist on a professional bellhanger of your choice being employed to do the work, rather than letting the contractors 'have a go'. (They will offer to, to keep costs down!)

7. Demand to see the plans (anyone can at the planning application stage). Scrutinize them very carefully with your ringers, and even your local bell advisers - try to spot anything which is likely to cause you difficulties with the bells, tower, clock, fittings or fabric in the future, such as limitation of space, reduced access, problems for future bellhangers, etc. Do not have the electronic plant in the ringing chamber, for instance, unless the room is very large - it takes up space, and may generate some heat and sound. Insist on cables running up outside the bellframe, not inside any pits. Do not allow plant to limit trapdoor access etc.

8. Try to predict effects on internal and external bell acoustics - this could be advantageous in some circumstances, disastrous in others, depending on the size and site of the electrical plant and further installations in the future. The engineers may be able to use an open steel grillage to support the plant, as was done in a neighbouring tower to us, rather than a solid steel floor. This may be better acoustically.

9. Be patient and cooperative. There will be many people - experts, contractors, subcontractors, etc. - who may all require tower access, escort and advice at different times during planning. They will invariably know nothing about bells and the whole process is exceedingly slow!

10. Develop and maintain good relations with the site foreman during construction, and watch progress very closely for any unforeseen problems which might impact on the bells and fabric.

11. Make sure all finishing work is up to standard -this can be skimmed on. Again, be prepared to be difficult and insistent if necessary.

12. Make sure the company is legally responsible for removing the equipment to the satisfaction of the church architect when it is no longer of use. There have even been cases of small companies going bankrupt in the early days, leaving masses of redundant equipment on buildings.

In conclusion, we would say don't be afraid of the idea or dismiss it out of hand - it can be quite interesting and exciting and it can work out well, even to the advantage of all concerned, including the ringers. It does require a will to make it work, some very sharp attention to detail and close involvement of at least one or two ringers with astute judgement, working both with the church and the phone company's contractors. There are some nagging concerns on safety, access and church security - it is important to ensure that all legal responsibility lies with the phone company.

Even with the closest of attention, you will still not manage to cover all eventualities!

Having said all that, we used to joke that, when fitting an installation, make sure that you allow room for another one in the future. Now we are not so sure -once you have acquired one, the companies seem to take advantage. All and sundry can have access to your church, and your tower can end up with permanent planning blight hanging over it!

Dr K. G. LEE, Steeplekeeper,  
St Margaret's, Dunham Massey, Altrincham, Cheshire

### **"Cool" Fashion comes to the bell tower**

In a certain Lewisham District 10 bell Tower (which shall remain nameless to spare the blushes of those involved !) a new ringing accessory has been noticed. As readers will know, not all people are created equal size and shape, and neither are all bell ropes. Another complication for ringers is that the current wet weather conditions tend to make the ropes shrink. Being practical folk, most tower captains have amassed a number of boxes over the years for shorter ringers to stand on. Our tower is no exception and our collection includes a large beautifully crafted box with blue carpet and two smaller ones. Various combinations of people, boxes and ropes usually succeed in allowing everyone to ring. However, we have an enthusiastic young man learning who needs two boxes because he isn't growing fast enough despite the force feeding of Weetabix. This often gives us a problem for one of the shorter lady ringers as we run out of boxes. Another of our ringers, who is a bit of a "disco babe" and spends non ringingnights out on the town dancing the night away, said she had the solution to the problem. She would bring them along next week. What on earth were they? Well, they turned out to be a pair of blue spangly platform trainers with soles about 5 or 6 centimetres thick! She lent them to the shorter lady who put them on, and they did the trick. Hey, who needs boxes? Cool!

Government Health Warning:

"don't try this at home" - unless you are confident walking in thick soled trainers or a spice girl.

Megan Smith

# The Learning Curve

## Back Seat Drivers

We give plenty of advice about bell handling and method ringing, but you don't often hear much about that all important skill of 'standing behind'. Notable exceptions are Teaching Beyond Bell Handling, Ringing Skills and The Tower Handbook all of which include sections on standing behind. Here we summarise some key points. For more detail, look at the books.

