

The Belfry

Newsletter of the
KCACR
Maidstone District

January 2016

Issue 102

Editorial

Why do you ring? As a service to the church, for your own enjoyment, or maybe for the social aspect? For most of us it is probably a bit of each.

In the 18th and early 19th centuries ringing was regarded as a hobby, a sport even, in its own right. The only connection with the church was that it provided the premises and equipment. Hence most ringers had little or no respect for the church and certainly no interest in religion. Tales abound of drunkenness and debauchery in towers up and down the country. Then, in the mid-19th century things began to change. A groundswell of opinion amongst the younger clergy of the day was demanding, in an effort to arrest the decline in church attendances (some things never change!), that religion got back to basics and with it the integration of ringing into the ritual of Christian worship. The result was, in short, that ringing came to be regarded as a Christian activity and most churches insisted on church involvement of its ringers. Belfry reform was complete.

Gladly most churches these days do not insist, or even expect, their ringers to attend services and are just happy to have their bells rung for services. In return they generally allow us to use their equipment for social, i.e. non-religious, ringing. However, ringing is generally still perceived by most outsiders as a "Christian" activity and this is one of the main obstacles to the recruitment of new ringers, particularly amongst the young.

So has belfry reform gone too far, and is it time for the pendulum to swing back the other way? In a recent leading article in the *Ringling World* one eminent ringer discusses the whole issue in depth and suggests that it has. The article makes for interesting reading and we hope to be able to reproduce it on our website shortly. Meanwhile, what are your feelings? Do you think that a move away from ties with the church may lead to more recruits? Would it open up the world of ringing as a sporting activity? And the other side of the coin - would this lead to alienation of those ringers and clergy who presently enjoy a good relationship? Would we end up having to fund our own bell maintenance costs, as the church would be unlikely to spend its already scarce resources on a group that didn't subscribe to their ideology? If that were the case where would that funding come from? The questions are many and the answers will be controversial.

Your editor must necessarily maintain a neutral stance on the subject but *The Belfry* would be pleased to hear readers' views by e-mailing thebelfry@kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk

The Editor

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Plus all the usual features



District News

District Practice at Lenham

There were 24 ringers at the District Practice Meeting at Lenham on Saturday 12th September which enabled us to ring the two special methods, Duffield Major (successfully) and Single Oxford Bob Triples (not so successfully). There were also plenty of opportunities for Rounds, Call Changes and Plain Hunt. Our thanks to the newly trained Lenham band for hosting the practice. It was good to see a number of them keenly taking part.

County Striking Contest

Maidstone District, represented by District Striking Contest winners Staplehurst, came a creditable second in the County Striking Competition at Godmersham on Saturday 26th September, albeit some way behind winners Chelsfield from the Lewisham District. Full results are on the County website.

Annual District Meeting at Leeds

Only 26 members attended the Annual District Meeting at Leeds on Saturday 10th October - rather disappointing considering the general upward trend at meetings this year. Those who didn't go missed out on a delicious hot meal of cottage pie followed by a gâteau dessert prior to the business meeting. Our thanks to Chris Saunders for organising it.

At the Business Meeting Liz Barnes replaced James Sawle as Chairman, Adam Brady took over as joint Ringing Master from Richard Barclay, and Jane Higgs joins the Committee in place of Barry Evans. Other posts are unchanged. Details can be found on pages 5 and 6 of this issue and also on the District website. Our thanks to retiring officers for their work during the past year.

One new member from Lenham was elected to the Association, and the draft District Programme for 2016 was presented to the Meeting.

It was also surprising that only around 15 people turned up to ring on the new five at Broomfield prior to the ringing at Leeds. Perhaps they were waiting for the next opportunity when we visited Broomfield for the District Carol Service.

County Surprise Major Practice at Wrotham

Around 15 people attended the Surprise Major Practice at Wrotham on Saturday 31st October. Six of the standard 8 were rung individually (not Rutland or Pudsey) as well as a very nice touch of 8-Spliced. This was the first in a series of Surprise Practices which will be held regularly on the 5th Saturday of a month where there is one. These practices are open to people from everywhere, and will rotate around the County, being held at towers on or near

District borders. We hope to start out ringing methods from the *Standard 8*, both individually and spliced, and we may extend this as time goes on.

