



# LEWISHAM DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

www.lewishamdistrict.fsnet.co.uk - Home of the Lewisham District on line

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

APRIL 2005

## Beckenham's striking success

On 5<sup>th</sup> March, five towers made the trip out to Biggin Hill, venue for the 2005 6 bell striking competition. This challenging six was made even more so by new ropes that were put on only the week before.

Michael Moreton stepped in at the last minute to judge the competition. He was relieved to find out that there were only 5 teams taking part as last time he had judged a competition there had been 13!

He made the following comments about each of the bands:

Team 1 – The little bells were often a bit quick.

Team 2 – There was no gap at the lead.

Team 3 – Good sound and the end of the change was not too rushed

Team 4 – One bell was consistently too quick but there was a good general rhythm.

Team 5 – Pretty good but one bell too quick at the lead.

He then gave out the result:

Position	Tower	Faults	Rank
1 <sup>st</sup>	Beckenham	48	5 <sup>th</sup>
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Chelsfield	54	3 <sup>rd</sup>
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Eynsford & Farningham	94	2 <sup>nd</sup>
4 <sup>th</sup>	Eltham	101	4 <sup>th</sup>
5 <sup>th</sup>	Crayford	180	1 <sup>st</sup>



Congratulations to Beckenham on winning the trophy for the third time by edging out 12 times champions Chelsfield. They will now go on to represent the District in the County 6 bell competition in



September in the Maidstone District (at least it's not at Penge!!). Also, thanks go to Nancy Gay and her team for providing the excellent tea (hopefully there will be no complaints about the ringing in the papers this time!).

Rupert Cheeseman



Michael Moreton presents Jim Hardy with the trophy

## Next District Event

**District Meeting**  
**SS Peter and Paul, Bromley**  
**on**  
**Saturday 9th April**

Bells 3.00 p.m. Service 4.30 p.m.

Names for tea to

Chris Webb on 01322 667\*\*\*

or chris@cwebb88.fsnet.co.uk

**by Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> April please.**

# Chairman's Bit

With Easter fast approaching I've been racking my brain for something to write about for the Newsletter.

In the hope of finding inspiration I looked back at David Holdridge's article in the Easter 2004 edition. Apparently it is good practice to congratulate the winning band of the 6-bell method competition – last year this happened to be Eltham, this year Beckenham - so no inspiration there.

However I would like to thank all the teams who entered teams, the host tower Biggin Hill and particularly the judge Michael Moreton for taking the time to make it an enjoyable (as enjoyable as taking part in any competition can be) afternoon.

As the days start to get longer and hopefully warmer I would ask you to think about booking the following dates in your diary:

8<sup>th</sup> May 2005      60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VE Day

14<sup>th</sup> May 2005 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Service and celebratory luncheon in Canterbury for the KCACR

Hopefully you will feel moved to ring for VE day and possibly attend either the service in Canterbury Cathedral or attend the special lunch to celebrate our 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary for the KCACR.

Finally I look forward to seeing you at future district events – if you are ever at a loose end on the second Saturday in the month there is normally a district practice somewhere – finding out where it is may take a phone call though.

Jeremy Byers (see photo below for those that don't know what our Chairman looks like - Ed)



# Secretary's Bit

The agenda for the meeting is printed in this Newsletter.

The main event in the near future is the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Kent County Association of Change Ringers. Tickets are still available for the lunch at Canterbury on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May at £25.00 a head. If you do not wish to go to the lunch you can still attend the service in Canterbury cathedral on the same day. No tickets are required.

All towers have been asked to celebrate the anniversary by ringing a quarter peal during May. Even if you cannot get a band to do this, try to arrange some ringing to commemorate the anniversary. Please send details of any quarter peals or special ringing to me so that I can co-ordinate them for the district and send them on to David Manger.

I look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

Christine Webb  
District Secretary

# AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the Quarterly District Meeting held at St George's Beckenham on Saturday 8 January 2005
3. Matters arising from the minutes
  - 6 bell Competition
  - Young Ringers' group
4. KCACR Committee Meeting report
  - County insurance policy
  - 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
  - Recruitment & Retention of Ringers
  - Committee report Bell Restoration Fund
5. Bell restoration fund
6. Events – District, County, other
7. Election of new members
8. 120 Club draw
9. Any other business
10. Vote of thanks



# Editorial



18 down and 2 to go (not that we are counting or anything!).

The next district meeting will have something new happen at it - the first draw for the 120 Club. Rachel should be congratulated for finally breaking through the red tape at Bexley Council and getting this up and running. There are still plenty of tickets available and remember non ringers can buy them too (see page 16).