### A relationship

You stand behind a person, not a machine. You are probably much more experienced and perhaps a bit awe inspiring, unless you are the regular mentor. Before the touch, try asking the person you are standing behind what (s)he would like you to say, or not to say. Nothing kills a relationship like saying the wrong thing.

### A responsibility

Standing behind is not an easy option. It needs hard concentration to know exactly what is happening, what should be happening, and what (if anything) to say. If your concentration wanders, you could wreck someone else's touch. Remember that taking advice from you uses up some of the ringer's available concentration, so let people correct their own errors if they can. Only jump in if you think uncorrected errors will lead to a mix up - otherwise bite your tongue. You might find this holding back takes more effort than ringing the bell would!

### What to say

This is harder than it might seem. You are there to provide missing information or to help correct mistakes, so what you need to say depends on what has gone wrong, and why. Sometimes, saying which bell to follow is helpful, but not always. If the problem is a missed dodge, then saying so might be enough. In this case, the immediate priority is to correct the 'over shoot' and get back on the blue line. If the problem is caused by handling, e.g. failing to change speed at lead and going below first place, the first

priority is to 'hold up' (now) since without a quick speed correction things will get much worse. After recovery, it might be helpful to advise 'hold up the handstroke leads', and if the problem still persists, you could pre-emptively warn to 'put the brakes on' when passing through 2nds place.

### How much to say

It can be very tempting to say too much. As far as possible, try not to intervene - only say something if you think it is needed to avoid further error or de-stabilisation. Don't just keep pouring out information. Only continue if more is really needed. Try not to create dependence. Be a safety net, not a crutch.

Sometimes, gestures are better than words. Pointing is visual and less likely to disrupt the place counting. Pointing in a general direction not only saves words, but leaves the ringer in charge of actually seeing who to follow, so it helps rather than replaces ropesight.

### When to say it

Nothing is worse than being told what to do when it is too late

to do it, and this can cause a lot of trouble for the hapless ringer on the receiving end. Try to avoid this trap by thinking ahead. Some types of advice are less time critical than others. For example, if the bell is too low, then saying 'higher' is likely to be good for a few blows, but saying which bell to follow will become stale within a blow (and by the time you say it might already be too late). Some information after the event (like 'that was a dodge') can help to reorient the ringer's thinking, whereas instructional information (like 'dodge with Fred') can be positively damaging a couple of blows late.

### And finally

Don't forget words of encouragement. We spend much time telling people when they are wrong. Try also to say when things go well. Apart from 'well done' at the end, quiet words of encouragement can sometimes help build confidence during the ringing too.

If there were problems, try at the end asking how it went. If you understand the problems as perceived by the person ringing, you are more likely to be able to give helpful advice.

### Overheard

Seasoned Ringer to Erratic Learner (whose striking left much to be desired)

SR: "Do you find it difficult to strike your bell in the right place?"

EL (surprised): "Why do you ask?"

SR (wondering if she should have started the conversation):



From Ringing World 4671 p1085

"Well did you think you were ringing in the right place just now?"

EL (puzzled by such a silly question): "I must have been. Bill would have shouted at me if I wasn't".

Apart from a quiet chuckle, what can we learn from this? Had Bill lost his voice? Hardly. The poor chap can't spend all his time shouting at EL. So what went wrong (apart from EL's striking)? We don't know all the background, but let's think about what might have happened. Presumably there have been times when Bill shouted corrections to EL quite a lot. Presumably he did this in the early stages. So what changed?

