



LEWISHAM DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter On Line at www.lewishamdistrict.fsnet.co.uk

THE KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS www.kcacr.org.uk

OCTOBER 2003

Mary Andrews "Well Done" and "Thank You"

MARY ANDREWS
Lewisham District Secretary
1959-1973 & 1977-2003

I had to get out my copies of the Kent Report to jog my memory and found that those for 1980 and 1999 were missing, the earliest being for 1960.

Mary was first elected as the Lewisham District secretary in 1959 when Alf Hill retired after 35 years of service. This was, at the time, a record for tenure of the office and compared with Canon Helmore's 38 years as General Secretary. Prior to her election, Mary had been a District Representative. Olive Barnett and I were elected as Representatives at the same time, to form a "Petticoat Government".

At that time, the General Committee met upstairs in a café in Maidstone. It had a low ceiling and was crowded with the 35 members, some of whom smoked.

In 1972 there was another candidate proposed as Secretary and I remember Fred Cullum saying "we can't have this" and proposed Mary, who was duly elected. The following year she declined to stand and for three years we had a different

secretary. Mary was then asked if she would be willing to take office again. In saying that she would, she told the meeting that if they voted her out of office she would not come back again.

Is this the reason we have re-elected her so many times?

Mary has always been conscientious and efficient in all the duties of

Secretary. During her time in office she has worked with 17 Ringing Masters and 9 assistants, whilst there have been 32 different representatives. Only three other people are still listed as members in the District.

Mary has also been Secretary and Captain of Bexley tower, teaching many to ring, helping to train new bands, arranging quarter peals and the ringing for the many weddings held at Bexley each year.

Mary has, as a member of the Kent Ladies Guild, arranged many weekend tower grabs, including finding suitable hotels for their stay. She also rings handbells, when all her other duties permit, as we have seen at some of our services.

I can only say "WELL DONE" and "THANK YOU" on behalf of all the District and hope your successor will follow your example.

Freda Cannon



Next District Event

Annual District Meeting
St. Mary the Virgin, Bexley
on
Saturday 11th October

Bells 3.00 p.m. Service 4.30 p.m.
Evening ringing at Eltham

Names for tea to
Mary Andrews on 01322 523***
by Wednesday 8th October please.

Chairman's Bit

After the usual quiet summer period, the District's ringing programme gets back on track with the Annual District Meeting on 11th October. This is the most important meeting of the year for us, so hopefully as many people as possible will be able to attend.

In particular, this will be the last meeting at which Mary Andrews will act as Secretary. By this time, there cannot be anyone in the District who is not aware that Mary will be retiring, after having served in this capacity for more than 40 years. It is a fact that the best Secretaries are those who – in the best possible way – you almost don't notice. As only the most recent of many Chairmen who have held office alongside Mary, I knew that there was never any need to worry about whether arrangements for a meeting had been made or not, or whether any of the other routine matters had been dealt with. It's the sort of thing you don't appreciate until it isn't there any more!

Furthermore, when visiting other towers within the District and mentioning Mary, on several occasions I was told "Oh yes, she came and helped to teach our band when we were getting started" – the sort of practical, grass-roots help that sometimes gets forgotten. Others who have known Mary for longer will be able to add to this picture, but I know that I can speak for everyone in thanking her for all she has done for the District, and hope that we will continue to see her whenever she can spare the time from her many other activities.

Just space, I hope, to encourage your support for some events coming up later this year. Firstly, the Call Change Striking Competition on November 15th at Downe. We have had a reasonable turnout over the last couple of years, so it would be good to see this continue. If your tower hasn't entered a band recently, why not give it a try? The last three years have seen three different towers taking first place, so there are no dead certs in this competition! And inexperience is no excuse, as Horton Kirby's third place last year shows.

On Saturday 13th December, the District Carol Service is being held at Beckenham. Last year's event wasn't as well supported as I'd have hoped, so why not have a break from the Christmas shopping and come along for a good sing and some mince pies afterwards – and how about some more of that punch that we had at the December practice last year?

Finally, on Saturday November 29th, a Quiz Night at Eltham. NB the correct date – wrongly advertised in the last newsletter (my fault, I'm afraid...). But please come along and support this fundraising event, in aid of the Kent County Bell Restoration Fund. You never know when your tower may need its services and I promise not to argue with the quiz-master this year!

David Holdridge

Volunteers wanted

Towers will, as usual, be required to volunteer to host District events next year. So please give it some thought before the ADM especially if your tower has not hosted an event for a few years.

The dates for the 2004 diary are:

10th January - Quarterly Meeting

6th March - 6 Bell Striking Competition

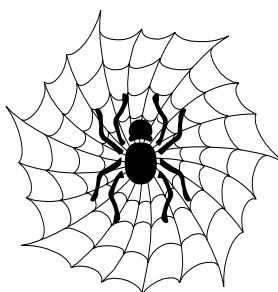
3rd April - Quarterly Meeting

10th July - Quarterly Meeting

9th October - Annual Meeting

20th November - Call Change Competition

11th December - Carol Service



What's been happening - News from the Website

I must apologise for the total lack of activity on this site during the last few months – a number of unexpected things have happened this year that have occupied my time, and as a result the site and practice arrangements have fallen behind.

We are now back on track, however, and I will endeavour to keep the site up to date from now on.

The following is a "potted" version of the News so far this year:

Several practices have been held, and were well attended – especially the practice at Beckenham where we rang 3-spliced S royal!! (London no. 3, Yorkshire, Cambridge). This is, I believe, a first for the District. We have had practices at St. Mary Cray, Beckenham (x2), Crayford and Eltham. In addition to these, we have started to hold quarterly (approx.) Surprise Royal practices at Beckenham, which, whilst not being a "District" event, are open to anyone wishing to practice their Surprise Royal.

James Hardy

Editorial



So another year has gone by and it's Annual District Meeting time again. However, it will be one with a difference this year as, after 40 years of service, Mary will be retiring as District Secretary. Appropriately enough the ADM will be held at Mary's home tower of Bexley. So, as the front page says, "Well done" and "Thank You". Your successor will have a lot to live up to.