The next Surprise Practice will be on Saturday 30th January 2016 at Leeds when, it being a 10-bell tower, we might also ring some Surprise Royal depending on who comes.

District Practice at Boughton Monchelsea

An attendance of just 16 at the last District Practice of the year at Boughton Monchelsea on Saturday 14th November was again a little disappointing by recent standards, particularly as the local ringers had gone to the effort of providing running refreshments all morning. Nevertheless we were able to ring Cambridge Minor and Stedman Doubles, amongst other things, and of course plenty of Rounds and Call Changes.

District Carol Service at Broomfield

The District Carol Service at Broomfield got the festive season off to a good start on Saturday 12th December. An excellent turnout of 35 ringers enjoyed a service of traditional carols and readings and a rendering of *O little One Sweet* by a quartet comprising Daniel and Debbie Brady, Tina Bastow and Richard Young.

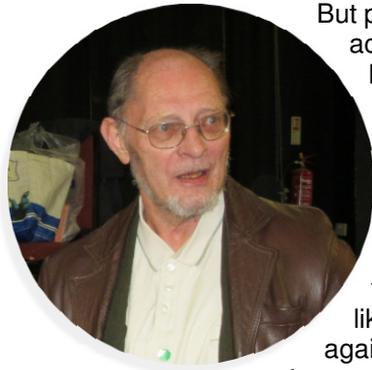
Before the service there was another opportunity to enjoy a ring on Broomfield's new 4cwt five and as usual there were the traditional mince pies and mulled wine afterwards (as well as some other goodies). The picture below shows these being heartily consumed.



Personalia

A fair number of people in our District are known to have rung over 50 quarter-peals during 2015, including **Debbie Brady** and **Sue** and **Chris Bassett** of Staplehurst, **Jacqui Barlow** of St Michael and All Angels Maidstone and **Terry Barnard** of Aylesford. There are probably more but your editor hasn't been notified of them!

Debbie managed to reach the target shortly before being sidelined by wrist surgery from which she is now slowly recovering, whilst Sue achieved the milestone as part of her 40th Anniversary Challenge (see article on page 4). Jacqui has probably rung nearer a hundred this year and has also reached a grand total of 700 quarters, not to mention having achieved her 400th peal.



But perhaps the most satisfying achievement in recent weeks belongs to the District's most experienced and prolific ringer. During 2015 KCACR Vice-president **Tom Barlow**, pictured left, underwent major heart surgery and for a long while it looked like he would never ring again. However Tom is made

of stern stuff and has gradually eased himself back into ringing. He reached a major step along this road when, on Boxing Day, he rang a quarter of Superlative Major at his home tower of St Michael and All Angels, Maidstone. Not content with this, he rang another one the following weekend on the front six at All Saints, Maidstone. Great to see you back in action Tom!

As we go to press we hear that **Martin Pring** of All Saints Maidstone is about to undergo major surgery. Our thoughts are with Martin and his family and we wish him well.

Youth Matters

County Youth Striking Contest

It was a chilly start at Chalk as the three teams for the inaugural KCACR Youth Competition assembled, along with a few slightly older cheerleaders. After some short open ringing to get used to the bells, the draw took place at 10am. The competition ringing was completed within about an hour, with each team showing excellent determination. A little more open ringing allowed people from different teams to have a ring together, while our judge, Mike Bale, assembled his thoughts.

The results were as follows:

Position	District	Rang	Faults	Average Age
1st	Lewisham	1st	61	17½
2nd	Maidstone	3rd	125	16½
3rd	Tonbridge	2nd	163	13½

Thanks go to the ringers at Chalk for the use of the bells, to Mike Bale for judging and to Jacqui Barlow for her assistance with refreshments.

It is hoped that in future the Competition may be extended to include method ringing and could perhaps be used as the basis to form a team for the following year's Ringing World National Youth Competition!

County Youth practice

An open practice for Young Ringers has been arranged at **Chelsfield** on **Saturday 20th February** from midday to 3.30pm. Any youngsters from across the county are invited to come to the practice and we will try to cater for everyone. There will be a short break for lunch but otherwise we will pack in as much as possible. Please spread the word and get as many people as possible to come along! Experienced ringers who'd like to help out, please do come along as your help would be very useful! The church postcode is BR6 7SN.

