

The Belfry

Newsletter of the
KCACR
Maidstone District

November 2013

Issue 95

1000th Peal at All Saints, Maidstone

On 15th January 1741 the first peal was rung on the bells of All Saints, Maidstone, the method being Grandsire Triples. More than 272 years later, on 5th November 2013, the 1000th peal was rung, the method on this occasion being Yorkshire Surprise Royal.

Congratulations to All Saints on becoming only the 6th tower in the world to have reached this landmark. Congratulations too to John Keeler who, by conducting the peal, has called exactly half of all the peals rung on the bells.



The band would like to associate Tom Barlow and Alan Ainsworth with this peal. Both have been an important part of peal ringing at All Saints and were not able to ring in this attempt.

Kent County Association

Maidstone, Kent All Saints

Tuesday, 5 November 2013 in 3hrs 20 mins (32 cwt)

5040 Yorkshire Surprise Royal

Composed by J Alan Ainsworth

- 1 Graham D Heath
- 2 David J Dearnley
- 3 Diana R Wraight
- 4 Philip H Larter
- 5 Phillip R J Barnes
- 6 David W Grimwood
- 7 Ian G Campbell
- 8 Fr David A Gibbons
- 9 John B Keeler (C)
- 10 Michael A Birkbeck

1000th peal in the tower.
500th on the bells as conductor.

Remembering Tom Cullingworth who was first to reach 500 peals in the tower and how much he enjoyed ringing these bells and being with those who ring them.

District Carol Service



East Farleigh - Saturday 14th December at 4.30pm

Ringling from 3.30pm

followed by mulled wine and mince pies



District News

District Meetings Round up

As this is the first issue of *The Belfry* in 2013 below is a resume of what has happened during the Year.

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 plenty of demand for further ringing after the meeting.

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!

Things didn't quite go according to plan at the **second District Practice** of the year at Snodland on the morning of Saturday, 9th March. 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 we had no access. 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.

Around 20 people attended the **Spring Quarterly Meeting** at Harrietsham on 13th April, 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.

There was another excellent **District Practice** at All Saints, Maidstone, on Saturday 11th May. There were 21 people in attendance and ringing catered for all levels and abilities, from rounds (some people had their first go on ten) up to Yorkshire Surprise Royal. All in all a very positive District Practice.

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.



This year's **District Outing** on 3rd August 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.

Normally the **September District 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, and including plenty of Plain Hunt and people's first attempts at Bob Doubles inside.

Several people adjourned to the King and Queen afterwards for refreshments.

October, of course, saw the **Annual District Meeting** which this year was held at Leeds. A report on the ADM appears on page 8.



Striking Contests

For the first time in most people's memory the **District Striking Competition**, scheduled as usual for the second Saturday in June, had to be postponed as only one band had entered. Rather than win by a "walk over" that band, Staplehurst, agreed that the contest be deferred until the Quarterly Meeting at Wrotham the following month, in the hope that a few more teams might enter.

Alas, by the time of the July Quarterly Staplehurst were still the only entrants. They therefore rang their test piece, scored 37 faults and were duly declared "winners". It really was a pretty poor show by the District, although I am sure most will have a good reason not to have taken part. Accordingly Staplehurst represented Maidstone District in the County Six Bell Striking Competition at Lamberhurst, and came a creditable 3rd, in a very close competition. In fact they only just failed to make the runners-up spot. The judges commented that all bands rang very well, making it hard at times to find fault with the ringing.

The full results were:

1st	St Dunstan's Canterbury (Canterbury District)	94%
2nd	Ss Peter & Paul, Tonbridge (Tonbridge District)	89%
3rd	All Saints', Staplehurst (Maidstone District)	88%
4th	St Mary the Virgin, Ashford (Ashford District)	84%
5th	St Martin of Tours, Chelsfield (Lewisham District)	75%
6th	Rochester Cathedral (Rochester District)	69%

Other News Snippets

Personalia

Moving from ringing to ringers, there is a fair amount to report since the beginning of the year - some good and some, sadly, not so good.

In Memoriam - Jessica Vale, Peter Mortley and Bryan Ebdon

Sadly, since our last issue we have lost three District Ringers.