What will be the same at the ADM is the need for towers to volunteer to hold District Events next year. The proposed dates are on page 2 so, especially if your tower has not held one for a while, think about volunteering.

As was mentioned in the last newsletter the Eltham ringers will be holding a Quiz Night in aid of the Bell Restoration Fund (see advert on page 4 and note the date change). Please support them in this venture and try to make this a truly district wide event.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the newsletter over the last year. Keep the articles coming, the newsletter is what you make it.

Rupert and Cathy



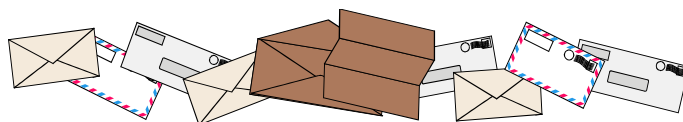
Walter Dobbie

We're very sorry to have to report the death of Walter Dobbie on Wednesday 17th September. He was the second longest serving member of the KCACR (71 years) and for the latter part of that he was a Vice President. Many of us will remember his amazing skill as a craftsman making and repairing handbells, the Jubi-Peal, which has been used for many District events, and all manner of beautiful woodwork projects.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to Sheila, his wife, at this time. Walter's funeral will be at West Peckham on Thursday 25th September at 2p.m.

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We, or our successor, will as usual, be seeking articles, pictures, jokes, cartoons, reports and tower news for the next issue. Get them in early!

**COPY DEADLINE -
19th December 2003**

to
Rupert and Cathy Cheeseman
** Church Road
Erith
Kent
DA8 1PG

☎ 01322 439***

✉ rupert@dartford26.freemove.co.uk
✉ cathy.cheeseman@virgin.net

Go Visiting!

Have you ever wondered why experienced ringers always recommend going out to other towers practice nights? If so here are some suggestions:

- * It might be fun
- * Additional practice that you get will help you improve
- * You might get the chance to ring something new
- * Someone might explain something in a different way - very often the light suddenly dawns
- * You can take something back to your own tower
- * It is easier for one person to travel than for 5, 7, or 9 people to travel to you - have you ever tried getting more than two people in the same place at the same time!
- * Come to a District practice

Going out takes quite a lot of confidence. If you are unsure take a friend or another ringer with you. To find out when other towers practice, have a look at the Lewisham District website, or the KCACR website (www.KCACR.org.uk) or look in the Kent handbook (this year with a green cover).

Alternatively, contact any of the District Officers who will be more than willing to help. One word of warning, always phone the tower contact beforehand to check they are practising.

Please remember that the Lewisham District is there to help all ringers in the District. It is, however, a voluntary organisation and people give their help out of their spare time. If you want to improve your ringing, an element of self-help is required. Making the effort to get out and about is important. If you show that you are keen and prepared to put yourself out, others will be prepared to put themselves out to help you.

Jeremy Byers



"Hand me the Hairdryer"

Call Change Competition

St Mary the Virgin, Downe

on

Saturday 15th November

Draw 2.30 p.m.

Ring 120 rows of call changes

Entries to the Secretary by 8th November

Eltham Ringers Proudly Present...

A GRAND QUIZ NIGHT

On
Sat. November 29th
at
St. John the Baptist Church Hall
from
8.00 pm

£5 per person.
Maximum 8 people per team.
Proceeds to the Bell Restoration Fund.

To book your place or for more information contact Len Morley on 020 8319 0051

- ▶ Prizes for the winning team
- ▶ Fabulous raffle prizes
- ▶ Light refreshments included

Christmas on the Home Front

St Martins, Chelsfield, is up to about £144,000 but is still busily fund-raising in its quest to raise £265,000 for an extension to its church which will include kitchen and cloakroom facilities. So, a way to go yet and we have a time constraint too, as building permission is only given for, I think, 3 years before we have to re-apply which would be quite a rigmarole. Also, of course, costs keep rising so the longer we take the more money we'd need to raise.

We would be delighted should anyone wish to join us for 'Christmas on the Home Front' on Saturday 25th October at our village hall in Chelsfield.

Angela Wilkins



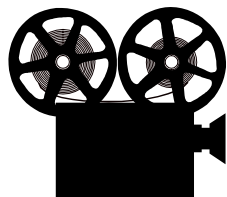
Christmas on the Home Front
Saturday 25th October at 7.30pm, Chelsfield Village Hall

When war broke out in September 1939 it was not uncommon, once again, to hear the remark "It'll be all over by Christmas. There would, in fact, be five Christmases before it was all over.



Summer holidays were done away with, Guy Fawkes night disappeared but Christmas remained special. Whatever happened: shortages, rationing, evacuation and the blitz, Britain would celebrate Christmas.

Mike Brown looks at the increasing difficulties of doing this and how the people of Britain got round them, or got on in spite of them.



With the help of artefacts, through the words of the people themselves, through the use of the 'helpful hints' and adverts in newspapers and magazines they read, and the newsreels of the period, well known author of many wartime related books, Mike Brown, will be giving a talk on this festive wartime subject.

Do please join us for what will be a very interesting and informative evening. Mike Brown is a particularly good speaker and I'm sure will bring home some very poignant and vivid memories for some of you.

Tickets £5.00, including refreshments,
available from Anne Mead Tel: 01689 826***
or Angela Wilkins Tel: 01689 8765***
In aid of St Martins, Chelsfield, Extension Fund.

PSP Concert

Please support this event.....

Many of you will know my husband, Jim Pailing, who has been unable to ring since, five years ago, he developed the rare condition known as Progressive Supranuclear Palsy (PSP). This disease was first described in 1964. The effects are very serious and extensive for the sufferer and yet there really is no treatment for it other than partial alleviation of the symptoms. At the moment, there seems to be no recognisable cause for the condition which results in lack of balance, mobility, eyesight, speech, and the ability to swallow. It is urgent that funds should be raised for further research.