- a Perhaps EL has always been erratic. At first Bill tried to be helpful and kept calling out corrections. But after a while he gave up because EL didn't seem to respond and never improved.
- b Perhaps at first EL needed a lot of prompting, but then did improve so that Bill rarely needed to give corrections. Then some while later, EL's striking deteriorated again, perhaps through laziness. Bill knew this, but did not like to say anything in case EL took offence and left. Perhaps at first he thought it was a temporary lapse, but when he realised it was becoming permanent it was too late. He had tolerated poor striking and didn't feel he could now start to criticise EL.
- c Perhaps Bill himself is not a very accomplished ringer. Many tower captains aren't. They do the job because no one else is there to do it. Perhaps he is never very sure who is striking badly, and so does not comment on the striking. Perhaps when EL was first learning, the mistakes were quite large, and he did not feel inhibited to criticise a raw beginner. But now EL is more like one of the other ringers, he is back to the state where he does not know who is or is not striking correctly.

There might be other scenarios, but these three provide food for thought.

We can sympathise with Bill in scenario (a). It is very dispiriting when people don't improve, and you can only pour so much effort into a single person. But before he gave up, would it not have been much better to take EL on one side and try to find out why improvement never came? Was it motivation, was it the inability to hear which bell was which? Perhaps it was handling problems, though Bill should have had a pretty good idea about that just by observing EL ring.

Scenario (b) is more subtle. This time Bill thought he had solved the problem, but then it came back. Should he really be afraid to say anything? If someone starts to have problems, would it not be natural to expect the tower captain to take an interest? Could he not have offered any help?

In these two scenarios, while we sympathise with Bill's weakness, it is clear that he should have taken some steps to find out the problems and try to help EL overcome them. Otherwise, he is not only condoning a degraded sound coming out of the tower, but he is also degrading what the rest of the band experience, when ringing with EL, and hence their motivation.

What about poor old Bill in scenario (c)? If he can't tell what is going on, is it fair to criticise him for saying nothing? Of course it isn't, but the role of a tower captain is more than just

putting people right while ringing. If Bill is aware of his limitations (and many tower captains are) should he not be trying to draw on the skills of others in the tower to help?

We don't know whether SR was a visitor or a member of the band. She was competent enough to detect that EL's striking was erratic, and she clearly wanted to help or she would not have said anything. If SR was a regular, perhaps Bill should encourage her to take an interest in his fledgling ringers, and be prepared to give them advice when needed. Perhaps there are a few more SRs in the tower who could be encouraged to take the less experienced ringers under their wings.

*Tail End*

From *The Ringing World* No. 4671 p1085

# Ring out for Foot and Mouth

Arising from a phone conversation this morning, I realised that a number of towers are unaware of Archbishop's request to ring a bell at midday on Sundays during the foot and mouth outbreak.

The details seem to be a little unclear but I gather the original idea was for churches in rural areas to do this on one particular Sunday to demonstrate sympathy with the farmers. Now I believe we are asked to continue to carry on each week until the outbreak is over; did I see it in the RW or was it on TV - can't remember?

Anyway we are ringing up our tenor at Dover, bashing away for a few minutes, and then slowly lowering it again. (That's all the use it gets these days.) Yes, I know we are a town centre church but one of our ringers has a smallholding with a few pet sheep and she is worried stiff. Apart from that, although it isn't ringing out across fields and pastures, the old bell is reminding the townies about what is going on.

I gather a lot of churches are doing this already but if you think it appropriate you may like to spread the word.

Peter Dale  
KCACR General Secretary

Psychic Psmith - Lewisham's man of the stars



Aries - Mothering Sunday saw you do the double - burn the roast and upset your mother. Pluto in Mickey, combined with Mars in the milky way indicates that things can only get better so have another go at Easter - at the worst there's always chocolate.



Taurus - Pluto in your ninth solar vestibule and a dead bird blocking your guttering. Its not entirely clear that these events are related, however it could just be one of those extraordinary coincidences with which life sometimes delights us.



Gemini - The aching spiritual emptiness you have experienced for so many months is entirely banished in a magic moment of enlightenment on Wednesday morning around 3-30am - set you alarm clock!



Cancer - A potential disaster lurks in the kitchen tomorrow involving an electric juice extractor and the cord of your dressing gown.



Leo - Poet Laureate Andrew Motion phones again on Wednesday to ask if you can think of anything that rhymes with "Thurrock". Tell him to earn his money and think of his own rhymes for goodness sake.