The sudden death of **Jessica Vale** on 4th March was a shock to all those that remember her from her days in the Maidstone District. Jessica had been Tower Captain at Snodland before returning to her native West Country some years ago.

Secondly, **Peter Mortley**, for many years a dedicated member of the Staplehurst band, passed away on Friday 5th July. He was also a former Churchwarden and Reader Emeritus at All Saints Church Staplehurst.

Although Peter's health had prevented him from ringing in recent years he remained a great friend and supporter of the ringers. A quarter peal of Grandsire Triples was rung to Peter's memory the following Sunday.

Finally, **Bryan Ebdon**, Tower Captain of Addington for many years, sadly passed away on Monday 7th October.

Personal achievements

Compared with the plethora of achievements in 2012 - coming about mainly as a result of the celebratory ringing for major national events - this year has been much quieter (no pun intended!).

However there are one or two milestones which deserve special mention, perhaps none more so than Richard Young who recently celebrated fifty years' ringing, every one of them as a member of the Yalding band. Over that time Richard has taught many people to ring, some of whom have gone on to become very competent ringers. He also taught your editor to handle a bell back in 1974 - well you can't win them all I suppose! Richard celebrated the achievement by ringing a peal of 4 minor methods at Yalding on Saturday 1st June. Hopefully we might be able to persuade Richard to give an interview for the next issue of *The Belfry*.

It won't be long before Richard completes 50 years as a member of the KCACR. Two of our members who have already reached that milestone however are Martin Pring of All Saints' Maidstone and Alan Webb of St Michael and All Angels Maidstone. Although they weren't at the County AGM they were subsequently presented with their Certificates by then District Chairman Daniel Brady as seen in the respective pictures below.



Personal Milestones

Congratulations to the following for achieving notable landmarks in their ringing career:

1st Quarter Peal:	Richard Thompson Darren Harris
1st Quarter as Conductor	Jack Velvick Sue West
50th Quarter:	Barry Evans
1100th Quarter:	Roy Barclay
1350th Quarter:	Tim Wraight
150th Quarter as cond:	Daniel Brady
1st Peal:	Jack Velvick
500th Peal as Conductor at All Saints, Maidstone	John Keeler
50 Years of Ringing	Richard Young
50 Years Membership of KCACR	Martin Pring Alan Webb

Please note that this information is taken from campanophile.co.uk, www.bb.ringingworld.co.uk and kcacr.org.uk. However the only way to be certain that your achievement is included is to e-mail details to thebelfry@kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk.

**Keep up to date with what's
happening in the Maidstone District at**

www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk

**Now available on your smartphone
via the QR code below**



Forthcoming Events

At the time of going to press the District programme for 2014 had not been ratified by the ADM. Once ratified, full details of the 2014 programme will be posted on the Website. Meanwhile we still have two events to come before the end of the year.

Firstly, on **Saturday 9th November** we have the District **Call Change Striking Contest** which will take place at Mereworth. The bells will be available from 9.30am, the draw will take place at 9.45am with the competition commencing at 10am. This is the opportunity for those towers unable to raise a band for the method competition to win a trophy. As well as the winners' shield there will also be a trophy for the band with the most ringers who have never previously rung in the Competition.



Believe it or not Christmas is less than seven weeks away. Take time out from Christmas shopping and get into the festive spirit by coming to the District Carol Service which this year will be held at East Farleigh. The date is **Saturday 14th**

December and the Service begins at 4.30pm, hopefully preceded by ringing. Following the Service there will be the traditional mulled wine and mince pies.



The first District event of 2014 will be the **Winter Quarterly Meeting**. It will take place on **Saturday 11th January** at Boxley, at a time still to be confirmed.

An apology...

...from your editor (not for the first time!) for the length of time it has taken for this issue of *The Belfry* to hit the streets - or rather the towers. Time seems to pass so quickly these days and before we know where we are another year has quickly flown. Your editor's New Year Resolution is to ensure that *The Belfry* appears four times a year, as it always used to.

