

# The Belfry

Newsletter of the  
KCACR  
Maidstone District

July 2014

Issue 97

## Editorial

Striking Competitions. You either love them or loathe them!

It seems that most people in the Maidstone District loathe them – or at the very least are totally apathetic towards them. For the second successive year only one tower entered a band in the method Striking Competition, and the Call Change Competition last November was only marginally better supported with just three teams – and two of those were from one tower. Apathy towards competitive ringing is not new. Interest has been declining for a number of years but has now reached a new low, and has become an issue which needs to be addressed.

No doubt the matter will be considered by the District Committee when formulating the ringing programme for 2015. Meanwhile let us consider some options:

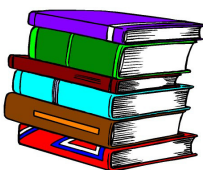
- We could leave things as they are. Things are unlikely to improve so this is not a good idea.
- We could return to the idea of knockout competition, with the finals to be held on a prescribed date. This could incorporate both method and call change ringing. This idea was tried for a few years in the late nineties and, while it proved reasonably popular at first, interest soon waned and we returned to the conventional competition.
- We could have both the method and call change competitions on the same day, perhaps in the spring before the holiday and wedding seasons start.

Or we could scrap competitive ringing in the District altogether and herein lies the crux of the matter. Have Striking Competitions passed their sell-by date? There is a school of thought that we should endeavour to achieve our best striking at all times, not just when we are trying to outdo another band. This is of course true, but others argue that competition ringing actually helps to improve an individual's and a band's striking. Barry Evans suggests in his *Letter to the Editor* on page 4 that readers should write to *The Belfry* with their views. Your Editor would welcome that.

In retrospect, perhaps the subject of Striking Competitions should have been included in the Ringers' Survey, the findings of which are in Sue Bassett's report on page 6. We are grateful for Sue's work on this and again your Committee would welcome any feedback.

*The Editor*

## KCACR Books and Clothing



There are a variety of books available on all aspects of ringing from beginner to expert, from conducting to steeplekeeping

A new range of leisure clothing is now available, including t-shirts, polo shirts, sweatshirts and fleeces, in a variety of sizes and colours. All with the KCACR logo.



For a full list of publications see  
[www.kcacr.org/bookstall.htm](http://www.kcacr.org/bookstall.htm)  
Books can be ordered through Chris Saunders at  
[csaunders792@btinternet.com](mailto:csaunders792@btinternet.com)  
or telephone 01233 663365

For a full list of clothing see  
[www.kcacr.org/clothingpage/clothing.htm](http://www.kcacr.org/clothingpage/clothing.htm)  
Clothing can be ordered through Catherine Lewis at  
[cmlewis@btinternet.com](mailto:cmlewis@btinternet.com)  
or telephone 01959 563767



## District News

### Spring Quarterly at Marden

After such a good turn out at previous meetings so far this year it was a little disappointing that only around 20 people turned up to the Spring **Quarterly District Meeting at Marden** on Saturday 12th April, and not all at the same time. However there were still enough to ring both the special methods, Single Oxford Bob Triples and Bristol Surprise Major.

At the Business Meeting two new members were elected, Christine Love and Peter Jasper.

Our grateful thanks go to the Marden ringers for the use of the bells and the usual delicious tea.

### District Practice

Seventeen ringers came to the **District Practice at Hunton** on Saturday 10th May which was quite encouraging, particularly since a number of those who regularly attend District Practices were away on their own tower outings that day. Ringing ranged from rounds and call changes up to Cambridge Surprise Minor. We had a few attempts at Double Oxford and got progressively better, the final one of which saw three people manage their first ever touch in the method. Sadly we didn't have enough to try Beverley, the other special method, but there's always later in the year!

Our thanks go to the local ringers for the use of the bells.

### District Striking Competitions

For the second successive year the **District Striking Competition** was cancelled as there was only one entry.

However it was not a wasted afternoon as, at very short notice, the event was changed to a District Practice instead. Sixteen people turned up and call changes and the usual standard methods were rung, plus the hurriedly designated special method Woodbine Delight.

We are very grateful to Keith Foxwell and the Stansted ringers for providing some light refreshments and we are pleased that their efforts didn't go to waste!