Bexley's Mayor, Cllr John Eastaugh, joined 30 members of the Borough's towers on a tour of their churches. A good day was had by all and a few columns inches was generated in the local papers.

*Rupert and Cathy*



Why do we press harder on a remote control when we know the batteries are flat?

Why do banks charge a fee on "insufficient funds" when they know there is not enough?

Why does someone believe you when you say there are four billion stars, but check when you say the paint is wet?

Why doesn't glue stick to the bottle?

Why do they use sterilised needles for death by lethal injection?

Why doesn't Tarzan have a beard?

Why does Superman stop bullets with his chest, but ducks when you throw a revolver at him?

Why do Kamikaze pilots wear helmets?

Whose idea was it to put an "S" in the word "lisp"?

What is the speed of darkness?

Are there specially reserved parking spaces for "normal" people at the Special Olympics?

If you send someone 'Styrofoam', how do you pack it?

If the temperature is zero outside today and it's going to be twice as cold tomorrow, how cold will it be?

If people evolved from apes, why are there still apes?

If it's true that we are here to help others, what are the others doing here?

Do married people live longer than single ones or does it only seem longer?

If someone with a split personality threatens to commit suicide, is it a hostage situation?

Can you cry under water?

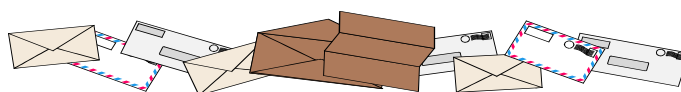
What level of importance must a person have, before they are considered assassinated instead of just murdered?

If money doesn't grow on trees then why do banks have branches?

Why does a round pizza come in a square box?

## In the newsletter this time...

Beckenham's striking success	1
Chairman's and Secretary's Bits	2
Agenda for District Meeting at Bromley	2
Editorial and Contents	3
Bexley's Mayor and Mayoress go ringing!	4
Eltham / Chislehurst Dinner	5
News from the towers- Chelsfield	6
Crayford	6
Eltham	7
Farningham	7
Foots Cray	7
West Wickham	8
Crayford travel East	8
Farningham Surprise Minor	9
Richard Bing RIP	10
Peals and Quarter Peals Rung In The District	12
Minutes of the District Meeting at Beckenham	13
125 in 2005	16
120 Club	16
District Events	16



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

### COPY DEADLINE -

**25<sup>th</sup> June 2005**

to

Rupert and Cathy Cheeseman

\*\* Church Road

Erith

Kent

DA8 1PG

☎ 01322 439\*\*\*

✉ [rupert@crayford42.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:rupert@crayford42.fsnet.co.uk)

✉ [cathy.cheeseman@virgin.net](mailto:cathy.cheeseman@virgin.net)

How is it that we put man on the moon before we figured out it would be a good idea to put wheels on bigger suitcases?

Why is it that people say they "slept like a baby" when babies wake up, like, every two hours?

If a deaf person has to go to court, is it still called a hearing?

Why do people pay to go up tall buildings and then put money in binoculars to look at things on the ground?

Why do doctors, when they ask you to strip, leave the room or close the cubicle curtain while you change? They're still going to see you naked anyway.



# Bexley's Mayor and Mayoress go ringing

When Councillor John Eastaugh, Carol's husband, was appointed Mayor of Bexley last year, he was keen to do something to promote bellringing during his year of office. After some discussion, the six towers in Bexley agreed to hold a joint outing on February 5<sup>th</sup>. The Mayor's office was contacted to make official arrangements for him to attend for part of the day and the local press were informed.

The day started at Sidcup and we were delighted to find that, as well as a number of ringers (both established and beginners), seven non-ringers had turned up to find out more. The Mayor and Mayoress arrived and we started to ring. We spent just under an hour at each tower. Following Sidcup, we went to Foots Cray and then Bexley before breaking for lunch. After lunch, we started at Crayford and then moved on to the two Erith churches. John and Carol joined us again at Christchurch and a photographer also arrived.

By the time we all got to St. John's, a second photographer had appeared and was keen to get photos of our younger ringers peering round the ropes! (Luckily one of the young ringers remembered her safety training – telling the photographer not to pull on the ropes as the bells were up!) The day ended with John Eastaugh having a lesson in bell handling!

The day was a great success. We had no idea at the start how many ringers to expect and we were delighted to welcome 30 ringers of all standards to some or all of the towers. It was particularly nice to see a number of beginners who were able to have their first experience on different bells. It was also good for those of us at the 'intermediate' stage – something we could ring confidently in our home tower was a very different proposition on different bells!