Items for inclusion are always welcome, particularly if they include photos. If you or your tower have something you feel will be of interest to your fellow ringers please send them to:

Roy Barclay
13 Bathurst Road
Staplehurst
Tonbridge
Kent TN12 0LG

E-mail: belfry@kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk
Telephone: 01580 890247

Ringling for the 300th anniversary of Stedman's death

As many of us know, we are approaching the tercentenary of Fabian Stedman, and the Central Council have asked Associations to publicise the event as widely as possible. Below is an article by the chairman of the Council's Public Relations Committee.

Fabian Stedman is often dubbed 'the father of change ringing'. He is best known to most modern ringers as the author of the method that bears his name. It stands out among methods not only because it is the most commonly rung principle but because its structure makes possible enormous diversity of composition and music without excessive length. But Stedman's most significant contribution to the Exercise was undoubtedly as the publisher of the first two books on change ringing: *Tintinnalogia* in 1668 (a joint effort with Richard Duckworth who supplied much of the content) and *Campanalogia* in 1677 (which Stedman wrote as well as published). *Tintinnalogia* was clearly popular because it was reprinted the year after it was published.

We take books on ringing for granted (and other sources like the *Ringling World Diary* or ringing websites) and it is hard for us to imagine a world where the only way to learn about methods was by personal explanation or private hand written notes. Change ringing was still in an early stage of development in the late 17th century. The dominant form was 'plain changes', where only one pair of bells swap in each change, and it was gradually being supplanted by 'cross peals', where several pairs may cross at each change – which we consider normal today.

Fabian Stedman was baptised at Yarkhill Church on 7 December 1640. He was the second son of the Reverend Francis Stedman, so unlike his older brother who entered the priesthood, Fabian was apprenticed to Daniel Pakeman, a master printer in London, where Stedman became a prominent ringer. In later life he appears to have dropped out of ringing, and also changed jobs to become auditor to Customs and Excise for the Crown. On 17 October 1713 he wrote his will, and a few weeks later, on 16 November, he was buried at the parish church of St Andrew Undershaft in the City of London, so the 300th anniversary of his burial is on Saturday 16 November 2013.

This is not just an event for ringers to celebrate by ringing, but it is also a major opportunity for us to bring ringing more into the public eye with coverage in national and local press, radio and TV. The Central Council will be generating national publicity, and we hope that local bands and ringing societies will contact their local press and broadcasting stations to promote their own ringing for this anniversary. It is a good opportunity to increase your local community's awareness of what you do (and maybe even gain some recruits). As many towers as possible should try to ring at some time during the day on 16 November, or if not on the day, then shortly before or after. Having the anniversary on a Saturday should make it easier for those bands who want to ring peals and quarter peals. Bands that are capable of doing so should try to ring quarters or peals of Stedman, but bands that do not feel able or confident to ring Stedman are encouraged to ring something else. A quarter peal in any method, is a fitting tribute to 'the father of change ringing'. Bands not wishing to ring peals or quarters are encouraged to ring short touches of Stedman, especially touches of 300. For Doubles ringers, 300 can be achieved by ringing five plain courses or two 120s and a plain course. More ambitious touches of Doubles, and touches of Triples or above, are available on the Central Council website. There will also be touches of 1713 Stedman on the Council website for those who want to ring a back-dated date touch.

As well as ringing, it is important for us all to ensure that the non-ringers in our communities know why we are ringing. This is one of the few opportunities when we can make ringing the main news story, and not just use bells as cheer leaders for a story about something else. To help you with your local publicity you are welcome to use any of the material about Stedman and change ringing on the Council's website. The Council also provides advice about local ringing publicity, which you should find useful. If there is any other way that the Council can help you, please contact us.

John Harrison (on behalf of Central Council PR Committee)

Information for Stedman publicity and touches of 300 Stedman : ccabr.org.uk/stedman/

Advice on working with the media: ccabr.org.uk/pr/advice/media/

General advice on ringing PR: ccabr.org.uk/pr/advice/

Contact: stedman@ccabr.org.uk

The Hollingbourne ringers are selling tickets for the Willington Players' production of the farce

There Goes The Bride

at the Hazlitt Theatre on Thursday 14th November

Tickets are £10 each and 50% of the value of each one sold will go to the fund for their two new bells. This is an extremely hilarious play and will make a good evening out.

