



LEWISHAM DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter On Line at www.lewishamdistrict.fsnet.co.uk

THE KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS www.kcacr.org.uk

JULY 2004



AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the Quarterly District Meeting held at St John's Eltham on Saturday 3rd April 2004
3. Matters arising from the minutes
 - Election of Mary Andrews as a Vice President of KCACR
4. KCACR Committee Meeting report
 - Central membership database
 - KCACR 125th anniversary
 - Rule change proposed by the Ashford District on criteria for membership
 - Insurance
 - Child protection policy and action
 - Webmaster
 - Publicity officer
 - Proposed change of date for County 8 bell striking competition
5. Events
 - County
 - 7th August Elementary School at Dover
 - 14th & 15th August Dover Regatta
 - 25th September County 6 bell striking competition at Penge
 - District
 - 9th October Annual District Meeting at Biggin Hill
6. Bell Restoration Fund – update on current plans
 - District open day
 - 120 club
7. Election of new members
8. Any other business
9. Vote of thanks

The Ashford District has produced this really colourful map of the bell towers of Kent. The map (A3 size) costs £3 on flexible card or £5 for a laminated version, both plus £1 p&p. All profits will go to the KCACR BRF. The picture above is a very low-resolution version (we don't want punters downloading from the website to avoid parting with 3 quid, do we?), but the real thing is of a very high standard.

Orders, including cheques made out to the KCACR, should be sent to Pam Manger at the address in the Handbook. For further info or address details please contact PamelaManger@care4free.net

Frank Lewis
Webmaster (www.kcacr.org.uk)

Next District Event

District Meeting
SS Peter & Paul, Shoreham
on
Saturday 10th July
Bells 3.00 p.m. Service 4.30 p.m.
Names for tea to
Yvonne Avery on 01959 522198
or ydshoreham@aol.com
by Wednesday 7th July please.

Chairman's Bit

Please do have a look at the Agenda for the next Quarterly Meeting, including the Secretary's note on the issues of a proposed "minimum level of competence" for Association membership, and the need (or not) for an Association Publicity Officer. If you have any particular views on the issues, do please come along and make them known! We need to have your views in order to ensure that the County takes due note of the opinions of the Lewisham District.

With summer coming up, there will no doubt be occasions when towers find themselves short of numbers, both for practices and service ringing. If you're thinking of cancelling your practice, don't forget that there may be another tower locally which is in the same position. So why not have a joint practice instead – not only do you ensure that only one tower is silent rather than two, but it is a chance to meet other ringers.

David Holdridge

Secretary's Bit

Lewisham District Quarterly Meeting Saturday 10th July 2004 at SS Peter & Paul, Shoreham

The agenda for the Quarterly meeting is published on page 1 of this Newsletter.

There are two issues in particular on which we will be seeking your views at this meeting:

1. Should a ringer demonstrate a minimum level of competence before being proposed for membership of KCACR?

The Ashford District have proposed a rule change:

'A minimum standard of competency should be reached by a ringer before Membership of the Association is proposed, this to comprise the ability to ring rounds and call changes, and to raise and lower a bell. The proposed new member's nomination should be seconded by any District Officer, who must satisfy him/herself that the required standard has been reached'.

- Do you think that it is right in principle that a ringer should demonstrate a minimum level of competence before being proposed for membership?
- If so, is the level of competence proposed realistic? Maybe this is the standard you would expect anyway before proposing a learner for membership.
- Should a District Officer verify the level of competence attained? This would be something

completely new for this district but is apparently already the practice in the Ashford District.

2. Does the KCACR need a Publicity Officer?

This issue was raised at the County AGM. In the County Chairman's view the role of a Publicity Officer is to take the art of ringing to a wider field and to support ringers. To some extent other County officers already have a publicity role. Catherine Lewis, as County Training Officer does her own publicity and the website, under the Webmaster, Frank Lewis, also provides valuable publicity. Perhaps there is a need for an Officer to co-ordinate other publicity activities e.g. publicity boards and videos that local towers could borrow, flyers and posters.

A committee has been set up to look at updating or replacing the current publicity boards on which Sara Hardy is our District representative.

- What do you think?
- What kind of publicity material do you need e.g. for tower open days?
- What else might a Publicity Officer do that would be useful in publicising our activities and aiding recruitment?
- Do you know anyone with relevant expertise who might be prepared to take on this role?

I look forward to seeing you at Shoreham and hearing your views.

Christine Webb
District Secretary



Incredibly, there are some members from whom I have not yet received subscriptions for 2004.

I'll name the towers rather than the individuals:

Beckenham x 3
Horton Kirby x 2
Shoreham x 2
Plus one other not associated with any particular tower x 1

If you're not sure whether your subs have been paid, then ask me and I'll let you know!

Mark Jones
Membership Secretary

Editorial



Sorry that the newsletter is a bit more rough around the edges than normal this time. Problems with the computer severely curtailed the amount of time that I had left to do it.

Congratulations to Cllr. John Eastaugh, Carol's husband, on being elected Mayor of Bexley. He is keen to try and promote ringing at some point during his term in office so if anyone has any ideas to achieve this then please share them. The Mayoral diary is already filling up fast though!



On a rather grey summer afternoon on Saturday 26th June four of the six Districts met at Ospringe to take part in the 8-Bell Striking Competition. The set piece for the day was 224 of Double Oxford Bob Major.

The draw was due to take place at 3.50pm, at which time each of the Districts had at least one member missing. However by 4.00pm the majority of ringers had arrived and the draw duly took place. Tonbridge were drawn first with Rochester, Canterbury and Ashford following - this was a relief to Ashford as some of their ringers were not expected until at least 4.45pm.

Ian Oram, our judge for the day, was safely seated on the far side of the church under the trees in case the rain came! Ringing took place although we still had to wait a little for the Ashford District to appear and the final blows were rung at about 5.10pm. Everyone enjoyed a well earned tea provided by Clare Larter and her team of helpers.

Then came the time for Ian give his verdict on the ringing. He said all the teams made good use of their 2 minutes practice but they might have been better ringing plain hunt than trying out the method of the day. He gave constructive criticism on the ringing and then announced the result in the traditional reverse order.