Nevertheless the fact remains that people put time and effort into organising Striking Competitions, only to see almost total apathy from towers. As mentioned in this issue's Editorial, perhaps it is time to think about the future format of competition ringing in the District. Certainly the present situation cannot be allowed to continue.

Better news though about the **County 8-Bell Competition**, held at Tonbridge on Saturday 5th July, where our District were runners up, just 4 faults behind winners Lewisham District.

### Obituaries

We are sorry to have to report the passing of three people in our District. Firstly **Julian Simpson**, formerly of East Malling, passed away on Tuesday 15th April following a long fight against cancer. Julian had latterly been prevented from ringing by his ill health. His funeral was held at Vinters Park Crematorium on Friday 2nd May.

A quarter-peal was rung to Julian's memory on Monday 19th May at East Malling, conducted by Mike Birkbeck. It was all the more poignant that the quarter was rung on the 30th anniversary of Mike's first quarter, also at East Malling, which was conducted by Julian. Details of the latest quarter are:

**East Malling, 19 May 2014 in 43 mins. 1260 Plain Bob Doubles;** 1 Kathy Howard; 2 Michael Birkbeck (C); 3 David Kirkcaldy; 4 Graham Heath; 5 Darren Elphick; 6 Darren Harris.

**Peggy Piers-Jones**, mother of Simon Wigg, died on Friday 11th April. Although not a ringer herself, in the 1970s she regularly entertained a generation of Maidstone ringers after their peals. Her funeral was held at St Michael and All Angels, Maidstone, on Friday 2nd May. Simon kindly popped up the tower after the funeral to thank the ringers and it was nice to renew acquaintance after so many years, albeit not in the happiest of circumstances.

We are also sad to have to report that **Jack Bishop** of Snodland died peacefully in the early hours of Friday 13th June. Jack learnt to ring at Snodland during his early teens and, apart from the years spent serving in WW2 and times when the bells were out of action, he rung almost every week until he became too ill to do so. He will be greatly missed, both for his ringing and his endless fund of stories about his early life in Snodland.

Snodland would appreciate having a peal rung on their bells to celebrate Jack's life; one Saturday in September would be a good time as that is when he and his wife Margaret would have been celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary. If anyone is interested in getting together a peal band for this could they please e-mail Sue Brooks or telephone 01634 241350 to discuss possible dates.



Our sympathies go to the friends and families of Julian, Peggy and David.

### Bell Restoration Projects

The refurbishment of Barming and Hollingbourne bells and the augmentation of the latter are both progressing and we hope to have an update in the October *Belfry*. Hopes are that Barming will be ringing again by round about that time.

## Munching and Mini-rings at Marden

The weather forecast for the evening of Saturday 28th June was somewhat ominous with warnings of heavy thundery showers. Not exactly the best weather for the District BBQ. In the event the evening turned out mainly fine with just one short shower, if a little cooler than the last two years.

This year's event was held at Marden and our thanks go to the Marden ringers for organising and hosting the event and particularly Chris and his family for making his garden available to us. The day started at 4pm with a couple of hours' open ringing at Marden tower where a variety of methods from Rounds and Call Changes to Yorkshire and Superlative Major were rung, to a reasonably good standard. Around 35 of us then walked the few hundred yards to Chris's house for a tasty meal of burgers, sausages and chicken.

Once again the Trafford Mini-ring was available and was put to good use, with methods rung including Cambridge Minor and the current favourite Woodbine Delight. One of the advantages of a mini-ring is that, being light, the bells can easily and safely be rung by even quite small children. It was particularly pleasing therefore to see some of the younger ones ringing quite well on it, including several who had never rung before.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves as can be seen from the pictures on the right.



*At the District BBQ.*

*Top: James Davis cooks the food*

*Bottom left: Ringers enjoying the food*

*Bottom right: Some of the younger contingent make use of the mini-ring*

A photo gallery of the BBQ can be found on the District website



*Here is the second in the series of cartoons by Joy Barnard on The confused Novice Ringer.*

## Personal Milestones

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

<b>75th Peal:</b>	Richard Barclay
<b>70th Quarter:</b>	Barry Evans
<b>550th Quarter:</b>	Jacqueline Barlow

Not many achievements again this time. If you have reached a major milestone in your ringing career and it's not mentioned here it might be because your editor doesn't know about it.