Virgo - An extremely dull week ahead. You'll have experienced nothing so dull since your famous dull months of 1997. I wish I could do something about it, but I have 11 other stars signs to sort out as well!!



Libra - Disappointment this week when the coat you took into the dry cleaners is returned on Friday as the costume of Po from the Tellytubbies. But there's fun for all the family when you put it on and do a little routine.



Scorpio - Problems on Tuesday when an elderly Aunt invites you to join her in Ibiza for the summer. She says it's "really banging". You know you would be happier in St Ives as usual. Scorpio's sense of diplomacy will see you through - just!



Sagittarius- Astonishment as Tom Hanks phones and invites you to LA for dinner and a show. Just check it's not the hamster's birthday - you did promise him a run in the park!



Capricorn - This week brings a series of major challenges, a major conference in Slough, a charity marathon in Alaska , the opening of your one man show in Paris. Plus the Hamster needs cleaning out. Are you taking on too much? I only ask.

Aquarius - Tony Blair phones this week to check whether 3rd May or 11<sup>th</sup> June is a better date for the



election. Your response is you don't really care as you'll be washing your hair that day.



Pisces - it has never occurred to you to take up Australian Rules Football before - so why now? Because Mercury, the planet of dangerous antipodean ball games, is in Leo, the sign of almost total lawlessness. See you in hospital



The bishop decided that he would conduct the interviews for the bell ringer's job personally and went up into the belfry to begin the screening process. After observing several applicants demonstrate their skills, he had just about decided to call it a day. But just then, an armless man approached him and announced that he was there to apply for the bell ringer's job.

Incredulously, the bishop blurted out, "But. . .you have no arms!"

"No matter," said the man: "Observe!"

And he began striking the bells with his face, producing a beautiful melody on the carillon. The bishop listened in astonishment, convinced he had finally found a suitable replacement for Quasimodo. But suddenly, rushing forward to strike a bell, the armless man tripped and plunged headlong out of the belfry window, falling to his death in the street below.

The stunned bishop rushed to his side. When he reached the street, a crowd had gathered around the fallen figure, drawn by the beautiful music they had heard only moments before.

As they silently parted to let the bishop through, one of them asked, "Bishop, who was this man?"

"I don't know his name," the bishop sadly replied, "but his face rings a bell."

{WAIT! WAIT! Not through yet}

The following day, despite the sadness that weighed heavily on his heart due to the unfortunate death of the armless campanologist(now there's a word-of-the-day...), the bishop continued his interviews for a new bell ringer of Notre Dame. The first man to approach him said, "Your Excellency, I am the brother of the poor armless wretch who fell to his death from this very belfry yesterday. I pray that you honour his life by allowing me to replace him in this duty."

The bishop agreed to give the man an audition, and, as the armless man's brother stooped to pick up a mallet to strike the first bell, he groaned, clutched at his chest, and died on the spot. Two monks, hearing the bishop's cries of grief at this second tragedy, rushed up the stairs to his side.

"What has happened? Who is this man?" the first monk asked breathlessly.

"I don't know his name," sighed the distraught bishop...

"....but he's a dead ringer for his brother."

PEALS RUNG IN THE DISTRICT

Date	Place	Changes	Method	RW page no.
18 November 2000	Chislehurst St N	5088	Bristol Surprise Major	01/32
02 December 2000	Crayford	5120	Glasgow Surprise Major	01/8
10 December 2000	Greenwich	5040	Superlative No.2 Surprise Royal	01/82
16 December 2000	Chislehurst St N	5184	The Moon Surprise Major	01/187
16 December 2000	Greenwich	5000	London No.4 Surprise Royal	01/89
27 December 2000	Penge	5040	Surprise Minor 7m.	01/113
20 January 2001	Bromley	5184	Bristol Surprise Major	01/271
03 February 2001	Cudham	5080	Cambridge Surprise Royal	01/217