1st	Canterbury	3rd	25
2nd	Tonbridge	1st	80
3rd	Ashford	4th	82
4th	Rochester	2nd	86

In concluding the afternoon's activities Eric Roughley thanked Ian Oram for judging and presented the trophy to the winning District.

Margaret Funnell

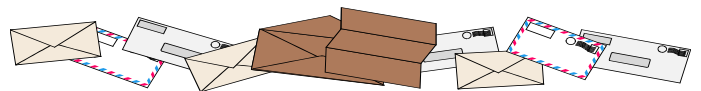
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I would just like to say how much I enjoyed the Pre Hereford tour in deepest darkest Gloucestershire. It really was a very good three days and certainly re-charged my batteries. It had all those ingredients that go to making a trip away a great success; good company, good food and drink and lovely scenery. I would like to thank Margaret for asking me and sorting out the accommodation, and Rhiannon for her work in organising the towers. A special mention must go to Dominic and Carol who enlivened the trip back home; I haven't laughed like that for ages, it was a real tonic.

Andrew Sinclair



We will as usual, be seeking articles, pictures, jokes, cartoons, reports and tower news for the next issue. Get them in early!

**COPY DEADLINE -
26th September 2004**

to

Rupert and Cathy Cheeseman
27 Church Road, Erith, Kent DA8 1PG
☎ 01322 439923

✉ rupert@crayford42.fsnet.co.uk

✉ cathy.cheeseman@virgin.net

Vernon Benning RIP

It was with great sadness that on Sunday, 4th July I learnt from a message left on our home answerphone by Vernon's son, Nicholas, that his father had died that morning in hospital. At this early stage I am presuming that the cause was heart related.

I had the previous evening spoken for the first time to Nicholas when he answered Vernon's home telephone. I was telephoning over concern for Vernon's wellbeing following a peal attempt at St.John's, Erith on Saturday. This had had to be set up after 2h 50m (3mins/120changes from the end) due to Vernon apparently finding it increasingly difficult, over the preceding few minutes, to keep the tenor in place, covering to Triples. For 2h 45m Vernon had rung well and the problem only emerged very near the end – the previous Saturday Vernon had rung the same bell to a quarter peal of Cambridge Major!

During Saturday evening's conversation with Vernon's son it emerged that despite seeming to regain his strength before leaving Erith, Vernon had had a (at this stage believed minor) car accident on the way home, probably caused by a heart attack, and been taken to hospital at Dartford.

Nicholas said that his father was *compos mentis* and that the intention was to move Vernon shortly to another hospital and said the hospital staff/doctors had talked of fitting a pacemaker although Vernon, I am told, had no history of any heart problems. Sadly, events have moved on since that telephone conversation on Saturday evening.

For those that didn't know Vernon, he learnt to ring at Christ Church Erith 70 years ago and knew many of the leading ringers of that day and became a College Youth. Latterly his home tower had been Brasted and in recent years he has not only attended the Cudham practice on Monday's but been very willing to ring when requested at Chelsfield and elsewhere for quarter peals, weddings and the occasional peal (You only need to see the number of different places he is mentioned in this newsletter to see how much he got himself around –Ed). Vernon had joined us on our Chelsfield ringing outing to Oxford in 2002 and had not only enjoyed the day enormously but had been a very useful ringer for the higher numbers of bells that we rang on.

He was a real gentleman always keen to ring and arriving for ringing events in good time, under his own steam usually having driven himself. He told me that recently he drove 5 hours to Herefordshire for an 80's peal (which I believe unfortunately was unsuccessful)! Even my ten year old daughter, Annabelle, is saddened at his

passing. Vernon rang in Annabelle's first quarter peal at Horton Kirby on 3rd April this year when she rang the tenor behind to Doubles. It was the week before she was ten and a month after Vernon was eighty. When the quarter peal was finished Vernon got out of his pocket a neatly handwritten card for Annabelle with the words suitable for the occasion taken from the inscription on the treble bell at Lamberhurst 'I mean to make it understood that though I'm little yet I'm good.' Congratulations, Vernon. Annabelle is very proud of the card and treasures it as much as her own ringing success.

Others will doubtless know more about Vernon and his ringing background and achievements as I can only speak for the recent few years but certainly those of all ages who knew him are going to greatly miss Vernon, a reliable ringer and a thoughtful, generous and caring gentleman.

Nick Wilkins



Vernon, 2nd from left, after the peal at Biggin Hill

The Biggin Hill band will miss Vernon very much. He assisted many of us in first quarters and, notably, a triple first peal (for Jenne, Julian Hemper and myself) in the heat of last August. He was sincere, supportive and quietly humorous, a true gentleman.

God bless him.
Nancy Gay

Horton Kirby Tour Three Counties

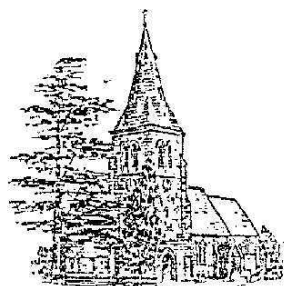
Following the success of our outing to Romney Marsh in September, and particularly the Gillet & Johnson 8 at Lydd, we decided to have another one in spring to search out more of these lovely bells. So, on a beautiful Saturday in May (Julian thinks I must be a witch or at least have a pointy hat to command such lovely weather) we set off on our 3 counties outing.

We started the day at Godstone. The tower got rather crowded with about 22 people at one point (our outings are rather popular). However, due to Lesley's excellent organisational skills (she is a teacher after all) everybody had a good ring including lots of Plain Hunt on 7 and a touch of Grandsire Triples.

We then left Surrey for East Sussex and went down to Fairwarp. Unfortunately, because of heavy traffic (and my misdirection's – well I'd given away all the beautiful maps I'd made) we arrived a bit late so didn't have as long here as we'd hoped.



This was a real shame as the bells at Fairwarp are wonderful – if you've never rung there it is well worth a visit. The sound was incredible. Even some of our less than perfect ringing was a real pleasure to hear (well we thought so anyway!).



Then it was on to Coleman's Hatch. Panic stations on the way when I discovered to my horror that I'd sent out letters booking the next 2 towers for 3 o'clock instead of this one for 12.30. I asked to be left to my misery in the middle of the Ashdown Forest but to no avail. I had to face the music

they said, or rather the ringing (or lack of it) because all of these ringers were looking for another tower. Then Lesley, who must be my guardian angel, said don't worry there would be someone at the church because they would realise I meant 12.30 and not 3 o'clock. Well sure enough, when we arrived there was, and they were really pleased because they wouldn't have to come back in the afternoon (who's the witch now then!)