Information is gleaned from [www.campanophile.co.uk](http://www.campanophile.co.uk), [www.bb.ringingworld.co.uk](http://www.bb.ringingworld.co.uk) and [kcacr.org.uk](http://kcacr.org.uk), but the only way to be certain that your achievement is included is to e-mail details to [thebelfry@kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk](mailto:thebelfry@kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk). Major milestones only please.

So don't be modest - you've earned the accolade!

## Forthcoming Events

Things tend to wind down a little during the summer months, not least because a lot of people are on holiday. However there are still some District activities to look forward to in the coming months.

First up should have been the **District Outing** on Saturday 30th August. However, as we go to press we hear that this event has now been cancelled and there will therefore be no District event during August.

The next District event will therefore be on Saturday 13th September when there will be a **District Practice**. This is scheduled to be on the moderately heavy, but nice sounding, eight at Lenham from 10am to 12noon. However at the time of going to press this was still subject to confirmation. Updates on the venue and on the special methods will be posted on the District Website when known.

This brings us once again to the **Annual District Meeting** which this year will be held on the pleasant ten at Staplehurst on Saturday 11th October. There will be ringing to suit all levels from Rounds and Call Changes upwards from 3pm - 4.30pm, followed at 4.30pm by a Service. Tea and the Business Meeting will follow at 5.30pm with evening ringing as required from about 6.30pm until 8pm. This is your chance to hear what the District has (or hasn't) been doing for you in the past year and the opportunity to elect your District Committee for 2014/15, so please make every effort to attend.

The **District Call Change Striking Contest** is on Saturday 8th November at Otham - the first time this tower has ever hosted a competition. The bells will be available from 9.30am, the draw will take place at 9.45am with the competition commencing at 10am. This Competition is primarily (but not exclusively) for those bands who don't have sufficient method ringers to enter the summer contest. As well as the winners' trophy there is also a shield for the band containing the most ringers who have never previously rung in a striking competition. Let's try to make it a bit more successful than was the (non) Striking Competition in June.

Competition rules can be found in the *Documents* section of the District website.



Finally, to end the year we have the traditional **District Carol Service**, at Addington. Saturday 13th December may sound a long way ahead but time has a habit of creeping up on us, so put the date in your diary now. Further details will appear in the October issue of *The Belfry*.



## Letter to the Editor



Dear Editor

I was sorry that the striking competition was cancelled at short notice, but I enjoyed a good ring on the lovely bells at Stansted. Those who couldn't make it, for whatever reason, missed out!

Would people prefer not to have these competitions? Or, perhaps, more publicity, and more time to set up a team?

Would those who have an opinion like to write to you, Mr Editor, with their opinions?

*Barry Evans (Mereworth)*

*Your Editor would love to hear members' views on this or any other ringing-related topic. E-mail your letters to [belfry@kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk](mailto:belfry@kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk), or write in the traditional way to Roy Barclay, 13 Bathurst Road, Staplehurst Kent TN12 0LG.*

*Please remember to include your name and tower. Anonymous letters will not be published.*



# The Apprentice Bell Ringer: For Whom the Bell Tolls?!!

by Claire Morton

One Saturday afternoon in September, Emily and I wandered our way through Churchfields to the High Street. Emily was chatting away about the bells and asked why they weren't ringing. She decided they must be resting before the Sunday service. As if by magic, a few moments later, the bells began to ring. Emily was delighted. She charged off up the hill towards the Church. A passer-by said there was a wedding at the Church and a big "princess" coach on the main road.

I thought Emily would love to see this – how wrong could I be! Emily whizzed by pretty little bridesmaids in cute dresses and on past the bride and groom and their guests without a glance. In she marched, through the Church door and straight to the tower, where she stood and gazed upwards, announcing "*They are ringing for me!*" In a pause from ringing, Carmen, one of the bell ringers, asked Emily if she had seen the princess coach and horses and offered to show us where it was. Waiting for the happy couple, we found a very ornate carriage, adorned with beautiful flowers and two magnificent white horses that would have made Cinderella proud. Most three year old girls would have loved the Disney romance of this, but on this occasion it was lost on Emily. The bells had started to ring again and she was determined to get back to the tower to see them. I think it's fair to describe Emily as the St. Mary's tower Number 1 fan!