Personal Milestones

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

Jacqui Barlow	400 th peal 700 th quarter
Terry Barnard	50 th quarter in 2015
Phil Barnes	900 th peal 100 th peal as Conductor
Chris Bassett	50 th quarter in 2015
Sue Bassett	50 th quarter in 2015
Adam Brady	1 st peal of Major as Conductor
Debbie Brady	50 th quarter in 2015
Isla Britchford	1 st quarter
Simon Davies	1 st quarter
Darren Elphick	1900 th quarter
Barry Evans	1 st date touch 100 th quarter
Robin Hughes	1 st quarter
John Keeler	1750 th peal as Conductor
Alan Phipps	250 th quarter
Jack Velvick	1 st quarter of Surprise Major

If you have reached a major milestone in your ringing career and it's not mentioned here it is probably because your editor doesn't know about it.

Information is gleaned from www.campanophile.co.uk, www.bb.ringingworld.co.uk and 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

Barming bells ringing again

We are pleased to be able to report that Barming bells are now ringing again following their restoration. The church was almost full for the service of rededication by the Bishop of Rochester on Thursday 12th November. The service was preceded by open ringing before a service touch conducted by Brian Butcher who, as County Bell Restoration Officer, was heavily involved in the project. I think all those who have rung on the bells since the restoration will agree that the work has made a vast difference to the handling and go of the bells.

Sue Bassett's 40th Anniversary Challenge 2015

A year ago I set out to celebrate the fact that I had been ringing continuously for 40 years, by challenging myself to ring 40 quarter peals in 40 different towers, 40 different methods and with 40 different ringers. Some parts of this challenge were a lot more difficult to accomplish when real life (work, holidays and two family weddings) naturally took precedence over ringing. Nonetheless, I have achieved some success and have enjoyed the challenge.

Ringing 40 quarter peals was easier than I had expected. Having achieved that part of the challenge by September, I carried on and reached a total of 57 quarter peals, finishing on 31st December with a 2015 date touch of Grandsire Caters.

Quarter-pealing 40 different towers was a step too far, but I did ring at 29, the furthest north being Stirling in Scotland, southernmost at Alfriston, eastern at Dover and western at Wembury near Plymouth – so I've done a fair bit of travelling too this year. This is something I've always enjoyed about bell-ringing; it takes us to so many different parts of the country that we might never have visited otherwise.

Learning and ringing 40 different methods was also a little over-ambitious, for me as well as the bands who kindly rang with me on various occasions, although I did ring 33 if you count methods in differing numbers of bells individually, variations and spliced. However, I have learned and gained a few firsts in new methods (Bristol Major being the highlight) and some had interesting names such as Cream Cheese Surprise and Fenland Teddy Bob. Whether I will be able to recall them in future isn't a given these days, but the exercise of learning them has been a challenge in itself and hopefully has been good for my brain! Most quarter peal attempts were successful (with only 6 lost for various reasons during the year) so I'm very pleased with that.

Ringing with 40 different ringers was surprisingly easy to achieve but emphasises how important the ringing networks are to organise and keep in touch with ringing friends. I am extremely grateful to each one of the 116 ringers who so willingly helped me to achieve this challenge. Some of whom I rang with for the first time, others who made a special effort to support this challenge. Of special note being my (partner-in-crime) husband who taught me to ring all those years ago. Chris will achieve his 50th year of ringing in 2016 but as he rang over 50 quarters with me in 2015, he's decided not to repeat the challenge. The après ringing social time is just as important as the ringing itself, so I have much enjoyed catching up with ringers I haven't seen for a while and enjoyed many coffees, pub lunches and a few pints through the year as well. Early last year after ringing at Hailsham a convivial coffee and cake was enjoyed in a nearby café catching up with Alan Baldock, Kathy Howard and David Kirkcaldy. Towards the very end of the year, a quarter peal with Tom Barlow was of special significance, marking Tom's return to ringing after a serious illness. A bottle of bubbly and some nibbles helped to celebrate his remarkable recovery.