After ringing on our 3rd Gillet & Johnson 8 of the day we retired for lunch at The Hatch Inn (No one got lost on the way there!). We can thoroughly recommend this hostelry. We gave them our order in advance and they were brilliant, not only was the food practically ready for us when we arrived,

but it was excellent as well (so was the beer I'm told).

Lesley and some other mad ringers went off to Hartfield in the lunch break to attempt a quarter peal. Most of us sensible people just lazed in the sun taking in the ambience of the pub garden.



The 4th tower of the day, Withyham, was, I am told, quite a scoop. It is often difficult to get this one due to an unringable vicar's wife! However we had a secret weapon in John Barnes who is her cousin. John was joining us for the afternoon but hadn't arrived when I went to get the key at the vicarage. I was met by a rather austere looking vicar asking if John was there as he was keen to catch up with him. Assuring the vicar that John was indeed on his way I prayed that he would arrive in time or my name might be put on a blacklist of secretaries who would do anything to get a ring for her tower. John duly arrived and we again had a good ring this time with Philippa in charge. This was another 8, but the only deviation of the day as they are Taylor's bells.

The church is in a beautiful setting up above a lake and as it was a ground floor ring we were able to enjoy the views, and some more sunshine, as well.

Then, leaving John to take tea with the vicar, it was back to Kent for our final Gillet & Johnson 8 at Edenbridge. We were met by Brian Jeffries who joined us for some ringing and much to the delight of Lesley we (used in the Royal sense) rang a very good touch of Stedman Triples which made up for their not getting the quarter.

The whole day was excellent. Everybody had plenty of ringing and they all seemed to enjoy themselves. We are still a 'new band' and were pleased to be able to ring a lot of Plain Hunt on 7 which has helped our rope sight no end. Also, our new ringers had the chance to ring lots of different bells which has improved their handling skills and confidence.

Thanks, as always, to all of our helpers without whom we would not have got so much out of the day. All of us were able to try something new, even if only a different bell to Plain Hunt or trebling to a touch of Grandsire Triples!

So, here's to the next outing I can't believe I said that I'm sure it was never, ever again!

Sue Allport

NEWS FROM THE TOWERS

ASH-BY-WROTHAM

Practice Saturday 9:30am

BECKENHAM

Practice Thursday 19:50

BEXLEY

Practice Thursday 20:00

BICKLEY

Practice Wednesday 19:30

BIGGIN HILL

Practice Wednesday 20:00

A typical (?) Wednesday night practice.

Injury time - one of our more experienced ringers (and mother) away because of a broken nose. Two more arrive. "Please can I ring the treble? I've got a twisted back." "My dislocated shoulder hurts; can I have the two?" Fine.

Let a learner ring up the five. "Don't pull so hard!" Too late. A missed sally and - crash! - right through the stay.

A quick scramble up the ladders to retrieve shattered remains and re-thread rope. Another weekend with drills and spanners ahead! I ring up the five and hold it on balance for some relatively confident call changes.

A visitor (Shock! Delight!) appears. "Let me have a light bell (He's a stranger.), as I have an injured arm. "With Dave (Please visit again!) one-handed on the three, me still hanging on to the five and other casualties distributed appropriately, we do reasonably well-struck mixed-up Plain Hunt, and Matthew proves that he is ready to ring for weddings.

Every time I despair that we never seem to progress, I only have to listen to the laughter, look at the determined faces, count the legs and divide by two, note that we almost always have a full complement on Sundays, see how young they (mostly) are, give FOUR learners instruction, to realise that we are quite lucky!

And on Sunday someone always says that they love the sound of the bells; that they listen for them as a signal to go out the front door. We're doing well!

Nancy Gay



BROMLEY

Practice Tuesday 20:00

BROMLEY COMMON

Practice Thursday 19:45

Since the beginning of the year we have introduced a new approach to our weekly practices. Most of our weekly practices are arranged for ringers of all levels of experience but once a month, the practice is devoted to method ringing only. This is aimed at the more experienced members of our band but has also been supported by the Hayes band.. It gives the band the opportunity to ring methods not normally rung because of, for example, time constraints on practice nights and it also gives our visitors eight bell practice.

In advance of each practice two methods are chosen to allow band members time to learn the blue line. The ringing concentrates on these but other methods can be rung on the night. These practice nights appear to be a success in view of the numbers that support them.

Chris Lawrance

CHELSEFIELD

Practice Monday 20:00

First, some good news; local ringer, Elsa Sjovorr, who in summer 2003 sustained a badly infected hand which needed surgery, is back ringing with us. The cause of the infection is now thought to have been an adder bite acquired whilst gardening, although no reptile was noticed in the open.

Now some sad news. Close on ten years ago we taught and welcomed to our band two senior citizens who were members of our choir. Norman and Irene Foster became loyal members of the band and progressed to call changes and plain hunt, always turning out regularly on Sunday evenings and practice nights. With Norman having undergone several operations in recent years and Irene caring for him as well as finding ringing increasingly tiring they excused themselves from the tower over the last twelve months. Nevertheless, it was a shock that whilst in hospital for a routine pacemaker fitting, Irene died quite suddenly at the end of October. Fittingly, we managed to ring for Irene's funeral. We offer Norman our condolences and very recently have been pleased to see Norman on a couple of forays into the tower which we hope will continue.

A further depletion of our ringing resources arose in November when Angela Whitley (nee Wilkins) suffered a

complicated fracture of her left elbow. Angela did this by falling in the gym and this has confirmed what many of us thought all along in that gyms are not such healthy places and perhaps ringing is somewhat safer! The complex fracture has had to be pinned, plated and wired and resulted in six days in hospital. Angela is missed not only in the tower, but also in the church where she is one of the leaders of a project to raise £265k for an extension to the church to provide a meeting room (suitable for ringing meetings) kitchen and toilet. So far over £150k has been raised and donations by cheque, Chelsfield PCC (Extension Fund), sent to either Angela Whitley, Oakover, Tower Road, Orpington, Kent, will be gratefully received. We wish Angela a speedy recovery and aim to ring a sponsored peal to raise more funds for the extension later in 2004. Apart from a couple of brief attempts to ring with one hand, at the time of going to press in late June, Angela has still not rung a bell properly since her accident.