A week later, St. James' Church tower in East Malling was open as part of the Heritage Weekend and we took Emily along to see the bells. The ringing chamber at St. James' Church is accessed via a narrow stone spiral staircase. This was the first time Emily had seen a spiral staircase and although initially daunted she clambered her way up with enthusiasm. At the top we had a breather while Tower Captain Sue explained a bit about the bells. The belfry was located on the next floor up and a steep open staircase led to the hatchway entrance. I'm not good with heights and my legs turned to jelly as we climbed higher and higher. At the top platform was one more ladder and I froze. I just could not go any further. Thankfully my husband was close behind and he helped Emily up the last few rungs. She thought it was like climbing up a big slide at the park!

Safely back on the ground floor we all had a welcome cup of tea and a look round the church before Emily decided she wanted a second look at the bells! Someone kindly volunteered to take us back up and this time I remembered the camera. Emily's smile is captured as she says her favourite bell word "gudgeons"! This photo still has pride of place on her bedroom wall!

September was a busy month for the bell ringers with weddings, a quarter peal before David's Licensing Ceremony and a successful peal following David's first Sunday service. Emily could hear the bells ringing the quarter peal from the back garden and despite it being a bit chilly, we ate dinner that evening in the garden so she could listen to them. It sounded really good and the ringing continued afterwards before the licensing ceremony began.

The Church was packed when I arrived. I popped my head around the door quite late as I had no intention of ringing that evening. I was experiencing joint problems in my fingers and had been advised to rest from ringing for a while. However, everyone's enthusiasm for me to give it a go on this special occasion was infectious. This was only the second time I had rung with the band and I felt a bit flustered as I took up my rope in a ring of six bells. I didn't have time to think about it as suddenly the treble was going and I had to go too. It all felt very fast and frantic and I was a bag of nerves. Then came the command to stand. Oh dear! This was not one of my strengths and as everyone else stopped, I kept going. "*Just relax and remember, long pull!*" Alan kept saying, but I still couldn't stand the bell. I got the bell up at backstroke and was filled with hope that this time I might just do it, only to catch the handstroke too early and be foiled again.

"Don't worry" said Nick, "*the Bishop will think the bell is ringing for him!*". Oh no, I'd forgotten all about the Bishop and the other dignitaries waiting in the Church Centre. They must have wondered what on earth was going on! I was wondering whether they would ever get to start the ceremony! Eventually it all came right and I stopped. After this it was ever so tempting to stand the bell early if I could, resulting in Alan shouting "*cheat, cheat!*". He was right of course, but sometimes you can't look a gift horse in the mouth!

Personal circumstances meant I was unable to ring for a couple of months and I returned to the tower shortly before Christmas. I was keen to begin ringing again and to ring at Christmas. Alan reassured me it was like riding a bicycle – you don't forget. I was a bit worried I could fall off though, and it did go pear shaped on several occasions, but no harm done. "*It's only bell ringing,*" joked Alan, "*it's not life and death, it's much more important than that!*" After a bit of practice, Christmas was upon us and I realised my dream of ringing for the midnight service and again Christmas morning. It was a very special way to start Christmas Day and of course Emily came too!

In the next issue - *Episode 2: Learning the Ropes*

*Claire Morton is a lawyer and former ringer at West Malling. Her series of articles on The Apprentice Bell Ringer first appeared in the Ringing World and we are grateful to her for allowing us to reproduce them here.*

## Ringers' Survey 2014 - Summary Report on Responses

Maidstone District currently has 222 members and 18% responded to the recent survey, which asked members to express their views on *The Belfry*, its methods of distribution and content. Members were also asked to indicate how often they rang, their abilities and how they found out about ringing events, etc. The District Ringing Masters were also keen to understand the ringing capabilities and interests of active members. Although quite a small number responded, the survey has provided some interesting statistics to consider.

**Age Profile of members** - Of the 40 who responded, roughly half have been ringing for over 30 years and a majority of these indicated they are "seniors" so are likely to be over 65. This may suggest that an urgent recruitment drive is needed to ensure sufficient teachers are available in future to maintain the current ringing standards and skills.