The PSP Association was formed nearly 10 years ago and the aim, for the tenth anniversary in 2004, is to raise the profile of PSP among the medical profession and the public in general. More importantly, the Association has set itself to raise half a million pounds.

As our response to this challenge we are most grateful to **Stephen Davies** and the **Sine Nomine Choir** who are offering the proceeds of their **Christmas Carol Concert** to the PSP Association. You are warmly welcomed to this concert which will be held in **St George's Church, Bickley, at 8pm on Friday 19th December, 2003**. Programmes at the door will cost £6 and £3 for those in wheelchairs, children and young people.



We should like to thank Fr David Herbert, Vicar of St George's, for permission to use the church.

I know that it will be a memorable occasion and I do hope that Lewisham District ringers will be able to attend. It would be fun to welcome lots of familiar faces so please put it in your diary now! If you can't manage to come but would like to make a donation of £6 instead, just send me a cheque made out to the PSP Association and I will forward it. Donations will be acknowledged in the next edition of the newsletter, together with a concert report.

Jean Pailing
* Adcock Walk, Orpington, Kent BR6 9SY.
Tel. 01689 856***



NEWS FROM THE TOWERS

ASH-BY-WROTHAM

Practice Thursday 20:00

BECKENHAM

Practice Thursday 19:50

Beckenham tower is looking cleaner - well nearly!

The top half of the 17 foot drop has been painted a very pleasant shade of white, unfortunately the summer break means work has temporarily slowed. Only the bottom 6 feet of wall to go.

Other improvements include fixing the fans to wall shelves which has improved ventilation particularly for those ringing around the back end.

If you can face ringing in a part decorated ringing room please pop in to see us.

At the moment we are still finding our feet after the summer holidays. Last night saw methods rung from Bob Doubles, Bob Minor, through to Stedman Triples, Bristol Major, 5 spliced Major, Stedman, Grandsire Caters and Call Changes on ten.

If you fancy any of these, please come along and join us.

Jeremy Byers

BEXLEY

Practice Thursday 20:00

BICKLEY

Practice Wednesday 19:30

We have recently changed our ringing times at Bickley to 7.30-8.30 p.m. on Wednesday evenings.

We are still keen to welcome new ringers or visitors on a Wednesday evening but do please check by phone that ringing is on. Either to Elizabeth Cruickshank (Sec) or Jeremy Clitheroe (Tower Capt.) on 020 8467 2*** or Valerie Cruickshank (Vice Capt.) on 020 8460 1***.

Elizabeth Cruickshank

BIGGIN HILL

Practice Wednesday 20:00

We did it! Jenne, Julian and I scored our first peal. The ringing went smoothly (mostly) for two hours, then a momentary loss of concentration and disaster loomed! Fortunately the steadiness of Jenne on the treble and the cool wits of Nick conducting got us back into place. It must have been less than a minute of panic, but it seemed like hours. I was a little consoled to realise that we novices were not the only ones prone to error. The details of the peal are:

2nd August, 2003,
St Mark's, Biggin Hill
5040 Plain Bob Minor (7 different extents)
in 2 hours and 32 minutes

Treble	Jennifer H Gay*
2	David H Kingston (Bromley)
3	Vernon J Benning (Brasted)
4	Julian J Hemper (Eynsford)*
5	Nancy E Gay*
Tenor	Nicholas Wilkins (Chelsfield)
* first attempt	

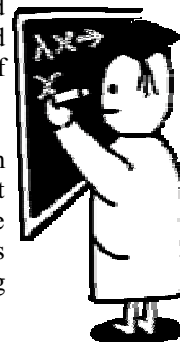
In celebration of the engagement of Jenne Gay to Jeremy Johnson.

Many thanks to the friends from other towers who braved the heat to ring with us.

Prior to the peal we rang two quarters, one unsuccessful, but good practice. The other, rung on 29th July, Plain Bob Minor, was Jenne's first Minor (on the 5th). The good folk of Biggin Hill seemed to take it all in good humour (only one complaint to the vicar), but we are aware that we need to be considerate as the bells are loud and in a residential area.

This summer, two of our junior ringers graduated to the wedding band. Rachel and Jess both proved their steadiness at Call Changes and earned every penny of their fee and every syllable of our praise. Well done!

We welcome a new learner to chum Fred in his learning process. Alan Skinner is from St Augustine's (one little bell, seldom rung). He began learning at the Millennium, but was not encouraged at the time. He is progressing rapidly and we all enjoy his company.



Painting, Beckenham Style

In mid-August we visited St Mary Cray on one practice night. Fred and Alan were delighted to have the opportunity to ring on very different bells and to have some good advice from Nigel. We thank Nigel and Don and their ringers for allowing us to descend on them en-masse.

Nancy Gay

BROMLEY

Practice Tuesday 20:00

BROMLEY COMMON

Practice Thursday 19:45

We have just installed a bell in the ringing room for alerting us when we have ringers/visitors after the door to the church is locked on practice night or other occasions. The previous installation was ripped out by some busybody years ago who was obviously unaware of its purpose. The bell push button is situated in the porch by the main entrance door of the church on Bromley Common but once rung entry is via the side door in Southlands Road. Vistors always welcome.



Chris Lawrance

CHELSEFIELD

Practice Monday 20:00

We have continued with practices throughout the summer including the August Bank Holiday Monday.

We are blessed with a number of visitors on practice nights who are most welcome and often in total we have 18-20 ringers in attendance. Ringing ranges from Rounds and Call Changes up to Cambridge, Norwich and London.

Sometimes we ring spliced Minor and when we don't ring it, it is usually because we have run out of time rather than not having the necessary ringers!



At the time of typing this article we have rung twelve quarter peals at Chelsfield this year which have so far included 12 local ringers and 8 others.

Some of the quarters have enabled us to ring Norwich or Spliced Plain & Little Bob, for example, so consolidating some of the things that we ring on practice nights but allowing us to ring them for a more prolonged period.