Tickets are available from Roland King (01622 745891) or Pam Nash (01622 880309)



Maidstone District 120 Club
www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk/120club

Winning numbers March - October 2013

March 2013

1st Prize (£20) 61
 2nd Prize (£15) 37
 3rd Prize (£10) 62
 4th Prize (£5) 40

*Drawn at District Practice at
 Snodland on 9th March*

April 2013

1st Prize (£20) 83
 2nd Prize (£15) 95
 3rd Prize (£10) 79
 4th Prize (£5) 38

*Drawn at Otham Practice on
 24th April*

May 2013

1st Prize (£20) 73
 2nd Prize (£15) 72
 3rd Prize (£10) 27
 4th Prize (£5) 29

*Drawn at District Practice at All
 Saints Maidstone on 11th May*

June 2013

1st Prize (£40) 119
 2nd Prize (£30) 68
 3rd Prize (£20) 70
 4th Prize (£5) 92

*Drawn at Staplehurst Practice
 on 11th June*

July 2013

1st Prize (£20) 33
 2nd Prize (£15) 120
 3rd Prize (£10) 128
 4th Prize (£5) 92

*Drawn at Quarterly Meeting at
 Wrotham on 13th July*

August 2013

1st Prize (£20) 103
 2nd Prize (£15) 34
 3rd Prize (£10) 97
 4th Prize (£5) 124

*Drawn at Staplehurst Practice
 on 13th August*

September 2013

1st Prize (£20) 48
 2nd Prize (£15) 12
 3rd Prize (£10) 104
 4th Prize (£5) 56

*Drawn at ADM at Leeds on
 12th October*

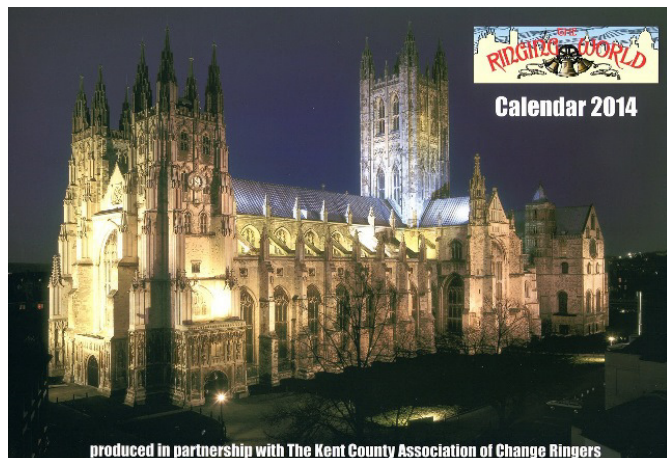
*The 120 Club draw is made
 monthly from March to
 December inclusive.*

*Winning numbers appear in
 "The Belfry" and also on the
 District website at
www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk/120club*

October 2013

1st Prize (£20) 110
 2nd Prize (£15) 21
 3rd Prize (£10) 103
 4th Prize (£5) 50

*Drawn at ADM at Leeds on
 12th October*



*To celebrate the Central Council holding their
 Annual Meeting in Kent next May this year's
 Ringing World Calendar features towers from
 around Kent, including All Saints' Maidstone.*

*Copies are available now from the District
 Bookshop, priced £7.00 each. By buying this way
 not only do you save on postage, but KCACR get
 the profit rather than the Central Council.*

*To order your copy contact Chris Saunders on
 01233 663365*

Aylesford Tower Outing - 28th September 2013

Once more the ranks of Aylesford ringers sallied forth on their annual outing, this time crossing the water to South Essex. Our ranks were somewhat depleted for a variety of reasons so we were glad to have Barry Evans and (for the afternoon) Alan Phipps with us. It was good, too, to have the company of non ringers Diane Evans and Julie Hambelton.

Thanks to the customary (but never to be taken for granted) hospitality of other ringers we were able to ring at six towers in all, each unique, and together representing such a wide variety of churches and bells.