Although not part of the church extension project, work has recently been undertaken on the bells which has resulted in our being able to raise them in peal. Previously this was almost impossible with any combination of the old back five going up 'wrong'. In fact, on a Saturday late last year, a visiting band that shall remain nameless, raised the bells and rang them for a half hour visit, leaving them up for Sunday ringing. When we rang them on the Sunday we found all except the 1936 treble up wrong! We are delighted with the outcome of the current work and will be pleased to welcome visitors to experience the improved 'go' and striking of the bells.

And now, some very good news. Last year two of our choristers, Elizabeth Harris and Phillida Lawes, neither of whom could ring a bell, acted as guinea pigs at a course held at Harrietsham, Kent. The tower captains on the course were being taught how to teach beginners. We are pleased that teenager, Elizabeth, her appetite having been whetted, is now enthusiastically receiving further tuition with a view to joining the band. In due course we hope Elizabeth will progress sufficiently to join the Kent County Association and to which four Chelsfield ringers across the age spectrum (from age nine to senior citizen) were elected in October.

Despite setbacks in the last twelve months, we remain a very keen band of ringers. We are supported by our Rector, Leslie Virgo, who regularly takes a Compline Service for the ringers after our practice. We are grateful for his encouragement and in the first week of January he completed 30 years in post! To celebrate, six members of the local band rang a quarter peal of 1440 Kent Treble Bob Minor on Sunday 4th January 2004 which replicated an identical length rung 30 years previously and with two of the same band as follows:

Treble	Nicholas Wilkins (C)
2	Karen Barter
3	Philippa Rooke
4	John Barnes
5	James Rooke
Tenor	Robert Pruden



Additionally, in further celebration of our Rector's achievement and the 1400th anniversary of the founding of the Diocese of Rochester, we rang a peal on 10th January in 2h 41m comprising four Minor Methods (Kent, Cambridge, St. Clements & Plain Bob) as follows:

Treble	James Rooke
2	Lesley Barclay
3	Philippa Rooke
4	John Barnes
5	Clare Pruden
Tenor	Nicholas Wilkins (C)

Nick Wilkins

CHISLEHURST (Annunciation)

Practice 1st Wednesday 19:30

CHISLEHURST (St Nicholas)

Practice Wednesday 20:00 (1st Wednesday at Annunciation)

CRAYFORD

Practice Tuesday 19:45

I wish I were able to report some stupendous event; something of great import, so just in case you are holding your breath in eager anticipation, I should exhale now! I am sorry to say there is nothing that is going to make you gasp in amazement. Like many towers we struggle on and ringing tends to be a bit hard to mouth. Sundays and practice nights have been restricted to six (and sometimes five) bells. We do experiment with some of the more obscure doubles methods to beef up the staple diet of Plain Bob, Grandsire and Stedman. We are able to ring Cambridge sometimes, and I shouldn't moan, because I scored my first quarter of this on the inside last month. I should like to thank Mark Jones, David Brown and Chris Webb who valiantly trekked across to Crayford on a wet and windy afternoon to help me achieve this.

Natasha, our newest recruit, what am I saying, our only recruit of recent years, is making excellent progress and I'm pleased to report she's hooked. On the 13th July, we have a delegation of girl guides who are coming to 'have a look', so you never know, but then the cynic in me says "Yes and pigs might fly", but this is not the attitude. Wedding rehearsals at Crayford tend to coincide with our practice nights; perhaps this is for the ambience, but we have been known on occasions to nab some poor unsuspecting bored relative and drag them up to the ringing room. The last man to do this brought his very young son; a toddler with eyes like dinner plates, who watched our efforts very judiciously. "Did you enjoy that?" his father cajolingly asked. "No" came the unequivocal answer. Oh well, we can but continue to try!

Our thanks go to all those who come along and help us out, because without them, we would sink like a stone, and if anyone else has nothing

better to do on a Tuesday evening (after all the washing up can wait, and de-frosting the freezer is one of those jobs you wish you'd never started), come along and have a ring, you will be made most welcome.

Andrew Sinclair

CUDHAM

Practice Monday (except 1st) 19:45 Joint Practice with Downe

To mark the local "Cudham in Bloom" event today, 20th June, a quarter peal of 1260 Plain Bob Doubles was rung, followed by the formal opening of the event by the vicar, the Rev Tim Hatwell. The event was primarily for visitors to walk around the village admiring local gardens opened for the day, but heavy rain meant most congregated in the church, and we thus had quite a few visitors to the tower. A short demonstration of our skills, such as they are, was given, and several visiting ringers joined us for a while in short bursts of call changes to show non-ringers what its all about.

In 42 minutes, 1260 Plain Bob Doubles by:-

Treble	Alison Wilson
2	Rita Cox
3	Alison Dyer
4	Jon Fry (C)
5	Vernon Benning
Tenor	Paul Alexander

The first quarter by a local band for many years.

With thanks to Vernon for keeping me right along the way. Also rung to mark the 1400th anniversary of Rochester Diocese.

Jon Fry

DARTFORD

Practice Wednesday 20:00

Peter and Joyce Rose celebrated their Golden wedding anniversary on 26th July. The Dartford band gave them some roses for their garden and rang a quarter peal in their honour in the afternoon.

1260 Plain Bob Doubles (768 cover) in 48mins

Treble	Rupert Cheeseman (C)
2	Brenda Barton
3	Debra Say
4	Martin Luffman
5	Andrew Sinclair
6	Andrew Boyd-Bell (1 st attempt)
7	Peter Rose
Tenor	Deryck Jones

Rupert Cheeseman

DEPTFORD

DOWNE

Practice 1st Monday 20:00 Joint Practice with Cudham

ELTHAM

Practice Tuesday 20:00

Things have been fairly quiet here since the last newsletter. We held our Annual Tower Meeting on the Tuesday in Holy Week. As Tower Captain, I was able to report on a reasonably successful twelve months since the previous year's annual meeting – most of which has already been reported in this column - although "recruitment and retention" remain a matter for concern (as they do for most towers).