Our junior ringers continue to ring for the Family Service from 9.00 to 9.45am on Sunday mornings. There are more than half a dozen 9-11 year olds who are ringing in a controlled way up to Rounds and Call Changes. Whilst

Chelsfield bells may not be easy to strike, they are certainly quite easy to ring. The youngsters' challenge is to be able to go elsewhere, e.g. Downe, where the Call Change Striking Competition is to be held, and ring such bells from the ground floor with the necessary degree of control. Early in May a few of them went to Horton Kirby and Chalk on a specially organised outing. For those that know these bells, they are ideal for youngsters and enabled them to gain in confidence and improve their bell control techniques.

Many readers will be aware that we are fund raising at Chelsfield in order to put a much needed extension on the church; we require approximately £265,000. I have said that at the end of 2003 I will contribute to the fund raising effort £1 for every different ringer that achieves a quarter peal at Chelsfield during the year.

Try making it expensive for me! (All requests subject to the Rector's approval.)



Nick Wilkins

CHISLEHURST (Annunciation)

Practice 1st Wednesday 19:30

CHISLEHURST (St Nicholas)

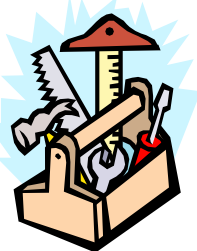
Practice Wednesday 20:00 (1st Wednesday at Annunciation)

CRAYFORD

Practice Tuesday 19:45

We have been quite an industrious lot at Crayford. The ringing room has been completely redecorated and looks, we are proud to say, quite stylish. We opted for yellow in the end and it has certainly brightened things up. The peal boards have been re-arranged in an artistic fashion that I am sure would please Lawrence Llewellyn-Bowen! The place was also given a good clean and general tidy up. Rupert used his skill at carpentry to devise an ingenious little cupboard so we can stow our bits and pieces; so all in all, we are pleased with the general effect.

As to ringing, we have had mixed fortunes. On the plus side, our two recruits Vanessa and Mark are still with us and progressing well. On the obverse side, we rarely get enough to venture into Triples, so content ourselves with Doubles methods and have branched out into the more obscure varieties to make life more interesting. We are on track for ringing a quarter a month, which had been a goal we had set ourselves earlier in the year. We rely very much on visitors, particularly on practice nights, so if any of you fancy a



trip out on a Tuesday evening, not only can we promise nice surroundings but a warm welcome into the bargain.

The new practice time of 7.45-9.15pm is proving to be much more beneficial, now that our vociferous neighbour has decided to move on; could we have had anything to do with this? Perish the thought!

Andrew Sinclair

CUDHAM

Practice Monday (except 1st) 19:45 Joint Practice with Downe

DARTFORD

Practice Wednesday 20:00

DEPTFORD

DOWNE

Practice 1st Monday 20:00 Joint Practice with Cudham

ELTHAM

Practice Tuesday 20:00

It has been a quiet summer at Eltham. Although we have managed to ring every Sunday morning, there have been a couple of Tuesdays when we have had insufficient ringers to have a practice, owing to holidays and the like. The extreme heat has probably played a part as well. I am sure this is a common problem across the District, but it would be nice to have enough ringers to ensure this doesn't happen!

In July, there occurred the death of arguably the most famous person ever to have been born in Eltham - Bob Hope, who died in the USA two months after his 100th birthday. We decided to mark the event by ringing a quarter peal on August 10th, on what turned out to be the hottest day since records began! The temperature downriver at Gravesend reached 100.6 degrees Fahrenheit, but with the aid of three fans in the ringing chamber we managed to ring a respectable quarter of Bob Triples (yes, we did choose the method on purpose). To make matters worse, Peter Skinner's car broke down that morning, so instead of ringing he spent most of the day sitting at Chislehurst waiting for a truck to tow him away. Many thanks go to Mark Humphries, who agreed to ring in the quarter at two hours' notice.

Finally, on the 9th of August, some enthusiastic members of the band went on



a rather sunny walk along the South Downs near Wye. I was unable to go, but understand that the usual good time was had by all, despite the heat.

David Holdridge

ERITH (Christ Church)

Practice Monday 20:00

The afternoon of Saturday 6th September saw most members of our band on a half-day outing to Ightham (6, 7cwt), Shipbourne (6, 9 cwt) and Hadlow (8, 12 cwt). We had asked to ring at West Malling but they were only available before 1pm due to neighbour problems.

Ightham has a fairly new ringing gallery but access is by a modern creaky loft ladder. Shipbourne has a roomy ringing chamber and a clock that used to chime a course of Grandsire Doubles every three hours. Sadly, the clock is now electric and the chime hammers no longer work. The common opposite was a pleasant spot for our tea break.

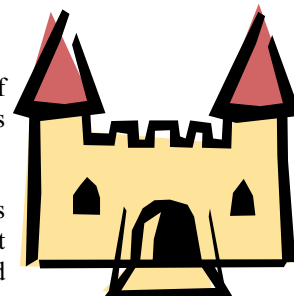
The large tower/folly of Hadlow Castle rather overshadows the church here. A small change in personnel before Hadlow, with a net gain of one, gave us a few more options when ringing the eight bells. This is where Philip and Emma Jarvis (ex-Bexley) now ring but they were away on holiday so we did not meet.

Our thanks go to all those who met us and made the arrangements locally.

Other news in brief:

We rang a quarter peal of Grandsire Doubles in 44 minutes on July 20th.

A team of Christchurch ringers won the Christchurch Quiz Night in August – maintaining our good record in this field!



Two of our band are off to University- Christopher Backhouse to Oxford and Adrian Lucia to Leicester. We wish them well in their studies and look forward to seeing them during the vacations. We are delighted that two young learners, Paul and Laura, have joined us. We hope they remain enthusiastic and develop as ringers.

Elizabeth Brett

ERITH (St John the Baptist)

Practice Wednesday 20:00

EYNSFORD

Practice Friday 20:00

FARNINGHAM

Practice Wednesday 20:00 by arrangement

FOOTS CRAY

Practice Wednesday 20:00

GREENWICH

*Practice 2nd, 3rd and 4th
Wednesday 20:00*

HAYES

Practice Tuesday 20:00

HORTON KIRBY

Practice Thursday

Not a lot has happened in our tower since the last newsletter. We are still struggling with Grandsire Doubles and really appreciate all the help that is being given to us by ringers from Eynsford and Chelsfield who come on a regular basis.