I am also extremely thankful to all 20 conductors who called the quarter peals. Conducting is an area of ringing that I have little expertise or interest in, but have been known to call at least one during the past 40 years! Particular thanks are due to Daniel Brady who called (and in some cases, composed) 24 of the 57 quarters.

So what have I gained from this challenge? First and foremost – a heightened respect for all ringers, we possess extraordinary and unusual skills. Nothing new to us, but often we're not so good at communicating the enjoyment of ringing to outsiders and attracting them into the art. Sadly, an increasing number of towers are falling silent due to lack of ringers but many locals appreciated hearing their bells being rung to a quarter peal. Secondly, ringing lots of quarter peals (and peals) helps to improve striking and listening skills – always a hot topic amongst ringers but something always worth striving for.

Whilst I am very happy to have achieved this personal challenge in 2015, ringing is very much a team activity. Therefore, the (continuous) teaching of learners is the most important thing that any ringer can do to ensure the exercise and expertise is passed onto others – at whatever level you can contribute. This last point is one of the reasons it's taken me so long to reach the "dizzy heights" of this personal challenge. Whilst I'm not a conductor nor great peal ringer (although I did also ring one peal during 2015), my emphasis has been always to encourage new people to learn to ring.

How to attract, retain and progress recruits are areas that need to be tackled continuously and effectively by each one of us, wherever we are in our ringing career. There has been much debate recently about how to achieve this and valiant attempts have been made to create a robust structure for the teaching of new recruits. Without new ringers coming into the exercise, many more towers will no longer be able to maintain a local band. So in 2016 I aim to refocus my ringing energy outwards towards the recruitment and teaching of learners. If every ringer taught someone new each year, then the future of this fascinating hobby would achieve a more secure footing. How's that for a new year's resolution?!

Sue Bassett

Sue Bassett rings at Staplehurst and is also Maidstone District Treasurer. She is currently involved with a recruitment and training initiative at her home tower.

Meet your District Committee

At the Annual District Meeting those members present (not many of them it must be said) elected the Committee to serve the District until the next ADM in October 2016. But how well do you know your Committee? If you saw them at a District Meeting or social event would you know who they were and what their responsibilities are in the District?

In an attempt to ensure they are not thought of as "the faceless ones" below are pictures and responsibilities of each member of the Committee. Please feel free to approach any of them if you have any ringing related questions or if you or your tower needs help of any kind. That is what they were elected for.

District Chairman - Liz Barnes



Responsibilities:
Running business meetings;
overseeing the District

Contact phone no:
01732 885443 (home);
07730 922500 (mobile)

Email:
maidstonechairman@kcacr.org.
uk

District Secretary - Terry Barnard



Responsibilities:
General administration, District
Programme

Contact phone no:
01732 849165 (home);
07885 677104 (mobile)

Email:
maidstonesecretary@kcacr.org.
uk

District Ringing Masters

Responsibilities: Running of District ringing events; Practical training and advice



Adam Brady

Contact phone no:
07837 266582

Email:
maidstoneringmaster@kcacr.org.
uk



Jack Velvick

Contact phone no:
07400 374530

Email:
jackvelvick@gmail.com

District Representatives

Representing District on County General Committee



Chris Saunders

Contact phone no:
01233 663365 (home)
07870 978562 (mobile)

Email:
csaunders792@btinternet.com



James Davis

Contact phone no:
07714 753810

Email:
maidstonerep@kcacr.org.uk

Treasurer - Sue Bassett



Responsibilities:
Financial matters, including subscriptions and covenants

Contact phone no:
07749 688340

Email: maidstonetreasurer@kcacr.org.uk

Publicity Officer - Roy Barclay



Responsibilities:
Editor of *The Belfry*; liaison with The Ringing World; Webmaster; all publicity matters

Contact phone no:
01580 890247 (home);
07718 216762 (mobile)

Email: maidstonepublicity@kcacr.org.uk

Additional Committee Members

Responsibilities: General Assistance

Debbie Brady



Contact phone no:
07792 731160

Email: brady.debbie@gmail.com

Jane Higgs



Contact phone no:
07804 645571

Email:
janehiggs129@btinternet.com

Christmas Tree with a difference



When the Friends of All Saints Staplehurst decided to have an exhibition of mini Christmas trees by village organisations at their annual Shepherd's Market at the beginning of December the Staplehurst Bell Ringers new exactly what they were going to do.

