

District News 2013

Carol Service

This year's District Carol Service was held at East Farleigh on Saturday 14th December and was attended by about 30 members and friends. The bells were put to good use before the service, which was led by Hunton ringer Reverend David Jones and included an excellent rendering of *Do You Hear What I Hear?* by Debbie Brady, Daniel Brady and Richard Young. Mulled Wine, mince pies and other refreshments were kindly provided by the East Farleigh ringers after the service.



Staplehurst win Call Change Competition to make it a double

Staplehurst added the Call Change Striking Competition shield to the Striking Competition trophy they "won" by default in July. However, once again it was rather a hollow victory with only three bands entering the latest Competition at Mereworth on 9th November - and two of those were from Staplehurst! The full results were:

1st	Staplehurst 1	23 faults
2nd	Staplehurst A	47 faults
3rd	Marden	96 faults

Our thanks to new District Secretary Terry Barnard for judging the competition (the first time he has done so!) and to the Mereworth ringers and friends for hosting it.

Annual District Meeting

The Annual District Meeting was held on Saturday, 12th October at Leeds. Around 25 people attended and afternoon ringing ranged from Call Changes to Surprise Major and Grandsire Caters. Numbers dwindled after the Meeting but we were still able to enjoy some evening ringing! At the Business Meeting District Officers' reports were received and some routine business undertaken. Unfortunately the District Programme for 2014 is still in an embryonic stage. Details will be posted on this site as venues are confirmed.

The [District Committee](#) shows several changes for the coming year with last year's Chairman Daniel Brady and Ringing Master James Sawle swapping places, Terry Barnard replacing Mike Birkbeck as Secretary and Sue Bassett replacing Pat Phipps as Treasurer. Newcomers are Debbie Brady who joins the Committee as an additional member whilst young Jack Velvick fills the newly created post of Junior Ringing Master, with a view to becoming District Ringing Master at some time in the future.

County 6-Bell Competition Results

This year the Maidstone District was represented by Staplehurst, who won the postponed District Striking competition. The band came a creditable 3rd, in a very close competition. The competition was held at Lamberhurst, the judges commented that all bands rang very well, making it hard at time to find fault with the ringing.

Place	Band	Score
1st	St. Dunstan's, Canterbury	94%

2nd	Tonbridge	89%
3rd	Staplehurst	88%
4th	Ashford	84%
5th	Chelsfield	75%
6th	Rochester Cathedral	69%

Practice at East Malling

Normally the September practice is a quiet one, however this year this was not the case. Around 20 people attended the practice at East Malling, with ringing ranging from Call Changes to Cambridge Minor also including lots of Plain Hunt and peoples first goes at Bob Doubles inside. Several people adjourned to the King and Queen afterwards for refreshments.

District Outing to London

This year's District Outing was not quite so well supported as in previous years and we could have done with a few more experienced ringers, particularly at the 12 bell towers. Nevertheless the two dozen or so that came to various stages of the day seemed to enjoy themselves.

Quarterly District Meeting and Barbecue

Around 25 people came to the District Barbecue in Phil and Liz's garden following the District Quarterly Meeting at Wrotham on 13th July. For the second successive year we were fortunate to have the hottest day of the year for this event.

Pictured right are District Ringing Master Richard Barclay and District Chairman Daniel Brady busily cooking the food, which was greatly enjoyed by everyone. Note the obligatory pint of beer in Richard's hand!

Our thanks to Liz and Phil for the use of their garden and for everyone else who helped make the event a success.



Staplehurst "win" District Striking Competition

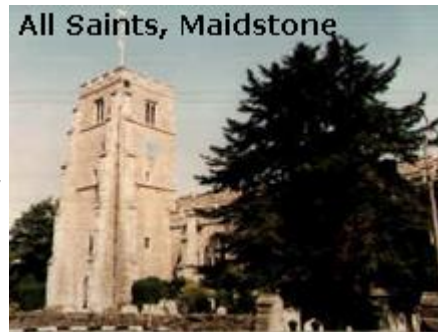
The District Striking Competition, which was postponed on 8th June when only one band entered, was held immediately prior to the District Quarterly Meeting at Wrotham. Unfortunately interest had not increased and Staplehurst were the only tower to enter a band. They rang their test piece, scoring 47 faults, and thus won the shield by default.

Let's hope for a little more enthusiasm for the [Call Change Competition](#) in November.



District Practice at All Saints Maidstone

There was an excellent District Maidstone, on Saturday 11th May. in attendance and ringing catered for from rounds (some people had their Yorkshire Surprise Royal.



Practice at All Saints, There were 21 people all levels and abilities, first go on ten) up to

All in all a very positive District

Practice.

Hollingbourne Practice

Could intending visitors please note that from now until further notice **Hollingbourne** practice will be at 8pm on Thursday evenings.

Spring Quarterly at Harrietsham

Around 20 people attended the Spring Quarterly Meeting at Harrietsham, where ringing ranged from Call Changes to Yorkshire Surprise Major. At the Business Meeting two new members were elected to the Association - we welcome **Kieran Denton** from Wrotham and **Roddy Lucas** of Staplehurst.

50 Year Membership Congratulations

This year two of our number achieved their fifty years continuous membership of the association. Congratulations to Alan Webb and Martin Pring.



Jessica Vale

We are sorry to have to report that Jessica Vale, formerly Tower Captain at Snodland, died unexpectedly on Monday 4th March. Jessica had been living and ringing in the West Country for some years, but will be remembered by many of the longer serving members of the District. Our sympathy is with her family at this difficult time. May she rest in peace.

A cold morning at Snodland

The second District Practice of the year was held at Snodland on the morning of Saturday, 9th March.

Things didn't quite go according to plan at this Practice. Firstly, despite the tower availability being previously confirmed, no-one turned up to open up for us. Fortunately a kindly chap working in the churchyard had a key and, after half an hour waiting in the bitter cold, we managed to get in.

Alas our problems were not over. As most people will know, Snodland bells are now rung from the original ground floor location after a short time in an upstairs ringing room with a floor subsequently found to be of insufficient strength for the purpose. The problem is that, although the ropes have been moved back downstairs, the clock chiming apparatus for the tenor has not so it can only be pulled off from the upstairs room to which access is prohibited on health and safety grounds. So we had to ring on just the front five.

However, it did provide the 13 ringers present with the opportunity to ring some lesser known Doubles methods, including Abu the Monkey Bob and Ding Dong Differential, as well as the standard fare.

The first [120 Club draw](#) of 2013 also took place during the Practice. See panel to the right for this month's winners.

District Practice at Aylesford

The first District Practice of the year took place at Aylesford on Saturday, 9th February and was attended by around 16 people. Ringing ranged from Call Changes to Cambridge Major, with a mid-morning break for tea and biscuits!

Quarterly Meeting at Otham proves popular

Around 30 people turned up to the Winter Quarterly Meeting at Otham on Saturday 12th January, no doubt attracted by the opportunity to sample the District's newest ring of six. During the afternoon there were periods when it was not possible to fit everyone in the tower and the Ringing Masters had no trouble in getting people to ring, with methods ranging from Call Changes to Cambridge Minor.

The Business Meeting lasted only around 15 minutes, including the election of five new members, and was preceded by a splendid tea provided by the local ringers. Not surprisingly there was sufficient demand for further ringing after the meeting. Minutes of the Business Meeting will be posted on our [Documents](#) page when available.