Simon Davies brought a band along in July and rang a peal of 7 Surprise Minor methods to commemorate Mary Andrews 40 years service as Secretary to the Lewisham District and 50 years membership of the KCACR. We were more than happy for this to be rung at our tower as Mary helped us so much when we first started ringing.

On the 26th July the District practice was held at Horton Kirby. It went well apparently but lots of us couldn't make it due to holidays, so can we have another one please, at a different time of year so that more of the home team can go?

We are off on an outing to ring at 5 towers on Romney Marsh shortly and so next time I'll be able to tell you all about that including some, but hopefully not all, of the following:

- The number of camera's we were flashed by (Lesley's driving us in her school minibus, fortunately not the bright green one, although I think that would curb the lunchtime drinking!)
- The number of broken stays we leave in our wake (our tower captain's coming!)
- The number of times we get lost, or argue about which way is best (not sure who's navigating but it won't be me!)

Sue Allport

LEWISHAM

Practice 5th Wednesday

PENGE

Ringling by arrangement

ST MARY CRAY

Practice Wednesday 19:45

SHOREHAM

Practice Monday 20:00

One year on we are still ringing and making good progress, even if sometimes it doesn't feel that way. Are Call Changes always such a frustrating nightmare?

We have been able to continue practice nights and Sunday ringing throughout the summer despite holidays and have had the support of Frank to achieve this. Frank's new churchwarden duties call for more of his time and Philippa Rooke from Chelsfield tower has stepped in to assist us. We have done the theory of Plain Hunt and

some of us managed it on the handbells. Hardly the same thing I know but still an achievement. Never a tower to be put off, we are doggedly determined to learn to ring up and down in peal.

Monday night saw the first ringing for Ann, our new recruit. What a strange feeling to suddenly not all be the newest kids on the block!

If anyone would like to ring with us we are always pleased to see visitors and groups can be accommodated by prior arrangement.

Yvonne Avery

SIDCUP

Practice Wednesday 20:00

WEST WICKHAM

Practice Wednesday 20:00

Practices and Sunday ringing have been a bit sporadic due to summer holidays, but we had a very enjoyable BBQ on 13th July in glorious sunshine.

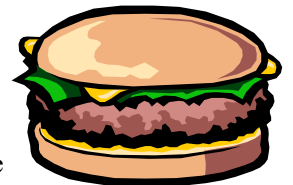
Judith Fry

WOOLWICH

Practice 1st Wednesday 20:00



EYNSFORD.
THE OLD BRIDGE AND TUDOR COTTAGES. CIRCA 1910



Church, the bell and a threat of dead ringers

The peal of church bells across a village green is a quintessentially English sound, conjuring up visions of maids on bicycles and farmers resting on gate posts.

But in the West Sussex village of Upper Beeding, a vigorous display by visiting bell-ringers provoked two infuriated villagers to issue a death threat over the telephone.

The Rev Timothy L'Estrange, rector of the parish of Beeding, Bramber and Botolphs, said: "The verger was a bit surprised, to say the least. By the time she had received the fourth phone call that afternoon we thought it wise to call the police"

The invitation from the parish to the Oxford bell-ringers had been expected to produce a welcome reaction from residents. But moments after the first bell rang from the 14th century church, one retired couple made the first of several complaints.

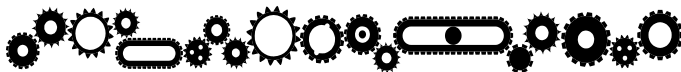
Mr L'Estrange said of the threats: "In one, the caller said, 'If you don't stop ringing the bells we're going to come up there and kill you.'" Police took the threat seriously enough to trace the calls to a cottage on the edge of the village, near Steyning.

Gerald McCarthy, 74, immediately admitted to officers that he and his wife, Irene, were responsible for the complaints - but they had no regrets. "We had to put up with about three-and-a half hours of bell-ringing," he said. "I told the vicar I hoped his bell ringers dropped dead."

"If it had been a rave or a youngster playing music at that level they would have certainly and quite rightly got into trouble. I don't see why the heavenly bodies should be exempt."

A police spokesman said: "We spoke to both parties and the situation was amicably resolved."

From The Evening Standard, 3rd September 2003



From the magazine of the churches of the Wantage Downs (Berkshire)

a) Always remember: you are unique, just like everybody else.

b) A professor of English wrote on the blackboard - "woman without her man is nothing" and asked his students to punctuate it correctly. The men wrote: "Woman, without her man, is nothing.". The women wrote: "Woman! Without her, man is nothing.".

MECHANICAL FUN

Never let it be said that ground crews and engineers lack a sense of humour. Here are some actual logged maintenance complaints by QANTAS pilots and the corrective action recorded by mechanics. By the way, Qantas is the only major airline that has never had an accident. P stands for the Problem the pilots entered in the log and S stands for the Corrective Action taken by the mechanics.

P: Left inside main tyre almost needs replacement.
S: Almost replaced left inside main tyre.

P: Test flight OK, except autoland very rough.
S: Autoland not installed on this aircraft.

P: Something loose in cockpit.
S: Something tightened in cockpit.

P: Dead bugs on windshield.
S: Live bugs on backorder.



P: Autopilot in altitude-hold mode produces a 200-fpm descent.
S: Cannot reproduce problem on ground.

P: Evidence of leak on right main landing gear.
S: Evidence removed.

P: DME volume unbelievably loud.
S: DME volume set to more believable level.

P: Friction locks cause throttle levers to stick.
S: That's what they're there for!

P: IFF inoperative.
S: IFF always inoperative in OFF mode.



P: Suspected crack in windscreen.
S: Suspect you're right.

P: Number 3 engine missing. (note: this was for a piston-engined airplane; the pilot meant the engine was not running smoothly)
S: Engine found on right wing after brief search.