Pictured left is their offering of a Christmas tree made entirely of handbells, masterminded by Sue Bassett.

It also provided the tower with a great PR opportunity, as can be seen from the notice. Whether it will result in any new recruits only time will tell, but it certainly showed that the ringers are an active group both in the church and in the community.

The next issue of

The Belfry

is scheduled for publication at the
April Quarterly Meeting

Copy deadline is
Saturday 26th March 2016

Articles for publication in the next issue
should be e-mailed to the Editor at
belfry@kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk

Photographs are also welcome and should
preferably be in .jpeg format

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

Forthcoming Events

Here we are, 2016 already. Where did the last year go? Time to get those New Year resolutions sorted, one of which will hopefully be to attend at least some of the District events planned for this year. Whilst attendance at events during the last year have shown an encouraging increase on previous years, it is a shame that it is generally the same group of people that come each time - and sadly they represent just a small minority of towers within the District.

It would be really good if during 2016 we could see ringers from those towers who rarely or never attend meetings. May I re-iterate that all our ringing events cater for all levels of ringing from Rounds and Call Changes upwards. Most also include two designated methods, one fairly basic and the other slightly more advanced, to give the keen ringer something to aspire to. However, ringing is tailored to suit those present and, provided you can handle a bell reasonably competently, you will be most welcome.

The full District Calendar for 2016 and the first three months of 2017 are on the next page. Could Tower Secretaries please print off a copy of that page and post prominently on their notice boards. Meanwhile below are more details of the upcoming events.

The next event will be the **District Practice at Mereworth** on Saturday 13th February. There will be ringing on the 9¼cwt six from 10am to 12noon. As mentioned above all are most welcome.

Four weeks later on **Saturday 12th March**, we have the 2016 joint Method and Call Change **Striking Competitions** which this year will be held at **East Sutton** (6 bells - 8¼cwt). The bells will be available from 9.30am, the draw will take place at 9.45am with the Call Change competition commencing at 10am, followed by the Method Competition. The existing rules for both competitions still apply and can be found on the District website, but with the addition of the following: *"While the same band of ringers may ring in both Call Change and Method ringing categories and be placed, they will be limited to winning in only one category.*

In the case they are placed first in both categories they forfeit the shield for the Call Change section, this is then passed to the team in second place." The District Secretary will be contacting towers shortly, but now is the time to start getting your band(s) together. Entries in recent years have been lacking to say the least. If Striking Competitions are to continue in Maidstone District they will need to be better supported.

Easter this year comes almost as early as it possibly can, and with it the **County Annual General Meeting** which will be held on **Easter Bank Holiday Monday 28th March**. The venue is **Tunstall** in the Rochester District and the day is likely to follow the usual format of Service at 12noon followed by lunch (pre-booking essential), with the AGM itself starting at 2.30pm. For the avoidance of doubt I would stress that members are welcome - indeed

encouraged - to come to the AGM even if they don't come to the lunch or service. There will also be towers open on routes to Tunstall in the morning and home again after the AGM. Watch out for further details on the County website at www.kcacr.org.uk or contact the Rochester District Secretary whose e-mail address is secretary@rochesterdistrict.org.uk.

The next **Quarterly District Meeting** will be at **Stansted** on **Saturday 9th April**. There will be ringing on the 5¾cwt six at this delightful little church from 10am to 12.30pm with a break at 11am for a short Business Meeting. Special methods for this Meeting will be posted on the District website when known but, as mentioned above, there will be ringing to suit all levels from Rounds and Call Changes upwards.

By the time we get to the **10-bell Practice on Saturday 14th May** we will be looking forward to the summer. This practice is provisionally planned for All Saints' Maidstone but please note that this still has to be confirmed. Please check the District website nearer the time.

The next **County Surprise Major Practice** will be held at **Leeds** on **Saturday 30th January** from 10am until 12noon. A reminder that these practices are held regularly on the 5th Saturday of a month where there is one and are open to people from everywhere. They will rotate around the County, being held at towers on or near District borders. At the moment we are ringing methods from the *Standard 8*, both individually and spliced, but we may extend this as time goes on.