Otherwise, there have been two peal attempts by visiting bands, neither of them successful unfortunately. The monthly Monday-night quarter-peal band has done a bit better, losing a quarter of Cambridge but scoring one of Bristol.

Now that the warmer weather is with us, we have already had one day's walking, around East Peckham in Kent, with a particularly fine lunchtime pub being a major feature. A date in July has already been agreed for the next one.

The wedding season is also upon us, and we seem to have a few more scheduled for this year than recently – although we have a long way to go before we match the likes of Chislehurst. We were also asked to toll the tenor for a funeral recently. Sad as that occasion was, we may have gained a ringer from it: the funeral was for the father of someone who learnt to ring at Eltham some years ago, but who gave up because of work commitments. He has since been up to a couple of practices, and has clearly not forgotten what he was taught! He has even brought along another potential learner – so we may even gain two ringers.

David Holdridge

ERITH (Christ Church)

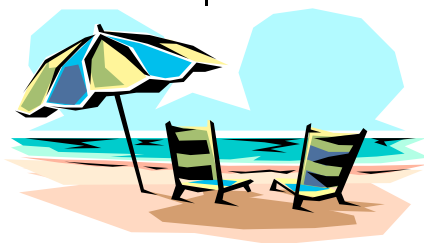
Practice Monday 20:00

We successfully rang a peal of Grandsire Triples on March 27th to celebrate the 1400th Anniversary of Rochester Diocese and also in memory of John Simpson (who was to have rung the Tenor). The peal was rung by a mainly local band and special congratulations are due to Carol Eastaugh and Tom Scarth on scoring their first peal.

We would like to congratulate Councillor John Eastaugh, husband of Carol, on his election as Mayor of Bexley – Carol is now Lady Mayoress. To celebrate, she conducted her first Quarter Peal on June 20th.

Our young learners continue to make good progress and have started ringing for weddings.

We are quite envious of those towers that have been painting



their ringing chambers as we are stuck upstairs most Saturday mornings scraping and painting our bell frame. This job has been turning up on the church quinquennial repairs list for at least 20 years! Now that we have replaced all our bearings, at least when we scrape off all the oil and grease that has run down our frame, we know it will stay clean. We have also improved the lighting in the belfry so we can see where we are painting!

Elizabeth Brett

ERITH (St John the Baptist)

Practice Wednesday 20:00

EYNSFORD

Practice Friday 20:00

FARNINGHAM

Practice Wednesday 20:00 by arrangement

FOOTS CRAY

Practice Wednesday 20:00

GREENWICH

Practice 2nd, 3rd and 4th Wednesday 20:00

HAYES

Practice Tuesday 20:00

On Sunday 6th June a quarter peal was rung at St Mary's Hayes to commemorate the 1400th anniversary of the Diocese of Rochester. It was also Jon and Janet Fox's wedding anniversary and Sue Fisher's 25th year of bell ringing!

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

Treble	Val Bracey
2	Sue Fisher (C)
3	Jon Fox
4	Janet Fox
5	Jamie Drew
Tenor	Rob Duke

It was the first attempt for Val and Jamie.

We now have at least 5 young beginners learning to ring at 7.30pm on a Tuesday but we would appreciate some more experienced ringers to join us at 8.00pm so that methods can be practised.

Mary Rowedder

HORTON KIRBY

Practice Thursday

Our new ringers are progressing well and have all received their 'Ambitious Apprentice' Bell Club Awards. They joined us for their first outing in May and enjoyed it very much. The experience of ringing on different bells has really improved their handling skills.

The rest of the tower are trying to learn different bells for

Grandsire Doubles – it's so easy to get stuck on one bell! – and, some are going back to Bob Doubles which we once attempted in a different life (or so it seems). We had planned a quarter peal for the end of April with four Horton Kirby ringers in it which would have been a first but it had to be postponed. Hopefully we can try again soon (I hope Nick doesn't read this bit or he'll make us do it!)

As always we are grateful to the helpers who come along tirelessly every week to ring Grandsire over, and over, and over again and they never complain! Visitors, whether learners like us or more experienced, are always given a very warm welcome.

Sue Allport

LEWISHAM

Practice 5th Wednesday

PENGE

Ringing by arrangement

ST MARY CRAY

Practice Wednesday 19:45

SHOREHAM

Practice Monday 20:00



Shoreham went for their first outing on May 8th and had an enjoyable day ringing at the very different towers of Kemsing, Brasted, Speldhurst and Leigh. The pub lunch was good too at the Fleur de Lys in Leigh. Next year we will look at further afield and any recommendations are welcome.

We had a successful stall at the village fete and are well on the way to raising money for new ropes, thankfully the one on loan has not had to go back to Chelsfield yet.

The George pub have said visitors can use their loos on July 10th so see you then.

Yvonne Avery

SIDCUP

Practice Wednesday 20:00

WEST WICKHAM

Practice Wednesday 20:00

WOOLWICH

Practice 1st Wednesday 20:00



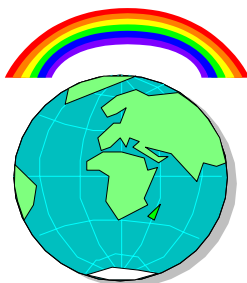
Around Bewl Water

Our annual ringing outing this year on 15th May took us to towers around Bewl Water, the weather was kind to us, and several car-loads of ringers and friends descended upon Brenchley to start the day. It's a fine 8, rather heavier than many of us are used to, however we managed a course or two of Grandsire Triples and Bob Major, which was an achievement as most of us are unfamiliar with ringing on 8's (notwithstanding that Cudham have a magnificent ten bells!).

Onwards to Lamberhurst, and the more familiar six rope format. We were never going to challenge the 1930 peal of 26 surprise methods – the first ever rung in that way, so the peal board said – but we acquitted ourselves well enough. Our learners were always eager to try their hands at new bells, and some creditable call changes were well struck. These were a nice, well rounded six, and some good Kent TB was achieved as well.

Last stop before lunch was the formidable lighter six at Kilndown – just getting into the rather cosy galleried ringing room there up a vertical iron ladder right inside the door was challenging in itself. For those that have visited, it reminds you of Chelsfield – but half the size, twice the height and a full glass screen, giving you a magnificent view down the church. Alongside our usual fare of Plain Bob and Grandsire, a course of Cambridge was tried with success.