P: Aircraft handles funny.
S: Aircraft warned to straighten up, fly right, and be serious.

P: Radar hums.
S: Reprogrammed radar with words.

P: Mouse in cockpit.
S: Cat installed



10th Victory for the District

Saturday 28th June saw another victory for the Lewisham District in the 8 bell Striking Competition at Benenden to bring up the district's 10th victory in the last 19 years.

The band drawn from Lewisham District, comprising David Brown, Chris Webb, Ian Mills, Mark Jones, Peter Swift, David Holdridge, Jeremy Byers and our esteemed Master James Hardy, had gone in to ring last of the five teams that entered and came away victorious.

This year's test piece of 240 changes of Stedman Triples, proved to be tougher than all had thought, as the bells at Benenden were described by the judges as "a pleasant 8 but unforgiving and hard to ring well". The Lewisham band was the better prepared than it had been for a number of years, having practised at St Sepulchre's - the church of the Old Bailey in London. The original

practice was planned when the venue was expected to be Tenterden, and we were expecting to do battle on a 27cwt eight. A late change of tower for mechanical reasons meant we ended up at Benenden a mere 18cwt. I think the entire band will remember the terrible attempt to try and practice on bells of a similar weight, when we rang on the 4th to 11th bells at St Sepulchre's - never to be repeated or mentioned again. Even so, pulling off in the 2 minutes practice at Benenden came as a shock to us all - stretchy ropes instantly removed any confidence we had when went into the tower. The judges later described our practice as "Band E tried to ring Stedman".

The results were as follows, in order of ringing:

Team A - Rochester 122 Faults.

A hesitant piece of ringing that was unsteady and slow, scoring faults evenly throughout.

Time: 10 mins 15 secs (Peal speed 3hrs 35 minutes)

Team B - Tonbridge 49 Faults.

Several initial hesitations but settled to a good rhythm.

Time: 9 mins 34 secs (Peal speed 3hrs 21 minutes)

Team C - Canterbury 56 Faults.

Initially not very rhythmical but it did improve - overall it lacked finesse.

Time: 9 mins 2 secs (Peal speed 3hrs 10 minutes)

Team D - Ashford 48 Faults.

A much faster piece of ringing with a good rhythm if a little rushed. The 6th was driven in, but at times the 7th couldn't keep up.

Time: 8 mins 24 secs (Peal speed 2hrs 56 minutes)

Team E - Lewisham 35 Faults.

Steady and very confident. Two small method mistakes and it could possibly have gone faster.

Time: 9 mins 36 secs (Peal speed 3hrs 22 minutes)

From reviewing the results you can see one important factor - Lewisham did not ring quickly, indeed the Lewisham prize for quick ringing goes to Ashford District this year.

Thanks go to the organisers, the tea providers at Benenden, and the judges Ian Smith and Gerald Sandwell of the Sussex Association. I would like to thank all the members of the band for giving up their time to come out and practice - I think the end result was worth it.

Jeremy Byers



"Of course it stopped. It only had a lifetime guarantee."



The victorious Lewisham District team, well, 62.5 % of them.
(another 12.5% can be seen on page 6)

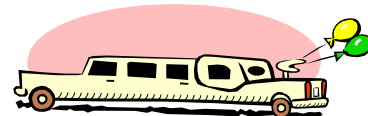
PEALS RUNG IN THE DISTRICT

Date	Place	Changes	Method	RW page no.
20 April 2003	Eynsford	5152	Yorkshire Surprise Major	03/853
14 June 2003	Chislehurst Ann.	5152	Glasgow Surprise Major	03/637
19 July 2003	Horton Kirby	5040	Surprise Minor 7m.	03/758
02 August 2003	Biggin Hill	5040	Plain Bob Minor	03/807

All four peals were rung for the KCACR.

Congratulations to:

Jenne Gay (Treble), Julian Hemper (4th) and Nancy Gay (5th) who rang their first peal at the first attempt in the Plain Bob Minor at Biggin Hill.



QUARTERS RUNG IN THE DISTRICT

Date	Place	Changes	Method	RW page no.
04 May 2003	Bexley	1260	Plain Bob Triples	03/615
08 June 2003	Eynsford	1250	Yorkshire Surprise Major	03/619
13 June 2003	Bromley	1280	Bristol Surprise Major	03/835
14 June 2003	Dartford	1260	Reverse Canterbury Doubles	03/641
15 June 2003	Eltham	1260	Doubles 4m.	03/664
21 June 2003	Chelsfield	1279	Doubles 4m.	03/835
29 June 2003	Chelsfield	1260	Plain Bob Minor	03/835
05 July 2003	Chelsfield	1260	Doubles 4m.	03/835
11 July 2003	Erith Ch Ch	1250	Cambridge Surprise Major	03/836
13 July 2003	Beckenham	1263	Stedman Caters	03/736
20 July 2003	West Wickham	1296	Cambridge Surprise Minor	03/786
21 July 2003	Crayford	1260	Doubles 6m.	03/736
29 July 2003	Biggin Hill	1260	Plain Bob Minor	03/834
31 July 2003	Chelsfield	1260	Plain Bob Minor	03/835
10 August 2003	Eltham	1260	Plain Bob Triples	03/856
03 September 2003	Chelsfield	1260	Doubles 5m.	

Congratulations to :

Jenne Gay who rang the 5th to Plain Bob at Biggin Hill for her first of Minor.

Brenda Barton who rang her first on the Treble and Debra Say and Andrew Sinclair their first in the method in the Reverse Canterbury at Dartford.

Debra Say and Andrew Sinclair who rang their most Doubles, 6 methods at Crayford.

Christopher Backhouse who rang the 2nd at Erith for his first of Cambridge Major.

Lesley Barclay who rang the Treble for her first on 8 and David Brown the 6th for his first of Bristol in the quarter at Bromley.

Kathryn Morgan and Jeremy Byers who rang the 5th and 6th at Beckenham for their first of Stedman Caters.

Vernon Benning who has circled the tower to quarters at Chelsfield.

From The Ringing World up to edition No.4819 September 5, 2003.