**When and how often do we ring?** Roughly 2/3 of responders rang at least one Saturday per month, whilst fewer rang twice or thrice per month with one member ringing every Saturday. Weekday daytime ringing was balanced between those who rang once per month and those in full-time employment, so weren't available for this. Again there were others who were free to enjoy twice or thrice ringing sessions per month with two who rang every week and one twice per week during the day. Practice night ringing gave a similar response with 2/3 ringing once per week or less, whilst 7 ringers rang twice or more every week in the evenings. When the question about additional ringing in school holidays/weddings, etc. was asked, more than half of responders said they engaged in this, some occasionally or only if necessary.

**Ringling abilities** – Always a sensitive subject, as ringers undoubtedly strive to do their best, but poor striking can elicit comment. However, is it not best to encourage and support one another in our ringing, rather than have towers fall silent? The survey tried to assess whether there were any training needs or areas where skills could be improved or supported. Sixteen of the forty responders considered they were learning the basics (handling, rounds & call changes) and a similar number indicated they were unable to raise, lower or plain hunt. A large number said they could not ring at cover but this could be due to the heavy weight of tenor bells or lack of opportunity to learn if even bell methods are predominantly rung. Ability to ring Plain methods or not was finely balanced, whilst one third of responders indicated they could ring Surprise methods.

**Ringling Teachers & Conducting** - In the areas of teaching learners to handle, raise & lower or ring methods, approximately one third of responders are prepared to put themselves out to help others to progress. The art of conducting produced the most striking response. Only 6 of the 40 responders indicated that they could conduct or teach others to conduct. Perhaps this is an area that needs focus as learning to conduct would help every ringer to better understand method construction and improve striking through the ability to predict coursing order, etc.

**Motivations for ringling** – Members were asked to prioritise their interest and motivation for ringing. Incumbents would be pleased to note that the most popular reason was; "To maintain ringing tradition for Sunday and other church services". However, this was closely followed by "Interesting hobby/pastime to keep brain and body exercised". At the other end of the scale, more than 50% of members were least interested in Bell maintenance. Perhaps the low priority here is not such a problem provided that every tower has at least two people who know how to check and maintain their bell installation, change ropes, etc. If this is not the case in your tower, then perhaps you should seek advice, as maintenance is very important when the safety of ringers and the installation itself are considered. We wouldn't wish to see a "Kilmersdon" situation in our District!

**Publicity** - Members were asked how they usually found out about District ringing events. Two thirds of responders appeared to rely on word of mouth, did not look at the District website, did not use Email or Facebook or read *The Belfry*. This puts the onus on other members or tower officers to communicate District events to fellow ringers.

**The Belfry** - When asked about *The Belfry* format that members read, more than 50% (25) read it by email or on the website, 13 did not read it at all and 2 read a printed copy. Given that the survey was only available by email, this result is not surprising as it may not have reached those without internet connection in the first place. Reasons given for not reading the Belfry included; not finding the time, don't bother unless something is pointed out by others, don't receive it. One member was positive they would read it in future! When asked whether *The Belfry* was satisfactory/useful nearly three quarters of members considered that it was.

**The Belfry content** - A majority of members indicated that they liked to read the established features; Calendar & Forthcoming Events, 120 Club winners, Post-event write-ups, Competition results, Milestones & Obituaries. Others indicated that they would like to see current Officer Contacts, useful website links, County updates, Tower Outing Reports, Book & Clothing sale details, with best practice, jargon busters and a few jokes and cartoons. Other suggestions included; Tower features and tower news to encourage members to visit other towers, aid the clustering of towers for mutual benefit, encourage more people to contribute to it, regular publication. Members were not so interested in reading meeting minutes, Treasurer's report, quarter & peal reports. New ideas that were suggested included Bell Restoration news, Training hints and neighbouring District training event details.

**Pay for printed *Belfry*?** Paying for a printed copy of *The Belfry* did not appear to be well received, but again this could have been due to the fact that the survey had originally been circulated by email to an internet-friendly audience, who were happy with the email format. A couple of responders indicated that they would be happy to pay up to £1 per printed copy of *The Belfry*. One member commented that each tower should receive a printed copy, and should also be available on application/payment by members who wanted one. This could, perhaps, be offered annually at the same time subscriptions are paid and the mechanics will be considered by the District Committee in time for the 2015 subs renewal.