Ingrave was our first. This unusual church was brick built in 1734 to replace two others; the tower was unkindly compared (by a local) to a water tower. The six bells sounded loud inside (but pleasant outside) and the very noticeable movement of the tower whilst they were being rung made some of us queasy. "This tower rocks!" was the comment left in the visitors' book.

We had been warned to allow plenty of time for parking at our next church, St Clements Leigh-on-Sea. Alas, our organiser had failed to give this adequate weight; cars were parked anywhere that could be found, often at considerable distance from the church. Barry had to admit defeat and go on to our next tower, but those of us who made it were pleased to ring a sweet sounding eight.

On to Prittlewell, now a suburb of Southend. Once the boat was on the other foot; Southend was the "south end" of Prittlewell. St Mary's church is large and impressive and has a wonderful ring of ten new bells installed in 2010. They sounded magnificent.

Lunch was much in mind now, so a short drive took us the The Bell, a Toby Carvery that served our needs very well. Our next church at Eastwood is a gem, a Domesday Book petite church perched incongruously next to the main runway of Southend Airport. It was bizarre to look out through the mediaeval porch and see an Easy Jet aircraft thunder by. The six bells are housed in a tiny tower so ringing there is a very cosy affair. Also cosy is the ancient wooden one up one down B&B accommodation inside the church for visiting mediaeval clergy to stay in.

We had been asked to ensure only experienced ringers rang the front three light bells at St Michael's in the unusually named village of Fobbing. We observed due caution and found all eight bells a pleasure to ring. No stays were broken! The grand finale of our tour was at St Martin's Basildon with its Millennium project detached glass tower situated in the shopping precinct. To ring there, with members of the public passing by and able to see the ringers and the eight bells in action was an unforgettable experience. And if St Nicholas Ingrave rocked then St Martin's Basildon rolled, giving those seated during ringing quite a lively ride.

Thanks are due to Darren Elphick who advised me on the choice of towers, all the tower correspondents who helped put the tour together and the ringers who made the day a real pleasure.

Gordon Hunt



*In the glass tower at St Martin's
Basildon:*

*L-R Tina Bastow, Steve Hambelton,
Darren Elphick, Gordon Hunt,
Terry Barnard, Barry Evans,
Alan Phipps, Ali Gerrish and
Paul Bastow.*

Photo by Julie Hambelton

Annual District Meeting 2013

Around 25 people attended the Annual District Meeting at Leeds on Saturday 12th October and enjoyed ringing ranging from Call Changes to Surprise Major and Grandsire Caters. Following afternoon ringing we had sung Evensong, conducted by the Vicar of Leeds - the only meeting in the year to include a service these days. Then, after a delicious tea, we adjourned to the Leeds Meeting Room where we held the Business Meeting.

There were a number of changes on the District Committee this 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. Your new Committee for 2013/14 is therefore as follows:

Chairman:	James Sawle
Secretary:	Terry Barnard
Treasurer:	Sue Bassett
District Reps:	James Davis and Chris Saunders
Ringing Masters:	Richard Barclay and Daniel Brady
Junior Ringing Master:	Jack Velvick
Publicity Officer:	Roy Barclay
Additional Members:	Debbie Brady and Barry Evans

Our thanks go to those retiring Officers for all the work they have done for the District over the years.

The District Programme for 2014 is currently only in a very embryonic stage and will be discussed by the Committee at their first Meeting. Please support your Committee by coming to as many District Events as you can.

Forthcoming Events

- | | | |
|--|--|-----------------------|
| Saturday 9th November | Call Change Competition at Mereworth | Draw 9.45am |
| <i>Only ring Call Changes at your tower? Well this is your chance to win a trophy, or maybe even two. Entries to the District Secretary, preferably in advance of the event.</i> | | |
| Saturday 14th December | District Carol Service at East Farleigh | Service 4.30pm |
| <i>Start your Christmas festivities here! Mulled wine and mince pies after the service</i> | | |
| Saturday 11th January 2014 | Quarterly District Meeting at Boxley | Time tbc |
| <i>Time yet to be confirmed but as usual there will be ringing to suit everyone and also a short business meeting. All welcome</i> | | |

***More information about District Events can be found on our own website at
www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk***