

# The Belfry

Silver Jubilee Issue

Quarterly Journal  
of the  
KCACR  
Maidstone District

January 2007

Issue 84

## Editorial

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I feel very honoured to be asked to write a guest editorial for the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of *The Belfry*. The Editor tells me that he had left it a bit late to ask the Archbishop of Canterbury so decided to ask the next best person (I wish!).

Every large business or voluntary group knows the importance of communications and never more so when people are spread out in small groups. Good communications directors know that it is so important for people to realise that whilst an individual team is the main focus of their energy they are also a part of something bigger. Good newsletters encourage this feeling. They contain a mix of current events, developments in the organisation, social events and most importantly information about people. They draw us in to the life of the wider organisation. Those are the objectives that *The Belfry* has met so well over the last 25 years.

It all began as a simple single-sided duplicated sheet with the very first issue in January 1982. Now, 25 years on, the Silver Jubilee issue has evolved into a professional looking publication but still meeting those original objectives. It tries to draw a balance between actual ringing matters and “news and gossip” about ringers to enable it to appeal to a wide range of readers from the fanatic to the Sunday service stalwart to non-ringing friends and partners. At the same time it tries to maintain a Christian ethos without “preaching”.

The country’s ringers are an important part of the service to the church, announcing as they do the presence of the church, and the word of God, to the wider community. *The Belfry* (and anything else) that encourages people to learn to ring, to stay ringing and to reach their potential in ringing should be valued and affirmed.

But, of course, it does not produce itself. Many people have helped with *The Belfry* over the years but one thing has remained unchanged over its 25 year life. That is our Editor Roy Barclay. Much hard work, dedication and imagination goes in to the production of our newsletter, most of it unseen by the rest of us. We owe Roy a huge debt of gratitude for all he has done – and all that we hope he will continue to do!

But, as they say, ‘the past is another country – they do things differently there’. As we look back with gratitude so we also look forward with anticipation. *The Belfry* now embraces modern technology (e.g. electronic/website versions) and, with the support of you the readers, we can confidently look forward to many more years of our District journal.

Phil Osler

*Revd Phil Osler is a non-stipendary curate at All Saints Staplehurst, where he also rings when his duties allow*

### *In this issue*

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***Plus all the usual features***

## Belfry Gossip

We have a number of new members to welcome to the Association. Firstly, welcome to new member **Kath White** of All Saints, Maidstone, who was elected to the Association at the Annual District Meeting at Maidstone on 14th October. Then at the January Quarterly Meeting at Aylesford on 13th January no less than a dozen new members were elected. We welcome **Maureen Simpson** and **Mark Elvers** of St Michael & All Angels, Maidstone, **Colin Friend** and **Alison Alderson** (Staplehurst), **Anne Wallen** and **Elizabeth Charles** (Otham), **Jon Haines**, **Bethany Gerrish** and **Samantha Harman** (Aylesford), **Wendy Hattfull** and **Anthony Sales** (Nettlestead) and **Yasmin Shahrad** (Bearsted). We look forward to seeing them at future events.



It is with much regret that we have to report that **Rosemary Ferrell** of Boughton Monchelsea died on Tuesday morning 16th January 2007. She had been a ringer for more than 50 years. She had been taken ill in November and came home from hospital only a week ago. Her last ring at Boughton Monchelsea was on Remembrance Sunday. It is hoped to include an obituary in the next issue.



We are also sorry to have to report the death of **Keith Wakefield** of Tunbridge Wells on 18th November 2006, following a long and brave fight against cancer. Keith was Tonbridge District secretary from 1992 to 1995, and was well known to many ringers in the Maidstone District. Keith's funeral was at St Peter's Church, Pembury, on Monday 4 December, when a large crowd of friends gathered to give him a very moving send-off.



## The Cinque Ports Ringing Centre at Dover

SATURDAY MORNING PRACTICES  
From 10 am to 12 midday

Admittedly we are rather far away, but members of the Maidstone District have visited the Centre on occasions and they may like to know that Saturday morning practices now include basic methods. Up to half-an-hour is still devoted to bell handling if needed, but rounds and call changes, and other exercises begin at a much earlier stage than before. The shortened coffee break at 11 o'clock marks the end of the beginners' session and the start of method ringing, on either five or six bells as required.

The success of the new agenda is of course dependent upon there being enough "inside" ringers to offer this repertoire, and we are most grateful to those who have already given generously of their time. This was to have been for a trial period only, but it has been so popular that we hope to enlist enough help for it to continue.

It would be good if we could build up a team of tutors who could undertake to come on a regular basis, once a month say, with those who can't make a fixed commitment standing in for them on the odd occasion. This will take some time to establish and all help will be much appreciated, from anyone who rings reliably to touches of Plain Bob or Grandsire.

Please contact Peter or Barbara Dale with offers of assistance, Tel. 01304 823217 or email [ptdale@dsl.pipex.com](mailto:ptdale@dsl.pipex.com); a map showing car parks in Dover is available on request.

We hear that **John Betts** of Harrietsham has been unwell, and spent some time in hospital before Christmas. However, we are pleased to say that he has now almost fully recovered, and was able to attend the recent Tower Captains' Meeting at Aylesford.



Congratulations to 13-year-old **Bethany Gerrish** of Aylesford who rang her first quarter-peal at the first attempt on 30<sup>th</sup> December. The quarter was rung at Stansted, with Bethany ringing the treble to Grandsire Doubles. A picture of Bethany with the band after the Quarter is opposite.



"On Monday 7th August a band of eight ringers, all ladies, and all regular **Aylesford** ringers or learners, rang rounds successfully on the eight bells. It seems likely that this is the first time that this has been achieved. Whilst the restoration of the bells last winter has no doubt helped, it is to the credit of the learners (and their trainers) that they have progressed so well as to make this possible. The ringers were Lin Lloyd, Beth Gerrish, Brenda Sladen, Nicola Kynaston-Jones, Samantha Harman, Alison Gerrish, Alison Harman and Tina Bastow.

Have you any gossip from your belfry?

Let the Editor know on  
(01580) 890247  
or E-Mail

[thebelfry@kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk](mailto:thebelfry@kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk)

## Committee Matters

The District Committee has met once since the last issue of *The Belfry*, on Wednesday 29th November. Below is a resumé of the main points discussed at that meeting.

### Maidstone District Committee Meeting of 3rd May 2006

#### **Election of Chairman**

The Committee agreed the election of Chris Bassett to chair the meeting

#### **Arising from the previous meeting**

*District Website:* There had been no progress on the idea to offer towers District Webspace for their own tower information, other than a rough draft. The possibility of having a "members only" area within the site was also being considered.

*Welcome Pack:* There had been no progress.

*Ringling Leisurewear:* Towers had been given details of the County Clothing Organiser.

#### **District Officers' Reports**

*The Ringing Masters* presented their report. In particular it was noted that there was a good atmosphere at the Call Change Contest.

*The Publicity Officer* reported that *The Belfry* was issued electronically prior to the ADM with hard copies issued at the ADM. The Committee was asked to persuade more towers to receive *The Belfry* by electronic means.

*District Reps* gave a verbal report on proceedings at the recent General Committee Meeting. The General Committee wished to retain the existing Association Prayer. Discussions had taken place regarding the future siting of the Jubi-Peal - the Museum of Kent Life were not interested. District Treasurers were reminded

to give accounts and District Secretaries to give reports by 15 January 2007. Of particular relevance to our own District, it was reported that Otham were looking at augmentation.

#### **Forthcoming events**

*Carol Service* – 9<sup>th</sup> December. All arrangements were in hand.

*Programme 2007-2008.* The revised list had been circulated and was continuing to be updated. Outstanding replies are being chased. Meeting cards will be prepared when details had been finalised.

*January Quarterly Meeting at Aylesford* – 13<sup>th</sup> January. The tower captains meeting will be at 1400 in the Brassy Centre.

*The County 8 Bell competition* will be held at St Margaret's Rochester 24 February 2007. The method will be Oxford Treble Bob Major.

*The County 6 bell competition* will be in the Tonbridge District on 22 September 2007 (venue still to be confirmed).

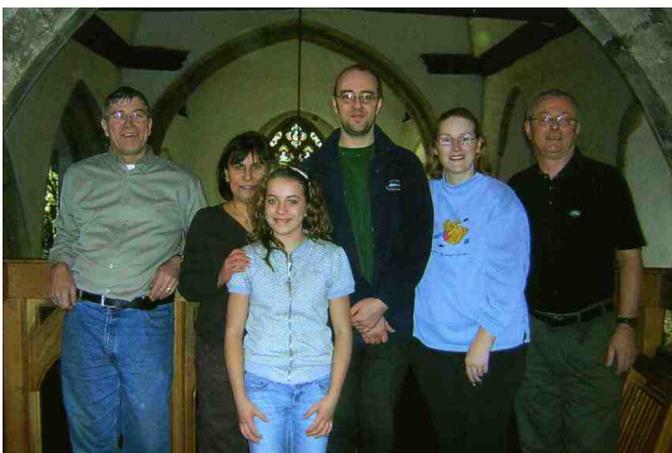
#### **Any Other Business**

*District Bookstall* The Publicity Officer reported that he was finding it increasingly difficult to run the Bookstall. District Rep Chris Saunders agreed to take it over with effect from January 2007.

*Barn Dance* Darren Elphick offered to organise a Barn Dance in aid of the Bell Restoration Fund sometime before 10<sup>th</sup> March 2007.

***This does not purport to be a complete and accurate report of the meeting. Any member of the KCACR can obtain a copy of the full minutes by contacting the District Secretary.***

*Pictured below is a very happy Bethany Gerrish with the band that rang with her in her first quarter peal on 30th December (see Belfry Gossip on page 2)*



### Maidstone District Bookshop

***Responsibility for the District Bookshop has been taken over by***

**Chris Saunders**

***Lots of new titles now in stock  
Also badges, car stickers, DVDs, etc***

***Available at most District Meetings,  
or from***

**Chris Saunders, 44 Royds Road,  
South Willesborough, Ashford, TN24 0DR  
Tel: 01233 663365**

## District Programme 2007

The District has a full and varied programme planned for 2007. District events are listed below, along with those County events in which our District is involved. Please note that at the time of going to press venues and/or timings of some events have still to be confirmed; these are marked as "TBC" and confirmation should be sought from District Secretary Sue Bassett on 01580-891917 before attending. Updates will of course be posted on the District Website at [www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk](http://www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk)

Sat 3rd Feb	District Surprise Practice	<i>Linton (TBC)</i>	10am - 12noon
Sat 24th Feb	County 8-bell Competition	<i>St Margaret, Rochester (Rochester District)</i>	Draw 2.45pm
Sat 10th March	Barn Dance	<i>Downswood Community Centre</i>	7.30 - 11pm
Sat 17th March	Joint Practice with Tonbridge District	<i>Hadlow</i>	2.30 - 4.30pm
Mon 9th April	County A G M	<i>Thanington (Canterbury District)</i>	All day
Sat 14th April	District Quarterly Meeting	<i>Mereworth Wateringbury</i>	3pm - 4.30pm 5pm - 8pm
?? May	Joint Practice with Rochester District	<i>St Margaret, Rochester (TBC)</i>	TBC
Sat 16th June	District Striking Contest	<i>Chart Sutton</i>	Draw 9.45am
Sat 14th July	District Quarterly Meeting	<i>Hollingbourne (TBC) Harrietsham</i>	9.30 - 10.30am 11.30am-12.30pm
Wed 12th Sept	District Practice Night	<i>Linton</i>	7.30 - 9pm
Sat 22nd Sept	County 6-bell Striking Contest	<i>Rochester District (tower TBC)</i>	TBC
Sat 13th Oct	Annual District Meeting	<i>Staplehurst</i>	3 - 8pm
Sat 10th Nov	District Call Change Contest	<i>Snodland</i>	Draw 9.45am
Sat ?? Dec	District Carol Service	<i>Hunton</i>	Ringing 3pm Service 4pm

**For updates please see [www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk/calendar.htm](http://www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk/calendar.htm)  
or contact the District Secretary Sue Bassett on 01580 891917**

## Annual District Meeting.....and other events

### Annual District Meeting

The 2006 Annual District Meeting was held at All Saints Maidstone, and once again the attendance was disappointing. Only 16 members – just 8% of the total membership – were at the business meeting where we were pleased to welcome County Chairman David Manger and his wife Pam. The District Officers presented their reports for 2006, and the meeting elected the “new” Committee for the coming year – not really new because nearly everyone was re-elected. The only change was that Darren Elphick becomes ringing master in place of David Pye who did not seek re-election. For full details of the new Committee see page 6. Minutes of the ADM are available to members on request from the District Secretary.

### District Carol Service

Christmas got under way in the Maidstone District on 9<sup>th</sup> December with the annual carol service at Boughton Monchelsea. There was a reasonable attendance of about 50 people, greatly boosted by many of the local congregation. The service was followed by the traditional mince pies and mulled wine, and the picture below shows District Chairman Chris Bassett happily serving it. Our grateful thanks to the local ringers for making the arrangements.



### Tower Captains' Meeting

The annual Tower Captains' Meeting was held at Aylesford on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> January prior to the Quarterly Meeting. Sixteen Tower Captains (or their representatives) were there, along with five District Officers. Amongst matters discussed were: recruitment and retention of ringers, encouraging attendance at and support for District events, training needs and maintenance. Encouraging reports were received from a number of towers. Further information is available from the District Secretary.

### Quarterly Meeting

The January District Quarterly is invariably the best attended meeting of the year, but this year's exceeded all expectations. Maybe it was the lure of Aylesford's recently rehung eight that encouraged no less than 36 people to crowd into the ringing room on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> January. A similar number attended the business meeting at which a record 12 new members were elected to the Association. A superb tea by the Aylesford ringers was followed by more ringing, ranging from Rounds to Cambridge and Yorkshire. The evening ended for many in the traditional manner at the Little Gem, reputed to be the smallest pub in Kent.

**Tired of waiting to see that single  
tower copy of The Belfry?  
Now you can get your very own copy on-line  
and  
you will get it before the hard copy version  
is even printed  
...and it's free!**

**To add your name to the circulation list  
e-mail  
[subscribe@kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk](mailto:subscribe@kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk)**



## Church Chuckles

Two members of the Mormons knocked on the door and engaged the householder in conversation. After a while they asked her if she would benefit from learning about Jesus.

“No” she confidently replied, “We are members of the United Reformed Church”

## Call Change Striking Contest



### Results

<b>Winners</b>	<b>Aylesford B</b>	<b>19 faults</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>Wrotham</b>	<b>37 faults</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Leeds</b>	<b>47 faults</b>
<b>4<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Staplehurst</b>	<b>65 faults</b>
<b>5<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Aylesford A</b>	<b>82 faults</b>

The 2006 Call Change Striking Contest was held at Boxley on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> November. Five bands, representing four towers, took part this year – an improvement on recent years. It was particularly pleasing to see that most of the bands had at least one person who had little or no experience of competition ringing. This, after all, is the idea behind this contest.

Aylesford B took the winner's shield with just 19 faults, with Wrotham runners up with 37 faults. Leeds were third some ten faults behind.

We are grateful to Steve Haynes and Susan Symons from neighbouring Rochester District who came to judge the competition for us, and to the Boxley ringers for use of their bells and for providing the most welcome tea.

Full results of the Contest are above, together with a picture of young Bethany Gerrish of the Aylesford band with the trophy!

## District Committee 2007

The new District Committee, elected at the Annual District Meeting at All Saints, Maidstone, on 14th October, is:

<b>Chairman</b>	Chris Bassett	<i>proposed by Pat Phipps, seconded by Chris Saunders.</i>
<b>District Secretary</b>	Sue Bassett	<i>proposed by Keith Foxwell, seconded by Mal Williams.</i>
<b>Treasurer/Membership Sec</b>	Pat Phipps	<i>proposed by Sue Bassett, seconded by Richard Young.</i>
<b>Ringing Masters</b>	Graham Heath Darren Elphick	<i>proposed by Richard Young, seconded by Jason Williams. proposed by Chris Saunders, seconded by Mal Williams.</i>
<b>District Representatives</b>	Malcolm Hitchcock Chris Saunders	<i>proposed by Pat Phipps, seconded by Graham Heath. proposed by Pat Phipps, seconded by Graham Heath.</i>
<b>Publicity Officer</b>	Roy Barclay	<i>proposed by Mike Birkbeck, seconded by Jason Williams.</i>
<b>Other Committee members</b>	None proposed.	

*The Meeting agreed that the Ringing Masters should also act as joint District Training Officers*

## A quarter of a century and still going strong

In case you hadn't noticed, this issue of *The Belfry* marks the 25th anniversary of our District journal. It is a sobering thought - for your Editor at least - that most of our present ringers were very young when that first issue hit the District's ringing rooms. Some weren't even born. Most of our ringers doubtless see *The Belfry* as an integral part of the Maidstone District ringing scene and do not perhaps realise the once small acorn from which the now mighty oak has grown. So, instead of our normal Belfry Reminiscences let us look back at some of the landmarks in the history of the journal.

**The very first issue** in January 1982 was simply a double-sided single sheet typed on an antique mechanical machine called a typewriter, and "xeroxed" (an early type of photocopying). The editor was Roy Barclay, who is still Editor to this day, and production was in the hands of the then District Secretary John Caley. The Editorial in that issue set out the aims and objectives of the "Maidstone District Newsletter" and sought contributions for future issues: it also included a news round-up and details of future events - and asked for suggestions for a name!

**Issue 5** saw the newsletter's first anniversary, the first to be prepared by what was then known as a wordprocessor (a very basic form of PC), whilst **Issue 6** in April 1983 was the first to be published under the title of *The Belfry*. In fact there had been a Maidstone District newsletter called *The Belfry* from 1949 until the early 'sixties and it was therefore thought to be a good idea to resurrect the name for the modern day equivalent. A coloured cover was introduced for **issue 10** (April 1984), the colour broadly representing the season of the year, and in October 1984 we were honoured to have Phil Corby, a vice president of the KCACR and at that time President of the Central Council, write the Editorial for **Issue 12**. This was also the first issue to have the District Calendar as a tear-off page at the back.

**Issue 25** in March 1989 passed without much comment, except that the editorial, this time written by the editor himself, said that if we were to reach the 50th issue members would have to start taking a more active part in the production of *The Belfry* than hitherto. Well it worked and the rest, as they say, is history.

There followed a variety of changes in production volunteers, along with some minor design adjustments, until with **issue 33** in January 1992 we came to what everyone considered at the time to be a remarkable achievement - the 10th anniversary issue. Again we were

honoured to have a guest editorial, this time by then County Chairman Nick Davies.

The next major landmark in *The Belfry's* evolution was **issue 50** in May 1996 and our guest editorial this time came from Revd (now Canon) Brian Barnes, then Rector of Staplehurst and previously curate at All Saints Maidstone. By now our journal included artwork and a modern (for those days) text layout. For this issue only the cover - which showed a delightful line drawing of All Saints Maidstone - departed from its normal colour scheme. It was of course gold, or at least a goldenish deep yellow!

Now what was so special about **issue 61** in October 1999? Well, as mentioned above the "old" Belfry first saw the light of day in October 1949, so this issue celebrated the 50th anniversary of our illustrious predecessor. It was rather a low key event however, with people more concerned about the imminent millennium celebrations to which most of **issue 63** was devoted in April 2000. By now *The Belfry* regularly featured photographs - monochrome of course - and there were plenty of photographs of bands who had "rung in 2000".

By **issue 70** *The Belfry* had had a make-over and looks much like it does today. Published in January 2002 this was the 20th Anniversary issue and in accordance with tradition we had another guest editorial, this time by Frank Lewis, then County Chairman. As a former County Publicity Officer and currently webmaster of the County's website Frank can claim to know a thing or two about newsletters.

So we come to the present day. Unlike that first single sheet issue 25 years ago most towers will receive their **Silver Anniversary issue** by e-mail. Rather than having to wait to borrow the one tower copy, tower e-mail contacts can print off as many as they want for their ringers, or individual ringers can ask to be put on the distribution list to receive their own copy by e-mail. It will also be posted on the District website, so will have a potential worldwide circulation of millions.

What of the future? No-one knows, but I am confident that, with the support of the ringers of the Maidstone District, our great journal will continue to go from strength to strength.

Perhaps I could just end this potted history by thanking all those, too many to name, who have helped *The Belfry* to reach its 25th birthday. Finally, thanks to you the readers for supporting it for a quarter of a century.

**Roy Barclay**



It's Back

It's Back

It's Back

**MAIDSTONE DISTRICT**

**BARN DANCE**

**Saturday, 10<sup>th</sup> March 2007**

**7.30 - 11pm**

**at**

**Downswood Community Hall**

**Dancing with**

**'Skinners Rats'**

**Tickets £8, or £10 on the door**

**Bar & Refreshments**

**Bring your friends & family**

***PROCEEDS TO THE B.R.F.***

***For tickets call Darren Elphick 01233 733123 / 07815 645984***

***Or contact committee members for information.***

## County Training Timetable for 2007

The following events have been put together by the KCACR Training Subcommittee to serve particular needs. If you don't see something here that you need, please let either James Hardy (County Training Officer) or your District training officer know. Specific venues and times will be announced nearer the time of the event. If these events prove popular, they will be repeated as required.

### **Course No 1: 16 February, 7.30- 9.30pm: *Basic conducting***

This has been arranged in response to a specific request, but may prove popular with several people. The topics will include: method structure / place notation, writing out touches and transposition, understanding and learning touches, how to approach basic conducting. Notes will be provided to take away. Methods will include Plain Bob Doubles and Minor, Grandsire Doubles.

### **Course No 2: 7 April: *A discussion seminar on training events***

The idea behind this event is not for me to tell people how to arrange training, but rather to share and evaluate ideas about training events. I am keen to see more "local" training events taking place, and I hope that this seminar will encourage people to arrange more, as well as demonstrating that there is a good support network out there for trainers.

### **Course No 3: 16 June: *Bell handling clinic***

I have noticed many times whilst doing training events, that poor bell control is the one thing that prevents many people from making the progress that they would like. As a result of this problem, there are many people out there who know their stuff, but can't quite get their bell in the right place. The format of the day will be to watch each student ring, and then to discuss any faults they may have, with a view to correcting them. We will use a video camera, so that students may see themselves ring. Students must bear in mind that a degree of "criticism" is inevitable, but that the criticism will be constructive. (Don't worry, you'll get to have a go at the tutors for fun too!)

### **Course No 4: 7 July: *Maintenance of bells and their fittings***

This is a subject which is close to my heart. So many good rings of bells are spoilt by worn out pulleys, loose fittings and odd-struckness, simply because nobody quite knows what to do. This is often due to financial restraints. With a small amount of training and a modest tool kit, local maintenance can overcome many problems with the installation and ensure correct and safe function. I have a fair amount of experience in general bell maintenance, and expert advice will be on hand from Brian Butcher (KCACR Bell Restoration Officer) and Mark Backhouse (Whitechapel Bell Foundry). Don't wear your best clothes!

### **Course No 5: 27 October: *Teaching bell handling***

If you are a tower captain, or the person who teaches learners when they get recruited, this is ideal for you. There are so many towers where everyone has the same handling faults, often impeding progress. This course is aimed at reducing this tendency. There will be plenty of time for discussion and idea sharing, as well as demonstration in the tower. Please note that if your own bell handling is questionable (be honest), I would suggest that you get it sorted before trying to teach, since faults are often passed on from teacher to student. If you cannot find anyone to help in this respect, please contact me. Handling clinics can be arranged if required.

### ***How to apply for a course***

If you would like a place on any of these courses, or would like more information, please contact me at [trg@kcacr.org.uk](mailto:trg@kcacr.org.uk). Similarly, if you would like to request a specific event which cannot be accommodated locally, contact me and I will do my best to arrange it.

**James J Hardy**  
**(KCACR Training Officer)**

## Our 15 Minutes of Fame + 15!

by *Brenda Sladen*

Through the magic of e-mail I learned that the makers of the TV programme *Ready Steady Cook* were looking for bell ringers to appear on a show and I approached our ringers to see if anyone was interested. Alison Gerrish said she would be happy to join me and we hurriedly completed the application form and sent it off. A couple of weeks later we were amazed to receive an e-mail asking us to go to Shepherd's Bush for an audition. We set off by car on a Wednesday for our appointment at 5pm and were asked to wait until summoned. There were a few other couples also waiting and we were all called into a conference room where we were told all about the programme and what was expected of us. We were then auditioned in couples by two researchers for the programme which involved a filmed ten-minute question and answer session, during which time we were asked about bell ringing and whether it would be possible to ring on the programme, which, at the time, we felt would not be possible and then about our cooking abilities, hobbies etc. We were told that they would call us if we had been successful.

A couple of weeks later a researcher telephoned to say they would like us to be on the show and I then said that we felt we could arrange for ringers to join us if they still would like them. We approached our band at Aylesford for volunteers and we had a couple of sessions of practice before setting off on 16 November for Capital Studios, Wandsworth.

It was a really cold, wet day and we were drenched by the time we arrived at the studios but were warmly welcomed and shown to the Green Room. Gordon Hunt had helped us during the practice and he, Tina Bastow, Lin Lloyd and Bethany Gerrish (Alison's daughter) made up the team of

six. We had a last minute practice before being called to make-up and rehearsal. Alison and I met our cooks – Phil Vickery, James Martin and of course Ainsley Harris and they showed us around the set so that we had some idea of where to find everything.

All history now as those of you who are keen viewers of BBC2 at 4.30pm will know. It was a great experience and I must say it was the fastest 20 minutes of my life – I could not believe it when Ainsley said the magic words STOP COOKING.

Alison and I agreed to donate the £100 and the proceeds of the raffle for the hamper (which raised £125) equally between the KCACR Bell Restoration Fund and our church Flush Fund.

*Alison Gerrish and Brenda Sladen with Ready Steady Cook's co-host James Martin*



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The latest winning numbers in the 120 Club Draw are:

**September:**

82 (£20) Dot (Folkestone)  
21 (£15) Doreen (Otham)  
61 (£10) Louisa (Boughton Monchelsea)

**October:**

80 (£20) Chris (Leeds)  
95 (£15) Nick (West Malling)  
61 (£10) Louisa (Boughton Monchelsea)

**November:**

11 (£20) Susan (Barming)  
53 (£15) Pat (Boxley)  
62 (£10) Gerald (Boxley)

**December:**

30 (£40) Nick (Boughton Monchelsea)  
105 (£30) Andrew (Harrietsham)  
22 (£20) Rosemary (Boughton Mon)

Have you renewed your 120 Club subscription for 2007?  
Download the form on the 120 Club's website at:

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

or contact the Hon Promoter:  
Mal Williams 01622-861143 or e-mail [malwyn.williams@tesco.net](mailto:malwyn.williams@tesco.net)

## Future Events

Well, Christmas has come and gone and we are now well into the new year. As the days get longer and we look forward to spring why not take the opportunity to get out and about to some of the District Events lined up for the next few months? We have a much wider variety of events in 2007 than for the past few years. Details of these are below, although it must be said that in a number of cases venues and timings are still to be confirmed as we go to press.

A list of District events for the first three months of 2007 is on the District Calendar on the inside back cover. Could Tower Captains/Secretaries please detach it and place prominently on their tower notice-boards. Remember that you can also check out future events by visiting the District website *Maidstone District OnLine* at [www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk](http://www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk) and choosing "Calendar of Events".

First up is a District **Surprise Major Practice** to be held on Saturday 3rd February at Linton from 10am - 12noon. This is a great opportunity both for those who are just beginning to venture into the field of surprise methods and for those more experienced ringers who want to extend their repertoire. There will be ringing to suit all levels, but please make sure you know the blue line before you come!