QUARTERS PEALS RUNG IN THE DISTRICT

Date	Place	Changes	Method	RW page no.
07 May 2000	Beckenham	1385	Grandsire Caters	
14 May 2000	Beckenham	1260	Grandsire Triples	
18 November 2000	Beckenham	1296	Cambridge Surprise Minor	01/45
14 January 2001	Bexley	1298	Cambridge Surprise Minor	01/275
11 November 2000	Bromley	1260	Plain Bob Minor	00/1240
26 December 2000	Bromley	1250	Lincolnshire Surprise Major	01/197
12 November 2000	Chelsfield	1260	St Martins Doubles	01/17
10 December 2000	Chelsfield	1260	Doubles 300 Grandsire, 960 Plain Bob	01/221
31 December 2000	Chelsfield	1260	Doubles 180 Grandsire, 1080 Plain Bob	01/194
14 January 2001	Chelsfield	1260	Doubles 4m.	
11 March 2001	Chelsfield	1260	Doubles 60 Grandsire 1200 Plain Bob	
25 March 2001	Chelsfield	1260	Plain Bob Minor	
12 February 2001	Chislehurst Ann.	1260	Grandsire Triples	01/300
08 October 2000	Chislehurst St N	1260	Plain Bob Triples	00/1189
29 October 2000	Chislehurst St N	1288	Little Bob Major	
26 November 2000	Chislehurst St N	1260	Plain Bob Doubles	01/13
12 November 2000	Crayford	1260	Grandsire Doubles	00/1240
21 May 2000	Eltham	2000	Plain Bob Major	
17 December 2000	Eltham	1260	Grandsire Triples	01/277
19 November 2000	Erith Ch Ch	1260	Grandsire Doubles	01/13
22 December 2000	Eynsford	1260	Grandsire Triples	01/198
31 December 2000	Eynsford	1260	Plain Bob Minor	01/198
17 December 2000	Farningham	1260	Plain Bob Doubles	01/64
05 February 2000	Foots Cray	1260	Plain Bob Doubles	01/118
26 November 2000	Foots Cray	1260	Plain Bob Doubles	01/118
05 December 2000	Foots Cray	1260	Doubles 4m:	
13 February 2000	Greenwich	2000	Stedman Caters	
23 November 2000	St Mary Cray	1296	Cambridge Surprise Minor	
05 November 2000	West Wickham	1440	Cambridge Surprise Minor	00/1197
11 November 2000	Woolwich	1259	Grandsire Triples	00/1240
30 November 2000	Woolwich	1260	Plain Bob Doubles	01/64
21 December 2000	Woolwich	2000	Doubles 2m:	01/224

Congratulations:

Anne Townsend rang her first away from cover and her first inside, the Treble and third respectively to Doubles, and Bobby Lawes rang his first away from cover, the treble to Doubles, all at Chelsfield.

James Tate rang the third to Plain Bob Triples and Bradley Collins the second to Plain Bob Doubles for their first quarters, both at St Nicholas, Chislehurst.

Mike Salter rang the Tenor for his first quarter and Debra Say the third for her first inside, both in the Grandsire Doubles at Crayford.

Neil Lucia rang the Treble for his first quarter and Adrian Lucia his first as cover, both in the Grandsire Doubles at Christ Church Erith.

Steve Edwards rang the Treble to Plain Bob Doubles at Farningham for his first quarter, and Susan Collins the Tenor to Plain Bob Doubles at Woolwich for her first attempt.

Finally, Judith Fry, Helena Benzinski, Alys Helm, Mike Christie and Jackie Toulmin all rang their first quarter of Surprise at the first attempt, in the Cambridge at West Wickham.

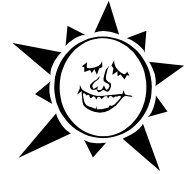
From The Ringing World up to edition No. 4691 March 23, 2001.

Jim Rooke



## KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS

### LEWISHAM DISTRICT



#### **Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting held at Christ Church, Erith on Saturday, 13th January 2001.**

The Chairman, Miss Philippa Rooke, welcomed everyone to the meeting and drew attention to the events since the Annual District Meeting - the Carol Service at Sidcup, the Millennium Service at Southwark Cathedral (thank you to Miss Mary Andrews for her contribution to this event, to which all ringers in the Greater London area had been invited) and to the Newsletter under its 'new management'.

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs. Monica Hanscomb and Mrs. Lis Stewart from Biggin Hill, Mr. Nicholas Wilkins from Chelsfield, Mr. Roger Long from St. Nicholas, Chislehurst, Miss Marian Wansbury and Mr. Mike Hutton from Dartford, Mrs. Jan Cass, Miss Marilyn Hayward and Miss Miriam Ross from Foots Cray, Mr. David Crowhurst and Mr. Jon Pettyfer from Horton Kirby.

#### **2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The Minutes of the Last Meeting, which had been circulated, were confirmed and signed.

#### **3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

##### **Tower Photographs**

Mr. Len Morley drew attention to report in the Newsletter of the Committee Meeting held at Leeds in November and reminded members about the request for millennium photographs. These should be sent to Mr. Morley by the end of April.

##### **Bell Restoration Fund**

The Chairman reminded members that each District had been asked to raise £2,000 each year for the Bell Restoration Fund. A good way to do this was to run a 120 Club, such as was being done in the Maidstone District. A volunteer to run such a club in this District was sought. It was reported that a recent Quiz at Horton Kirby had raised over £300 for the B.R.F. An Open Day for tower grabbers was suggested. The Chairman felt that it might not be a good event to organise since the District was due to host the Association's Annual General Meeting in 2002. Members were told that the Dartford tower would be arranging a fund-raising event.

##### **Membership Subscriptions for Students**

The question of the level of membership subscriptions for students who remained in the county whilst attending college was discussed and an amount of £6.00 was suggested. A vote was taken on this and it was agreed to put this proposed amount forward to the General Committee (25 for, 18 against).

##### **Newsletter**

The Chairman drew attention to an error on page 10 of the Newsletter. Mr. Donald Niblett had not been elected as a Vice-President of the Association but had been nominated by the General Committee for election at the Annual General Meeting on Easter Monday.

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#### **4. CORRESPONDENCE**

No correspondence had been brought to the meeting.

#### **5. ELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS**

The following new members were elected:

Bromley Mr. Alec Thompson P. Mr. David Kingston S. Miss Christine Webb

Chislehurst, St. Nicholas Mr. Bradley Collins (jnr.) P. Mr. Len Morley S. Mrs. Pauline Morley

Crayford Mr. Andrew Sinclair P. Mrs. Nancy Robins S. Mrs. Cathy Cheeseman

Erith, St. John Miss Megan Heald P. Mrs. Margaret Heald S. Mrs. Carol Eastaugh

West Wickham Mr. Phillip Sullivan (jnr) P. Mrs. Judith Fry S. Mr. Jon Fry

#### **6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

##### **Call Change Competition Certificates**

The Chairman presented Call Change Competition Certificates to a representative to of bands that were places first, second and third in the Competition held at Eltham on 18th November, i.e. to Beckenham, St. Nicholas, Chislehurst and to Eltham.

##### **Holy Week - Bell Control Clinics**

The Chairman drew attention to the Bell Control Clinics; of which details were given on the bright orange posters that had just been issued.

##### **Carol Service**

Mrs. Esther Correia asked that anyone who wished to suggest a particular carol or wished to volunteer to read at the Carol Service which was to be held at Dartford in December should get in touch with her.

##### **District Practice**

The Ringing Master said that the next District Practice would be at Beckenham on the following Saturday. Practices at Southwark Cathedral were being arranged.

##### **Newsletter**

Mr. Rupert Cheeseman and Mrs. Cathy Cheeseman were congratulated on the high standard, which they had set with their first issue of the Newsletter. Mr. Cheeseman thanked all those who had contributed and asked towers to remember to send material to him.