A leisurely lunch was taken at the Globe & Rainbow, a stone's throw from Christ Church, Kilndown, and then onwards to Ticehurst, a moderately heavy six.



We'd planned at lunch to have a go at some more adventurous methods, perhaps Norwich or Stedman, however we soon discovered that the bells were rather more difficult to ring than we'd hoped. Despite now being rung from another galleried ringing platform, rather than previously at ground floor level, the bells still deserved their unofficial tag as the suicide six! Very long drafted, with a rope guide at precisely the wrong level, meant difficult bell control for the unwary. There were two large panels in the ringing room describing parish bequests to the local poor, which prevented any lowering of the rope guides to improve the quality of ringing. Everyone who tried them had to be on their toes, and our learners now know what "difficult" bells are all about.

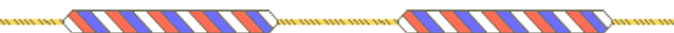


Last tower of the day was to be Wadhurst, a lighter eight.

Long drafted again, but with better placed rope guides this time, meant we had a good go with some decent methods, rounding off the day with Grandsire Triples and Bob Major.

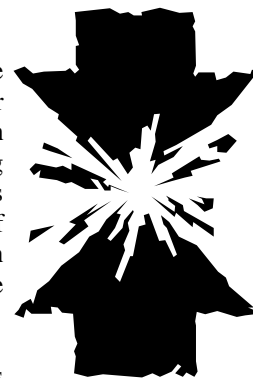
All in all, 23 attended during the day, and a modest surplus of £30 arose after deducting tower donations from the subscriptions collected, which will be sent to the BRF. Not content with the five towers visited, our two seniors, Vernon Benning and Bob Sherlock, went onwards to Otford, for further ringing – there is no stopping them, these days!

Jon and Judith Fry



A special practice event was held on 8th May at St Mary's, Downe, to help the local bands there and at Cudham improve their skills in raising and lowering bells in peal. Across the combined bands, a total of fourteen of us gathered to learn more.

Having researched the topic using one of Steve Coleman's books, it is clear that there is a lot more to this than simply putting a lot of effort in pulling the rope! Steve devotes a few chapters of his book on various aspects of raising, lowering and chiming in peal – let alone the more specialist role of leading up and down.



There are often limited opportunities to put theory into practice, as practice night is usually principally geared to improving striking, methods and so on. The objective at the start is to get the bells up ready for ringing, and how that is achieved may not be considered very important. And at the end of practice, again, it seems that there's a rush to depart, and what should be a steady lower turns into more of a disorderly collapse.

I took along a model bell, prepared some notes, and spent a couple of hours talking through the theory side of putting the bells upside down, or downside up, depending on which way they are at the start. We did try and put theory into practice for a couple of raises and lowers, but time was not on my side, and we could have spent a lot longer giving more people a go. The bells at Downe were ideal for this, being not too light, nor too heavy, and with a degree of sound control in place, the local populace were not inconvenienced.

I trust that many found it useful to concentrate upon this particular skill for the morning. It is an event that could be repeated in a few months, with perhaps more time to concentrate upon practice rather than theory.

Jon Fry



PEALS RUNG IN THE DISTRICT

Date	Place	Changes	Method	RW page no.
06 March 2004	Beckenham	5040	Bristol Surprise Royal	04/297
06 March 2004	Deptford	5088	Bristol Surprise Major	04/321
06 March 2004	Eltham	5056	London Surprise Major	04/297
27 March 2004	Erith, Christ Church	5040	Grandsire Triples	04/374
03 April 2004	Bromley	5058	Percy's Tea Strainer TP Major	04/396
13 April 2004	Chislehurst, Annunciation	5024	Spliced Surprise Major 4m.	04/421
24 April 2004	Bickley	5152	Glasgow Surprise Major	04/470
24 April 2004	Greenwich	5007	Stedman Caters	04/470

Carol Eastaugh rang the Treble and Tom Scarth the Tenor to Grandsire Triples at Christ Church, Erith for their first peal, and Christopher Backhouse rang the 3rd and Robert Backhouse the 4th in the same peal for their first on 8 and in the method.

QUARTERS RUNG IN THE DISTRICT

Date	Place	Changes	Method	RW page no.
14 February 2004	Dartford	1280	Plain Bob & Grandsire Doubles	04/301
29 February 2004	Crayford	1440	Plain Bob Minor	04/400
03 March 2004	Horton Kirby		London Surprise Minor	
07 March 2004	Lewisham	1250	Yorkshire Surprise Major	04/326
28 March 2004	Eynsford	1264	Double Norwich CB Major	04/379
31 March 2004	Lewisham	1260	Doubles 2m.	04/452
04 April 2004	Crayford	1260	Plain Bob Triples	04/400
04 April 2004	Lewisham	1260	Grandsire Triples	04/452
25 April 2004	Bexley	1260	Stedman Triples	04/474
09 May 2004	Crayford	1260	Doubles 2m.	04/522
16 May 2004	Crayford	1260	Grandsire Doubles	04/546
16 May 2004	Farningham	1440	Plain Bob Minor	04/547
22 May 2004	Lewisham	1260	Grandsire Triples	04/618
05 June 2004	Chelsfield	1320	Cambridge Surprise Minor	
06 June 2004	Hayes	1260	Plain Bob Doubles	04/615
06 June 2004	Lewisham	1260	Grandsire Triples	04/618
23 June 2004	Chelsfield	1320	Norwich Surprise Minor	
26 June 2004	Erith, St John	1250	Cambridge Surprise Major	

Congratulations to :

Val Bracey rang the Treble and Jamie Drew the 5th to Plain Bob Doubles at Hayes for their first attempt.

Christopher Backhouse rang the 4th and David Hilling the Tenor to Double Norwich Court Bob Major at Eynsford for their first in the method.

Carol Eastaugh rang in the quarter of Grandsire Doubles at Crayford for her first as Lady Mayoress of Bexley!

Clare Pruden rang the 5th at Chelsfield for her first of Norwich.

Julian Hemper circled the tower at Farningham to quarters by ringing the 5th to Plain Bob Minor.