On Saturday 10th March we have the return of an old favourite. Until a few years ago the annual District **Barn Dance** was a very popular event, so it has been decided to hold one again this year. Full details are in the advertisement on page 8.

The following week, on Saturday 17th March, we will be meeting up with and friends and near neighbours in the Tonbridge District for a **Joint Practice** on the eight bells at Hadlow. This is a good opportunity to sample a ring of bells that we don't normally get the opportunity to ring on. If previous joint events with Tonbridge District are anything to go by, this will be a well run practice with plenty of opportunities for everyone from rounds to Surprise Major (depending of course on who turns up!). Ringing will be from 2.30pm to 4.30pm, so put the date and time in your diary now.

On Easter Monday 9th April there is the **County AGM** which this year will be held at Thanington in the Canterbury District. Full details have yet to be confirmed, but are likely to follow the usual pattern: service in Thanington Church at 12noon, followed by lunch at 1pm with the AGM itself starting at 2.30pm. Towers are likely to be open on routes to and from Thanington before and after the meeting. For confirmation please check on the County website at [www.kcacr.org.uk](http://www.kcacr.org.uk) nearer the time.

Maidstone District are not noted for their support of the County AGM. Let's try and alter that this year.

There are two towers for the price of one at the spring **Quarterly Meeting** on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> April. Afternoon ringing will be at Mereworth from 3pm to 4.30pm and evening ringing at Watlingbury from 6.30pm to 8pm. The venue for the business meeting and tea has still to be confirmed, so watch this space. There will be special methods, but as always there will also be ringing to suit all levels, from Rounds upwards.

In May we will (hopefully) have something that will appeal to the tower grabbers amongst our readers, with a visit to the newly restored ring of 8 at St Margaret's Rochester for a **joint Practice Meeting** with the Rochester District. Date and time have still to be confirmed, so watch this space.

Those long warm days of early summer seem a long way off at the moment, but they'll be here before you know it, along with the **District Striking Contest**. There is a change to the Contest this year in that it will take place in the morning of Saturday 16th June, with the draw for order of ringing at 9.45am and the contest itself starting at 10am. The venue is Chart Sutton and all those towers that can manage to raise a band are urged to do so. One of the reasons for the event being held in the morning is to avoid the age-old problem of clashes with weddings. The days when just one or two bands had a stranglehold on the winner's shield have long gone, and the competition is far more open now. Who knows, your tower may end up with their first ever piece of silverware!

The full District programme for 2007 is on page 4 of this issue although, as already mentioned, a number of events are still subject to confirmation. As soon as such confirmation is received Meeting Cards will be printed and issued on a one-per-member basis. If yours is one of the towers whom the District Secretary has approached to host an event - and you haven't yet replied - please do so urgently as you are holding things up.

Articles for publication in the  
**The Belfry**  
should be sent to the Editor  
at the address on page one  
or e-mail to  
***belfry@kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk***

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



# MAIDSTONE DISTRICT CALENDAR

Winter/Spring 2007

Saturday 3rd February  
**SURPRISE MAJOR PRACTICE at LINTON**  
*From 10am to 12noon*

Saturday 10th March  
**BARN DANCE at DOWNSWOOD COMMUNITY CENTRE**  
*from 7.30pm to 11pm*

Saturday 17th March  
**PRACTICE MEETING at HADLOW**  
(joint with Tonbridge District)  
*Ringing from 2.30pm to 4.30pm*

Easter Monday 9th April  
**COUNTY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
at Thanington (Canterbury District)

Saturday 14th April  
**QUARTERLY MEETING at MEREWORTH & WATERINGBURY**  
*Ringing at Mereworth from 3pm to 4.30pm,*  
*Ringing at Wateringbury from 6.30pm to 8pm*  
*Venue for Tea & Business Meeting to be confirmed*

May (date to be confirmed)  
**PRACTICE MEETING at St MARGARET, ROCHESTER**  
*All arrangements to be confirmed*

Saturday 16th June  
**DISTRICT STRIKING CONTEST at CHART SUTTON**  
Draw 9.45am Contest starts 10am

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For updates visit Maidstone District OnLine at  
[www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk](http://www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk)

or contact the District Secretary