Finally, advance notice that the **District Barbeque** this year will be held on **Saturday 13th August**, at a venue still to be confirmed. Put the date in your diary now and keep fingers crossed for good weather!



Maidstone District 120 Club



For just £10 you can purchase a share in the 120 Club and have a chance of winning a cash prize of £20, £15, £10 or £5 every month from March to December inclusive (£40, £30, £20 or £5 in June and December).

Shares for 2016 available now from the Promoter:
Mal Williams on 01622-861143

For more information please see
www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk/120club

District Calendar 2016/17

<i>Date</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Tower</i>	<i>Bells</i>	<i>Times</i>
13/02/2016	District Practice	Mereworth	6, (9-1-7)	10.00 – 12.00
12/03/2016	District 6 bell Call Change/Striking Competition	East Sutton	6, (8-1-16)	Bells available 9.30. Draw 9.45 Competition 10.00am
28/03/2015 Easter Monday	County AGM, Tunstall, (Rochester District)			
09/04/2016	District Quarterly Meeting	Stansted	6, (5-3-21)	Ringling 10.00 – 12.30 Quarterly meeting 11.00am
14/05/2016	District 10 bell Practice	All Saints Maidstone (tbc)	10, (32-0-20)	10:00 - 12:00
11/06/2016	District Practice	Chart Sutton	6, (14-2-16)	10.00-12.00
02/07/2016	County 8 Bell Competition (Canterbury District - 9.45 draw)			
09/07/2016	District Quarterly Meeting	Nettlestead	6, (5-0-22)	Ringling 10-12.30pm Quarterly meeting 11.00am
13/08/2016	District Barbeque			
10/09/2016	District Practice	Wrotham	8, (20-0-10)	10:00 - 12:00
24/09/2016	County 6 Bell Competition (Lewisham District - 9.45 draw)			
08/10/2016	Annual District Meeting	Staplehurst	10, (19-2-7)	Ringling 15:00 - 16:30 Service 16:30 – 17:30 Tea & Meeting 17:30 Further ringling
12/11/2016	District Practice	Hollingbourne (tbc)	6, (13-3-2)	10:00 - 12:00
10/12/2016	Carol Service	West Peckham	3, (5-0-26)	16:30-17:30 Service Mulled Wine and mince pies
14/01/2017	District Quarterly Meeting	Yalding	6, (17-0-5)	Ringling 15.00 to 17.30. Quarterly meeting 16.00.
09/02/2017	District Practice	East Malling	6, (10-3-7)	10:00 - 12:00
09/03/2017	District Practice	East Farleigh	8, (7-3-0)	10:00 - 12:00

All details are correct at the time of going to press. However, very occasionally it may be necessary to change timings or venues, sometimes at short notice. To ensure you are up to date please check our website at

www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk

The website also gives more details about events for the forthcoming three months including, where appropriate, special methods



I'm confused.....

then let our

Jargon Buster

help you!

Most of us have at some time rung the tenor bell in our tower. But not many can claim to have rung the *Bass*. What is a Bass bell anyway and why is the heaviest bell in a ring called the Tenor when Bass obviously provides the lowest musical note? The latest in our jargon buster series provides the answer to this and some not-so-common bellringing phrases.

Lightning work: Work entailing moving rapidly from back to front to back (or vice versa) with a single snap lead or lie at the turning points and a single dodge in the middle of the lead, particularly in Bristol.

Middle: (1) The calling position where the observation bell (normally the tenor) is two below the highest working position at the lead head.

(2) The calling position that affects the three bells one later in the coursing order than a Home. This is identical to the definition above for even bell methods, but not for odd bell methods where there are differences of opinion. It is advisable to check which is intended. See also *Wrong*.

Wrong: (1) A place (particularly at lead) is made wrong if it consists of a backstroke followed by a handstroke.

(2) Backwards, as in hunting wrong or leading wrong (backstroke then handstroke).

(3) Calling position with the observation bell in the penultimate working position.

(4) Calling position that affects the three bells one earlier in the coursing order than a Home. This is identical to the definition above for even bell methods, but not for odd bell methods where opinions differ. See also *Middle*.

Home: The calling position when the highest working bell is in its home position.