**Lies, damned lies and statistics** - As the survey sample was very small and not particularly detailed, it is difficult to reach any absolute conclusions. I have tried to draw out some useful discussion points and look forward to receiving members' feedback in due course. Ringing associations exist to help co-ordinate and share expertise amongst members by and for its members. What is clear, however, is that it is beholden on every ringer to take responsibility for their ringing performance, progress and teaching of others, with help and encouragement (if you can find it!). In that way our skills, art and enjoyment of the exercise will continue down the years. Thank you to all members who took part in the survey, which has been an interesting exercise and one which I hope will lead to improvements in various areas.

**Sue Bassett**  
*District Treasurer and Member of Belfry Sub-Committee*

**Keep up to date with what's  
happening in the Maidstone District at**  
**[www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk](http://www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk)**

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



The next issue of


## The Belfry

is scheduled for publication at the ADM

**Copy deadline is Saturday 27th September 2014**

**Articles for publication in the next issue  
should be e-mailed to the Editor at  
[belfry@kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk](mailto:belfry@kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk)**

*Please limit articles to one side  
of A4 if possible*



**Maidstone District 120 Club**  
[www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk/120club](http://www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk/120club)

**Winning numbers April - June 2014**

<b>April 2014</b>	<b>May 2014</b>	<b>June 2014</b>
1st Prize (£20) 51	1st Prize (£20) 110	1st Prize (£40) 33
2nd Prize (£15) 79	2nd Prize (£15) 127	2nd Prize (£30) 51
3rd Prize (£10) 7	3rd Prize (£10) 119	3rd Prize (£20) 63
4th Prize (£5) 6	4th Prize (£5) 28	4th Prize (£5) 28

*Drawn at the Quarterly District  
Meeting at Marden  
on 12th April*

*Drawn at the  
District Practice at Stansted  
on 14th June*

*Drawn at the  
District Practice at Stansted  
on 14th June*

*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](http://www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk/120club)*

## A Sweet Six at South Cadbury (or Aylesford on Tour)

For a few years now, some of us at Aylesford have been venturing around the country for long weekends away with a view to grabbing a few towers, looking around lovely churches and sampling the local brew.

This year saw us heading off to Somerset at the end of May Bank Holiday weekend. There were eight ringers and one supporter. We stayed at a small hotel in Shepton Mallet called The Shrubbery. Those of us who did not have to go to work arrived during the afternoon and were able to enjoy a lovely bite to eat and a cider or two. The last three finally made it late into the night just right for cocoa and bed! The joys of the M25!

Saturday morning, and after a hearty breakfast, we were raring to go. Weather drab and dreary but spirits were high. Five towers beckoned - Baltonsborough, Barton St David, West Lydford in the morning, then a lovely pub lunch in Charlton

Adam before tackling the anti-clockwise rings at Charlton Mackrell and Othery. All bar one were 6 bell towers so we were able to ring a mix of Doubles methods as well as some Bob Minor. Othery was a rather challenging anti-clockwise 5. The gentleman that let us in was very surprised that we managed to ring all 5 up. He explained that the tenor had not been rung for many months as they had no-one who could manage it. Feather in the cap for us!

Back at base we reviewed the day over dinner and a few beers.

Sunday allowed us to have a relaxed start as we were starting the day ringing in Shepton Mallet for their Sunday morning service. This was a lovely 8 and we managed some Bob Triples with the help of one of the local ringers. Back to base for a cup of coffee before heading off to Ashwick which was only 10 minutes away. The weather was so different from the previous day, blue sky and lovely warm sunshine. We had a most enjoyable ring here before heading off to Wookey. After some crisps and a beer, we walked through the village to the church. Nearly had a lock out here! Only person in sight was a builder who eventually said there were some keys in the cupboard where his building materials were stored. Mr Bastow went to investigate and found a key to fit the padlock. Access to the tower was ours! We had just rung the bells up when a very red faced man appeared in the doorway. He was supposed to have been there to let us in but had forgotten. Maybe it was because he lived so far from the church – all of 50 yards. The casing for the clock mechanism made ringing a little tricky if you were on the 5<sup>th</sup> as you were not able to see the tenor. It was as if you had been put in the naughty corner. From Wookey we went off to West Pennard where we took the opportunity here to have a well-deserved cup of tea before heading off to the last tower of the day at Pylle. Entry to the tower was through a tiny door, up the steps and then down a ladder into the ringing chamber. A lovely end to another long day.