Jim Rooke





KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS



LEWISHAM DISTRICT

Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting held at St. John's Sidcup on Saturday, 12th July 2003

The Chairman, David Holdridge, welcomed everyone to the meeting and went on to thank Mark Jones for chairing the April meeting.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Sara Hardy from Beckenham, Louise and Monica Hanscomb from Biggin Hill, Nicholas Wilkins from Chelsfield, Roger Long from St. Nicholas, Chislehurst, Andrew Sinclair from Crayford, Brenda Barton, Esther Correia, Deryck Jones, Peter Rose and Marian Wansbury from Dartford, Mark, Rachel, Christopher and Robert Backhouse from Christ Church Erith, and Freda Cannon and the Greenwich band.



2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting, which had been circulated, were confirmed and signed on the proposition of Jeremy Byers, seconded by James Hardy.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Website

James Hardy said that the website had been updated and would be updated again shortly.

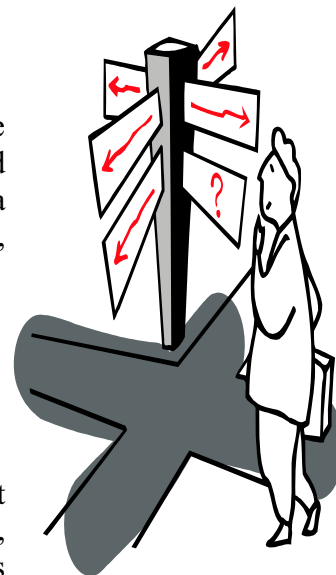
Annual General Meeting

It was reported that the motion regarding attendance at County Committee Meetings, which had originated as a request from this District, had been discussed at the Annual General Meeting. The main part had been passed, although a second motion, which would have reduced still further the size of the Committee, had been rejected.

4. CORRESPONDENCE

Shoreham

Since the last meeting there had been some discussion of the situation at Shoreham, arising from an e-mail from Catherine Lewis of the Tonbridge District, who had been helping out with the newly-formed band, along with Frank Rogers of Eynsford. Frank was having to reduce his commitment and, as she was unable to help out on a more regular basis, Catherine suggested that experienced help was needed for the band to





make progress. She also wondered whether the tower would be better served by transferring to the Tonbridge District. James Hardy did not think that this would necessarily assist them. He felt that since the tower was in our District we should help and asked if there was anyone who would be prepared to do so regularly, but not necessarily every week, to get in touch with him. It was felt that if we were able to provide regular help then we would be allowed to run the practice and it was agreed that efforts should be made to make suitable arrangements.

Quarter Peal Day at Dover - 16th August

The District had been invited to send a band to Dover to take part in the Quarter Peal Day there on 16th August to mark the completion of work on the bells. James Hardy agreed to make the arrangements.

5. ELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS

There were no new members but some of those elected in April and had not been able to attend that meeting, were welcomed.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS



E-mails

Nancy Gay complained about the huge amount of 'rubbish' on the District "Yahoo" mailing list and made a fervent plea that the mailing list should be reserved for information which is of interest to everyone. It was agreed that individual e-mail addresses should be used for everything else.

Training Sub-Committee

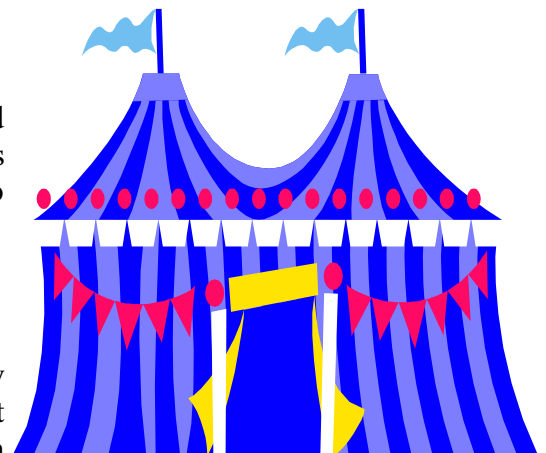
Philippa Rooke drew attention to the Training Sub-Committee poster. Copies of this were available for each tower from the Secretary.

Dartford Show

Andrew Boyd-Bell wondered if any members would be interested in a District presence at the Dartford Show in 2004, which was held each year at the end of July. It was agreed that anyone who was interested in this venture should get in touch with Andrew.

County Committee Meeting

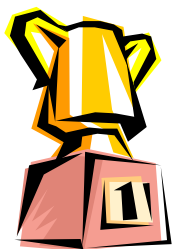
Len Morley said that someone had pointed out that the County website refers at one point to "Conditions of Membership", but these do not exist. This would be one of the topics for discussion at the forthcoming County Committee Meeting. Members felt that 'Conditions of Membership' were the same as 'Rules' - and, if necessary, the website should be amended to refer to these. Also, under this heading, it was mentioned that funding was available for training but that it was necessary to bid for it.



Other matters concerned the need for ringers for a wedding at The Annunciation, Chislehurst, on 19th July and details were given of a practice at Beckenham on the same day. Venues for practices were asked for

and Sidcup was offered.

Eight-Bell Striking Competition



The District offered its warm congratulations to the team that had won the County Eight-Bell Striking Competition, at Benenden, by a comfortable margin.

Vote of Thanks

The Chairman offered a warm vote of thanks to the Vicar of Sidcup, Canon Paul Wright, for the use of the bells, to the Curate, Gareth Beresford-Jones, for taking the service, to Lynton Cope for playing the organ and to the Sidcup ringers for making the local arrangements.



KCACR Meeting At Leeds 23.8.03

The following issues were discussed:-

Publicity

The KCACR flyer has now been revised.

The display panels are due to be updated, Frank Lewis is seeking ideas for themes for the display or anything that might be of interest.

Some discussion took place about the condition of the display panels and generally felt we could benefit from some new ones. If anyone is aware of any organisation seeking to upgrade their present display facilities leaving the old ones possibly seeking a new home please let me know.

Handbooks

The Secretary desperately requires spare copies of the handbook to send off the usual complimentary copies.