Near: (1) A place (or combination of places and dodges) made in an adjacent position (especially in Double Norwich) e.g. 34 is near but 56 is far when leaving the front to go up.

(2) the place nearer the direction of approach when a series of places is made in adjacent positions.

Far: A place, or combination of places and dodges, made after hunting through a previous position (especially in Double Norwich).

Split tenors: A composition in which the tenors do not always course each other. The term is mainly used for Major and above, since on lesser number it is not possible to keep the tenors together except for very simple touches.

Tittums: A row with small and large bells interleaved in descending order. i.e. 142536, 15263748, etc. The name is onomatopoeic, since the alternation of high and low notes can be described as 'ti-tum-ti-tum-ti-tum....'. Popular in call changes. 47362518 is sometimes known as reverse tittums.

Tittums position: Coursing orders where the back bells course in numerical order. e.g. 5678. This gives Tittums-like rows near the course end (and often elsewhere as well). A course can thus be 'in the Tittums'. (More common when ringing higher stages of odd bell methods).

Ropesight: The skill of deducing one's position and the position of other bells, by looking at the other ropes while ringing. Hence the ability to see what work different bells are doing.

Carillon: A set of more than 25 bells, hung dead and struck with hammers operated from a clavier (or console). Some carillons omit two of the bass bells, thus having only 23 bells while still spanning two octaves.

Which bring us nicely back to Bass bells. The Bass is defined as the bell with lowest note in a carillon, although there are some stand alone heavy bells around the country sometimes thus described, including one which your editor has heard booming out at Paddy's Wigwam (aka Liverpool RC Cathedral).

And why is the heaviest (and therefore generally the lowest note) bell of a full-circle ring known as the Tenor rather than the Bass? I have absolutely no idea! More jargon busters next time.



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

Winning numbers September - December 2015

September 2015

1st Prize (£20)	8
2nd Prize (£15)	101
3rd Prize (£10)	112
4th Prize (£5)	79

Drawn at District Practice at Lenham on 12th September

October 2015

1st Prize (£20)	49
2nd Prize (£15)	60
3rd Prize (£10)	116
4th Prize (£5)	87

Drawn at Annual District Meeting at Leeds on 10th October

November 2015

1st Prize (£20)	126
2nd Prize (£15)	111
3rd Prize (£10)	120
4th Prize (£5)	61

Drawn at District Practice at Boughton Monchelsea on 14th November

December 2015

1st Prize (£40)	25
2nd Prize (£30)	12
3rd Prize (£20)	127
4th Prize (£5)	118

Drawn at District Carol Service on 12th December

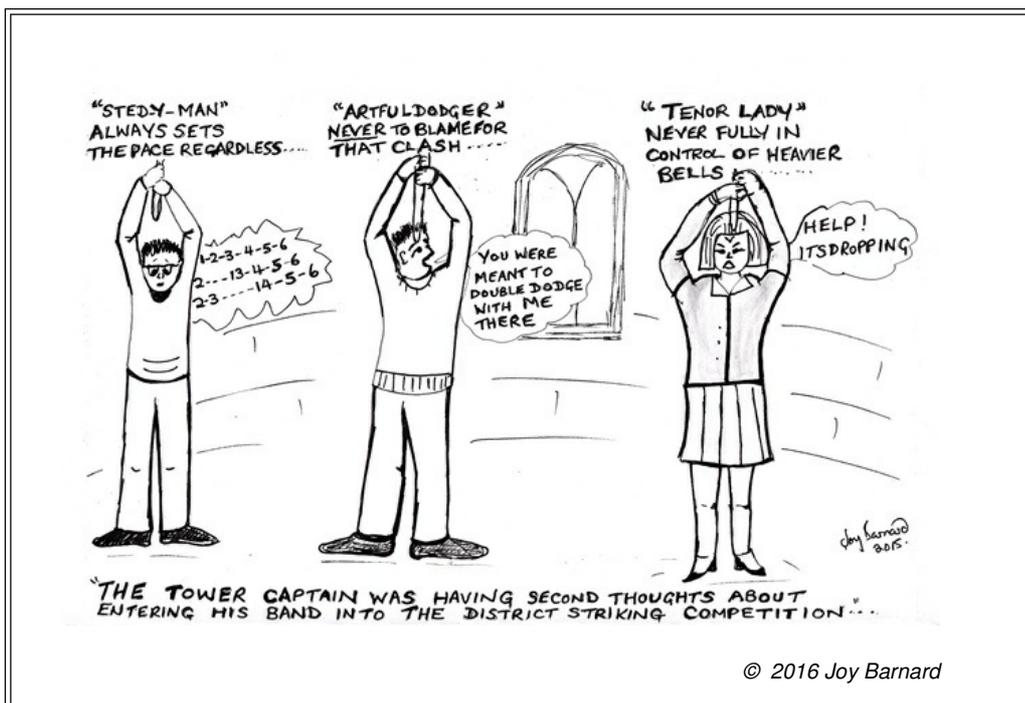
The 120 Club draw is made monthly from March to December inclusive.