The quarter of Stedman Triples at Bexley was the first attempt on the newly rehung bells and the Cambridge at Chelsfield the first on the bells since their recent refurbishment.

From The Ringing World up to edition No. 4861 June 25, 2004.

I will say this at the next meeting but if you know of anyone who would like to take over this job they would be more than welcome. I think it is about time for a fresh approach.

Jim Rooke



KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS



LEWISHAM DISTRICT

Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting held at St John's Eltham on Saturday 3rd April 2004

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Jon and Judith Fry (Cudham/West Wickham), Dominic Meredith (Beckenham), Margaret Macey (Foots Cray), Louise and Mark Hanscomb (Biggin Hill), Mark Backhouse (Christchurch Erith), Cathy Cheeseman, Andrew Sinclair and Debra Say (Crayford), Nick Wilkins (Chelsfield) and Mary Andrews (Bexley).



2. Minutes of the Quarterly meeting held at St John's Erith on Saturday 10th January 2004

Subject to one minor amendment the minutes were approved on the proposal of Jeremy Byers, seconded by Andrew Boyd-Bell.

3. Matters Arising

The Chairman reported the results of the District six bell striking competition. He presented certificates to the top three teams; Beckenham, which came third, Chelsfield, second, and the winners Eltham who will go on to represent the District in the County six bell striking competition to be held at Penge on 25th September 2004.

4. Committee Report

Len Morley reported that the proposed meeting to discuss the situation regarding Deptford bells had not taken place. The issue that had prompted the proposed meeting, that of a ringer who was not a member of KCACR (and therefore not insured) carrying out work on the bells, appeared to have been resolved, making a meeting at this time unnecessary.

There had been some discussion at County level of a possible subscription increase, partly because of the increase in the cost of insurance. Any decision on separate District training/advertising budgets (see item 5) could also have an impact on subscription levels.

5. Recruitment and Young Ringers Group

Len Morley reported that one meeting had already taken place with another scheduled for May. He welcomed ideas on what made a successful tower both in the areas of recruitment and training. He also asked for any ideas on how the County publicity boards could be updated.

There was some discussion on whether a District advertising/training budget would be helpful. The view was expressed that it was better to have a budget held at County level to which Districts could submit bids for funding when required. If Districts were allocated a specific budget they might feel obliged to spend it whether or not any specific project was cost effective. Advertising at local level was often most effective in local free papers, who would often carry articles or adverts for no charge.

It was proposed by Jeremy Byers and seconded by Rhiannon Meredith that a separate District training/advertising budget was not necessary. This proposal had the support of the meeting.

6. Events

The KCACR AGM was due to take place at Rochester on Easter Monday. The Chairman reminded the meeting that Mary Andrews, a long serving Lewisham District Secretary, was to be proposed as a Vice President of the Association at this meeting and encouraged as many Lewisham District members to attend as possible.



The Secretary, in reply to a question, said that she was unaware of any major issues to be raised at the AGM, though, as reported at the last Quarterly Meeting, there were some vacancies for County Officers as the current incumbents were standing down.

At District level, Jeremy Byers asked whether anyone could offer their tower for a district practice on 24th April. Christchurch Erith was offered subject to confirmation. The meeting was reminded that District events were publicised on the website and on the posters distributed to every tower.

7. Bell Restoration Fund

Philippa Rooke explained that, owing to work commitments among other factors, she had been unable to arrange a District Open Day for the first May Bank Holiday, although the fact that there were already two other Open Days on that day would in any case have been a problem. The suitability of other dates was discussed. There were already a number of nearby open days on August Bank Holiday Monday: the last Saturday of the Autumn half term was a possibility but dark evenings and colder weather were problems. Finally it was left to Philippa to identify a suitable date and make the arrangements, possibly based on a route similar to the one mapped out for the last District Open Day in 1992.

The Secretary briefly outlined what was involved in setting up and running a 120 Club and suggested that, if the meeting agreed to proceed with this idea, it would be best left to a small committee to work out the details. The meeting agreed to proceed with the idea and that Rachel Backhouse and Christine Webb should work together to set this up.

The Quarterly Meeting raffle, first suggested at the last meeting, took place for the first time at this meeting and raised £40.00 for the BRF. It was agreed that, for the time being at least, prizes for the raffle should be donated. Potential donors should contact Jeremy Byers.

The Chairman reported that Andrew Boyd-Bell had organised a Bob Doubles Training Day and the three trainees from Dartford had donated £20.00 to the BRF as a thank you to the tutor and helpers.

8. Election of New Members

The following new members were elected:

UNATTACHED

Lucy Weston

proposed by James Hardy, seconded by Sara Hardy

ELTHAM

Katherine Trill

proposed by Len Morley, seconded by David Holdridge

BIGGIN HILL

Mathew James Allan

Jessica Savage

proposed by Nancy Gay, seconded by Jim Rooke

proposed by Nancy Gay, seconded by Jim Rooke

DARTFORD

Helen Keogh

proposed by Deryck Jones, seconded by Esther Correia

9. Surplus Funds

Sara Hardy reported that Beckenham was still holding in their tower funds £69.03, a surplus left over from a Millennium Quiz Night held to raise funds to recruit new ringers for the millennium. This was money that properly belonged to the District but the District had no account of its own. After some discussion it was agreed, on the proposal by Lucy Weston, seconded by Deryck Jones, that the money be used to buy a supply of *One per Learner* books to be given to new recruits in the District.

10. Pleas from Biggin Hill

Nancy Gay appealed for visitors to help out on practice nights as once her daughter married and moved away she would be the only experienced ringer in her tower. She also asked whether anyone would be available for a peal at Biggin Hill on 24th April as she was one ringer short.

11. District Newsletter

Rupert Cheeseman thanked all those who had contributed to the latest issue of the District Newsletter.



KCACR Meeting 1.5.04

The main items to report are as follows:-

Correspondence

A letter had been received from "Q.S.Fore Ltd." Advising that they wished to install telecommunications equipment in the tower at St Mary's Church, Kemsing. Peter Romney as Diocesan Advisor and the Tower Captain, Fraser Clift are to pursue this with the company, PCC and Diocese.