##### **Vote of Thanks**

Mr. Jeremy Byers offered a vote of thanks to Mr. Jim Bennett, a Lay Reader at Christ Church, for conducting the service, to Mr. Jack Greenwell for playing the organ and to the local ringers for providing and serving an excellent tea.



## Around and About the district

### CAROL CONCERT AT DARTFORD

Further to the Xmas Carol Service on December 15th at Holy Trinity, I now have enough volunteers to read lessons but so far have only had one request for a carol, from Sidcup. Please discuss at your next practice and let me know.

Did everybody read the Tower news in the District Newsletter? If so, is there no Anne Robinson out there. We are still waiting for offers of help.

Replies to either of these to [gaoenzhu@dircon.co.uk](mailto:gaoenzhu@dircon.co.uk) if by e-mail, to 01322 220\*\*\* if by phone/fax.

Many thanks, Esther.

### OLD RINGING WORLDS

Sidcup has many copies of Ringing World - going back about twenty years. If anyone has a use for them or knows someone who would be interested, please contact Yvonne 020 8300 7524 or e-mail [RebeccaWright@compuserve.com](mailto:RebeccaWright@compuserve.com)  
Visitors are always welcome to Sidcup.

### DOES YOUR TOWER NEED A CLEAN?

If yes then ring Mary Hayward (01322 614035) of Sidcup tower because she has a small portable electric Hoover that will be going to the charity shop unless it can find a new home.

### A CORRECTION

Dickon Love, KCACR Handbook editor, writes:

“Just a quick note to say that there is an error in the newsletter that I would like you to correct if that is possible. It states that "the Lewisham District has suffered because of misinformation in the current years (sic) handbook". The problem was actually that the printers had misprinted a small number of copies... unfortunately this happened within the Lewisham District part, and even more unfortunately the misprinted batch largely ended up in the Lewisham District!! It was therefore not misinformation but a misprint outside of our control. We are indeed seeking a price reduction from the printers to cover their error, but all proof reading will continue to be done by myself.

Otherwise, an excellent newsletter.”

### PERFORMING MIRACLES

District Meeting

January 13th

I suppose I should have known that things could go wrong if only by the date. It was great to see so many turn up, but only a few had actually made contact to let me know they were coming. Not very fair on those who took the trouble to phone in by the Wednesday evening. Unfair? Yes, because those who notified me by the due date had food prepared for them, but for others to notify me late or turn up unannounced meant that there was a lot less food to go round. The amount of food prepared would have been a good spread for the numbers expected. Unfortunately for us no one there could split the loaves and fishes so some of us went hungry. Will Tower Captains please make note to tell the caterers who will be attending the meeting in plenty of time, because when your turn comes to host the Quarterly Meeting, there may not be any one around who can perform miracles either.

Carol Eastaugh (Christ Church)

### LATER START FOR BECKENHAM

The Beckenham practice night now has a later start- 7:50. It still finishes at 9:30 before ajourning to the Jolly Woodman. For more details see ‘News from the towers’.

### PHOTOS, RECRUITMENT AND THE BRF

I asked at the last meeting and in the newsletter for each tower to send me a photo of all tower members during the millenium year. They have been requested for the KCACR central library. So far I have only received 2! Please could you get any others to me as soon as possible.

I have noticed that since the recruitment drive fueled by the millenium there appears to be very few new recruits in the district. At Eltham we are now at a stage where it would be appropriate to seek new ringers and train them. I wonder if any other tower has any recent recruitment experience and can suggest a relatively easy and cost effective way of finding new ringers. If so I am sure that I am not alone in wanting to hear about this. Very shortly we will have to think about attracting new ringers in Eltham, if anyone is interested in pooling resources please let me know.

Another thing that has crossed my mind is that, you may remember that all towers were asked after the last Quarterly meeting to try to give thought to the question of fund raising for County. All districts were asked to raise 2K, so far we have done very little and possibly nothing. Towers were asked to bring ideas to the next quarterly meeting (soon) thus enabling me to provide a response on behalf of the Lewisham District at the next meeting in May. It would be nice if we were able to report that we are doing something.

Len Morley