Winning numbers appear in "The Belfry" and also on the District website at

www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk/120club

In our next issue - Ringing in Kilifi

Last year some Kent ringers played host to a band of ringers from Kilifi, in Kenya. The Kilifi ringers returned the compliment by inviting the Kent ringers over to experience ringing on the African continent, amongst them our District's Julian Lees and Pat Phipps. Read the story of this tower grab with a difference in our next issue!

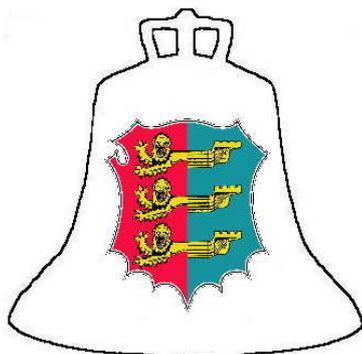


Here is the latest in the series of cartoons by Joy Barnard.

It is intended to be rather tongue-in-cheek so don't let it stop your band from entering the Striking Competitions at East Sutton in March!

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The Cinque Ports Ringing Centre at Dover



Cinque Ports Ringing Centre
at St Mary's, Dover

The first of our “drop-in clinics” for beginners was in January 2004 and twelve years later our Saturday morning sessions are still going strong, albeit catering for a much wider clientele. Practices start at ten o'clock and the first half-an-hour or so is for beginners. It's an opportunity to practise handling a bell, setting it, and raising and lowering, but we don't teach bell handling from scratch. There's usually some rounds-based exercises before a break for coffee and the last hour is reserved for change ringing. We finish at twelve o'clock.

Attendances in 2015 ranged between eight and twenty-two, the average weekly attendance over the forty-nine practices being fourteen. Five of the six Districts and twenty-eight towers were represented, including two from outside Kent. Methods rung included Ashford Little Bob, Bastow Minimus and Minor, and Cloister. Part of our remit is Public Relations and we welcomed a total seventy-nine non-ringing visitors during the year, including forty-one on a Heritage Day and many from overseas.

There's a common misapprehension that we still cater only for beginners but in fact they are now in the minority. Once they have sufficient bell control we regard them as learners rather than beginners and introduce them to simple methods. By breaking things down into small steps, each with a high chance of success, plain courses are mastered quite quickly. However, we are also trying to cultivate ropesight but we don't always have a band capable of touches.

So, when we appeal for more support, we are not asking towers to refer beginners to us. There is a desperate need for the learners to have around them some steady ringers who will not fall apart after a bob is called. Let us hope that in 2016 more help does become available and the method ringing for learners really takes off.

Peter Dale

Forthcoming Events

Saturday 30th January	County Surprise Major Practice at Leeds	10am - 12noon
<i>The latest in series of such practices, to be held on the 5th Saturday in the month when there is one.</i>		
Saturday 13th February	District Practice at Mereworth	10am - 12noon
<i>Our first District Practice of the year, with ringing for all levels. Everyone welcome.</i>		
Saturday 12th March	District Striking Competitions at East Sutton	Draw 9.45am
<i>Combined Call Change and Method Competitions</i>		
Easter Monday 28th March	County AGM at Tunstall (Rochester District)	2.30pm
<i>Towers open for ringing before and after, also lunch and service. See County website for details</i>		
Saturday 9th April	District Quarterly Meeting at Stansted	10am - 12.30pm
<i>Ringing for all levels with a break at 11am for a short business meeting</i>		