Back at The Shrubbery we convened in the bar for dinner and drinks. We were the only ones in as Sunday is a residents only day. What a result!

Bank Holiday Monday brought us to the end of our weekend marathon. We had two towers left. Our first was at Queen Camel. All I can say is 'wow'. They are weighty but go really well. Respect to all those who rang the tenor, especially Alison Gerrish. Last but not least was a sweet 6 at South Cadbury. Here we met a lovely lady from South Africa but who was living in the UK. She heard us ringing and came to investigate. Thanks to Graham Heath who put his teacher's cap on and gave the lady a quick ringing lesson.

We are all wondering where next year's residential will take us.

**Tina Bastow**



**Do you know.....**

What a Q-set is?

What is the definition of a "Surprise" method?

*Most of us mere mortals probably don't. Find the answer to these and more in our new Jargon Buster column, starting in the next issue.*



## Training Matters

There hasn't been a training committee as such for many years, so I'm in the process of forming a new one and am asking each District to nominate representatives. The business will be conducted mainly via email, perhaps by telephone conferences, and possibly an occasional face-to-face meeting.

More pressing though is the need to do something about the lamentably poor teaching practices that prevail in the majority of towers in the County. This can't wait for a training team to be formed so on my own initiative I've arranged an **ITTS Module 2 course to held on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> August at Dover**. It's intended primarily to follow on from the three Module 1 courses already held in Kent, but I should stress that Module 1 is not a prerequisite; it's open to anyone with the appropriate skill level and commitment to teaching. The ITTS Tutor will be Graham Nabb, Director of the Kinton Ringing Centre in Warwickshire. The poster and an application form are on the KCACR website at [www.kcacr.org.uk/tscpage/tsc.htm](http://www.kcacr.org.uk/tscpage/tsc.htm).

ITTS (Integrated Teacher Training Scheme) does have its flaws, but I propose to arrange more courses across the County nevertheless. Success depends upon local organisers and teachers' mentors following up the day course, which doesn't always happen in practice. If we are to roll out a series of Module 1 courses then I want to be sure that there is a pool of good mentors. With that in mind, I have arranged a **mentoring evening for Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup> August, at Kennington Community Centre**. Pip Penny, the architect of ITTS, has offered to take time out of her break in Kent to present this two-hour seminar. Details and an application form are on the KCACR website at [www.kcacr.org.uk/tscpage/tsc.htm](http://www.kcacr.org.uk/tscpage/tsc.htm). If you have the experience and are willing to pass on your skills then please make a note of this date now.

**Peter Dale**  
County Training Officer

**For more information on Training Programmes available at County level  
please see the Training page on the KCACR main website ([www.kcacr.org.uk](http://www.kcacr.org.uk))  
or e-mail Peter Dale at [training@kcacr.org.uk](mailto:training@kcacr.org.uk) (tel: 01304 823217)**

### Forthcoming Events

<b>Saturday 13th September</b>	<b>District Practice at Lenham (tbc)</b>	<b>10am - 12noon</b>
<i>Ringling to suit all levels from Call Changes upwards on this moderately heavy eight. Please note venue is still to be confirmed</i>		
<b>Saturday 11th October</b>	<b>Annual District Meeting at Staplehurst</b>	<b>3pm - 8pm</b>
<i>Ringling 3pm - 4.30pm. Service 4.30pm Tea and Business Meeting 5.30pm, followed by evening ringling until approximately 8pm</i>		
<b>Saturday 8th November</b>	<b>Call Change Striking Competition at Otham</b>	<b>Draw 9.45am</b>
<i>Haven't enough ringers to ring methods? Then this is your chance to win a trophy</i>		
<b>Saturday 13th December</b>	<b>Carol Service at Addington</b>	<b>4.30pm</b>
<i>Ringling before the Service and the traditional mulled wine and mince pies afterwards</i>		

**More information about District Events can be found on our own website at  
[www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk](http://www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk)**