Training

It was confirmed that another "Elementary School" will be run at Dover on August 7th 2004 looking at Plain Bob Doubles, Grandsire Doubles and Plain Hunt. Anyone interested in joining should contact the County Training Co-ordinator, Catherine Lewis.

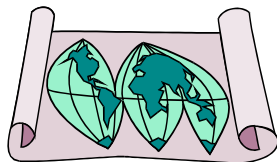


Membership Database

Graham Cottle has now been appointed County Membership Secretary and has also been co-opted to attend the General Committee Meetings during 2004/05. It was decided that we need a central database which the Districts can access, this information would be used to feed the handbook and drive the district tower returns, all information to be based on the requirement of individual members. Graham will now proceed developing such a database and in due course will contact the District Membership Secretary's.

KCACR 125th Anniversary

The cost of the meal is to be advised by next meeting. There was some discussion about producing some celebratory memorabilia using a KCACR map showing all the county's towers, possibly on such items as tea towels, mugs, tankards, etc. Any suggestions, information or queries concerning this please to Sara Hardy who will co-ordinate this districts response.



Rule Change being Proposed by the Ashford District

It is felt that to be a KCACR member there should be a minimum level of competence before membership may be proposed, this would aid our Insurance policy by ensuring that all members have a level of competency (people learning are covered by a separate clause under constant supervision).

The suggested minimum standard is that all members must be able to ring rounds and call changes and be able to raise and lower a bell without supervision (not necessarily in peal). It is further suggested that any new member should be proposed by their Tower Captain and seconded by a District Officer

who has witnessed their standard of ringing.

Mention was also made that the Winchester District have a system of "Probationer Membership" where a learner may become a "probationer member" for a small fee whilst learning as a formalised means of encouraging them to work towards being a full member.

Insurance

It was noted that it does not feature in the new handbook. The Secretary advised that our Personal Accident Insurance, as featured in last years handbook, is alright but she had noticed that our Public Liability Insurance was dependant upon the organisation being of charitable status. We are registered for BRF but not for anything else, as a consequence she has been asked to clarify this with the Insurance company.

Child Protection Policy and Action

Following the AGM, as requested, the Association has now written to the Bishops Council expressing support for the guidelines, details of which are available on the Website.

Webmaster

The meeting voted and approved that the Webmaster will this year be co-opted onto the Committee and that a formal proposal will be put to next years AGM that he should in future be a permanent member of the committee thus ensuring that information is fresh and up to date.



Publicity Officer

At present we do not have a Publicity Officer, it was felt that there should be someone to co-ordinate all issues related to any form of publicity and to raise the profile of the Association. It was agreed that a subgroup would meet, lead by the Chairman, to discuss this and report back to the General meeting their findings. Sara Hardy agreed to represent the Lewisham District and would appreciate any thoughts, views or suggestions to aid the process and, of course, anyone interesting in being a Publicity Officer should let Sara know.

Striking Competitions

It was noted that the 8 Bell Competition always clashed with the National 12 Bell Competition and agreed that this will be changed for future years. It is suggested that in future this event will be held on the 4th Saturday of April, feedback on the suitability of this date would be appreciated before August 2004.

The 6 Bell Competition is now confirmed for Penge on September 25th 2004. The Essex trophy this year is to be 317 of Stedman Caters, to be held at Hornchurch on September

11th 2004.

Rules of the Association

It was proposed that, because there has been a number of changes to the Rules of the Association, in future a paper copy would be kept by the County Secretary. At each AGM the Chairman would formally "sign off" the copy of the rules, which for the avoidance of doubt, would feature in the following years handbook.

Forthcoming Events

June 6th 2004, Country Garden Fair at Chevening Gardens near Sevenoaks. There will be craft and plant stalls, portrait artist, demonstration by HM Prison dogs, bouncy castle, raffle for a bike, refreshments and a Mini Bell Tower, all in aid of the Brasted Bell Restoration Project. (This raised over £5000 – Ed)

August 14th & 15th, Dover Regatta supported by the Lichfield Mobile Ringing Machine.

Len Morley

Upcoming District Events

Sat 10th Jul District Meeting: Shoreham, 3p.m. bells, 4.30p.m. service.

Sat 24th Jul District Practice: Beckenham, 7-9p.m.

Sat 14th Aug District Practice: Farningham, 7-9p.m.

Wed 18th Aug District Practice: Southwark Cathedral, 7-9p.m.

Sat 11th Sept District Practice: Venue tbc, 7-9p.m.

Sat 9th Oct Annual District Meeting: Biggin Hill, 3p.m. bells, 4.30p.m. service

Sat 22th Nov Call Change Comp: Venue tbc, 2:30p.m. draw

Sat 11th Dec Carol Service: Horton Kirby, 4:30p.m. service

Surprise Minor Practice

Please would all District Members note that the Eynsford & Farningham Bellringers intend to hold a monthly Surprise Minor Practice at Farningham every 3rd Wednesday commencing Wednesday 21st July at 8pm.

All are welcome, however a minimum standard of Treble Bob would be appreciated in order to maximise the benefits of the practice for everyone.

Initial enquiries and ideas of numbers interested in the first instance please to Julian Hemper on 01322 861751.

Dover Regatta & Ringing Weekend 14th & 15th August

In recognition of the part that bells have played at sea, Dover Town Council has invited the ringing fraternity to be part of the activities taking place along 1 km of sea front. In joint sponsorship with The KCACR, they are bringing an attraction to Dover that has not been to Kent before:



This little ring of six has a tenor of 76½lb in D and, given enough volunteer help, we hope to operate it throughout both days of the event. Running in parallel with this will be general ringing and pre-booked quarters at St Mary's in the town centre.



This is a great opportunity to promote our art and we are asking for as much help as possible from members of the Association. Stewards are needed to answer questions from members of the public, and especially instructors to give "hands-on" experience. Please contact Peter Dale with offers of help, either

pandbdale@yahoo.co.uk or telephone 01304 823217. We'd need to know which day you could come, at what times, and whether you'd be prepared to act as a steward or an instructor.

Other attractions, to interest all the family, include a French market and many other stalls and sideshows along the promenade. There are dragon boat races and a programme of various maritime activities on Dover Harbour, with music and fireworks on Saturday evening. Further information on Regatta events are available from Dover Town Council, michelle@dovertown.fsnet.co.uk or telephone 01304 242625.