There was some discussion about delivery problems experienced this year. In future the District Secretary will be asked to provide a suitable address where someone will be in during the day to accept delivery.

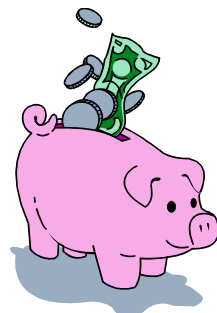


Webmaster Report

Reported that there has now been over 16000 hits, it was felt this was effective publicity but he desperately requires news from the Districts. If you have anything please contact Frank Lewis.

B.R.F.Grant

4k was approved for Boughton under Blean, the work here includes recasting the treble and two, all bells to be rehung in existing frame with new fittings.



125th Anniversary Service and Dinner

Date set for 21st May 2005, service to be at Canterbury Cathedral followed by a group photo afterwards, a quarter peal to be rung as a service touch followed by a meal. Originally it was suggested that a dinner might be appropriate but after consideration, the feasibility of lunch will now be investigated, as this is more likely to suit outlying Districts such as ours.

Membership Database

This has been talked about for a long time. Someone asked why we need one. Following much discussion, it was agreed that Peter Dale will be asked to analysis the issue before presenting a set of proposals. If anyone has a strong view either for or against a database please let me know.

District Membership Rules

The purpose here is to formalise the minimum standard acceptable before a new ringer can be proposed to join the association. The meeting agreed that a ringer must be able to ring Rounds and Call Changes as well as being able to ring a bell up and down on his/her own.

Substitute District Representatives

Much discussion took place about this before eventual acceptance that any committee member (those listed in the handbook) could attend as a substitute, providing they introduced themselves at the beginning of the meeting and explained who they were standing in for.

Recruitment and Young Ringers

Lots of discussion about this, clearly every District felt they had a problem in this area. It was decided that each District should be asked to appoint one representative to join a working party to research this issue before coming up with a set of proposals.

Len Morley

Calling All Singers

The District Carol Service will this year be held on Saturday 13th December at St George's Beckenham at 4.30pm. As usual we are going to have a choir and I shall have the privilege of organising and directing it.

The repertoire will be straightforward and I hope well-known. We will also need to have a few rehearsals (probably three or four) and I will attempt to organise them on different days of consecutive weeks so that practice nights don't get too much in the way.

If you're interested in singing please let me know on mark1.



jones@virgin.net or telephone me on 020 8467 2*** or 07790 006***.

If you do not feel that your greatest talents are in the vocal department then come along anyway and sing gustily in the congregation and support the choir at St George's on 13th December.

Mark Jones



ORGAN RECITAL

in aid of Brasted Bell Restoration Project

There will be a concert by Paul Isom, organist at St Martin's Brasted, on Saturday 18th October at 7.30 in the church. It will include music written around a bell theme as well as other organ music and should appeal to all. This is a rare opportunity to hear Brasted's fine Walker organ, which was only completed in 1992. Tickets £5 from 01959 563*** or on the door. Wine and nibbles available.

District Events and Special Methods

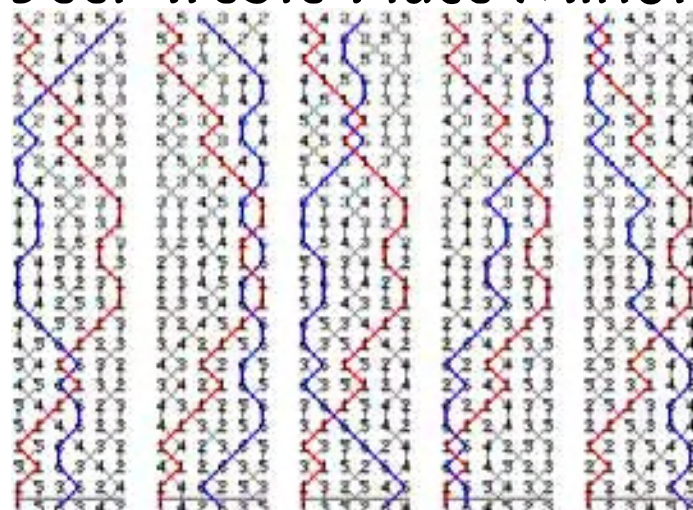
Sat. 11th Oct Annual District Meeting: Bexley, 3p.m. bell, 4.30p.m. service, tea and meeting. Evening ringing at Eltham

Sat 25th Oct District Practice: Erith, Christ Church, 7-9p.m.
Special Methods: Call Changes, Grandsire and Stedman.

Sat 15th Nov Call Change Competition: Downe, 2.30pm draw.

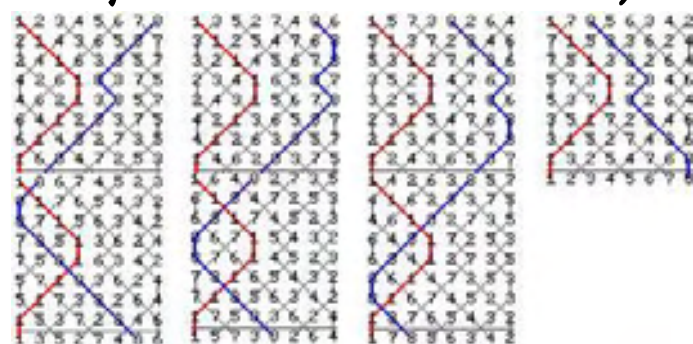
Sat 15th Nov District Practice: Chelsfield, 7-9p.m.
Special Methods: Call Changes, Plain Bob and Beer Treble Place Minor

Beer Treble Place Minor



Sat 6th Dec District Practice: Crayford, 7-9pm
Special Methods: Call Changes, Grandsire, Crayford Little Bob Major.

Crayford Little Bob Major



Sat 13th Dec District Carol Service: Beckenham, 4.30p.m.

Sat 10th Jan District Meeting: TBA, 3p.m. bells, 4.30p.m. service.

Sat 24th Jan District Practice: Beckenham, 7-9p.m.