Thanks to all who made the day go so well: to John and Carol, the Mayor and Lady Mayoress, for their support, to those at each tower who made the visitors welcome, to those at Sidcup and St. John's Erith for providing welcome refreshments and finally to Rachel Backhouse for organising the event.

Elizabeth Brett

The bell ringing open day on 5<sup>th</sup> February for the six towers in the Borough of Bexley was a very successful and enjoyable day.

The day began at Sidcup, when a large crowd of both ringers



and spectators crammed itself in to the ringing chamber. We were delighted that the Mayor and Mayoress - Cllr. John and Mrs Carol Eastaugh, joined us to wish us well for the day. The next church to visit was All Saints, Foots Cray where ringing takes place in the nave - so no stairs to climb there. To ring the bells at St Mary's Bexley, it is necessary to go up some steep 'fire escape' steps, thus not entering the church at all.

The lunch break was either

spent in the local pub at Crayford or enjoying a packed lunch in St Paulinus church and then viewing this very interesting building, before ringing commenced again. Erith was our final destination and we were joined once more by the Mayor and Mayoress. We rang

first at Christ Church, where Carol is a ringer, and finally at St John's.



Photographers from two local papers were eagerly awaiting us here. (I hope you have now seen the reports in print!) (see page 5 - Ed)

Thanks to St. John's ringers for the welcome tea and biscuits, and to the Mayor who had

suggested this day in support of his wife's hobby. A small donation was made to him for his nominated charity - The Butterfly appeal (for assisting people in the Borough who are affected by all forms of arthritis - Ed). Thanks also to Rachel from Christ Church, Erith for arranging and co-ordinating a splendid event.

Yvonne Wright

# Eltham / Chislehurst Dinner

Friday 14th January 2005

For the fifth year, the Eltham and Chislehurst ringers' dinner was held at the eighteenth-century Camden Place, one-time home to the Emperor Napoleon III and his family, now rather more prosaically the headquarters of Chislehurst Golf Club. As usual, we were joined by friends from throughout the district, including ringers from Crayford, St Mary Cray, Beckenham, Foots Cray and Chelsfield. In the end, around sixty people sat down to dinner, at tables identified by particular ringing methods - I have been assured that there was no relevance attached to who was sitting at a particular "method"!

Following the meal, we were treated to a very entertaining speech by Michael Murray of Chislehurst, ranging across a range of reminiscences from both his employment in the legal world, to his later time as a ringer. Following this, David Holdridge, Tower Captain at Eltham, gave a resume of the previous years' activities at the two towers, with particular emphasis on the close links between the two bands, both at a ringing and a social level. Eltham in particular were particularly grateful for the help given by Chislehurst ringers on a Sunday morning, while being able to return the favour by ringing at many of the numerous weddings at Chislehurst throughout the year - around 35 in 2004! Outside ringing, not only had Peter Skinner organised several walks on Saturdays during the year, but Len Morley had organised holidays to both Cyprus (with no bells at all!) and the Isle of Wight.

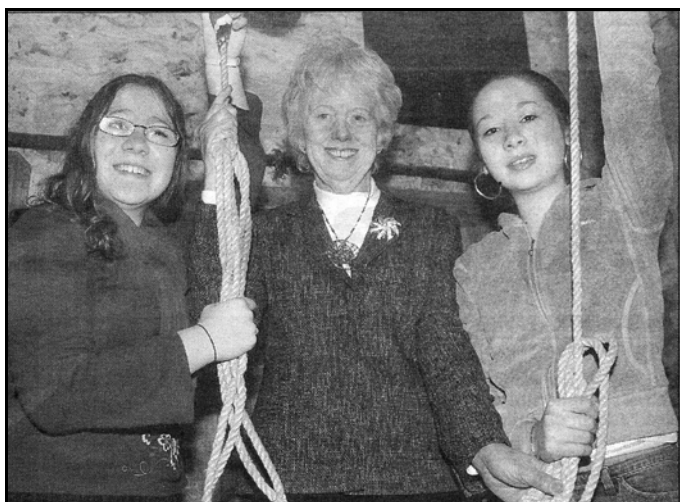


Hilary Smith concluded the formal part of the evening by welcoming the many guests who had joined us. Following this, those present were free either to

retire to the bar, or to listen to - or take part in - some impromptu hand-bell ringing, courtesy of Carolyn Ogilvy.

Our thanks go as always to Len Dumper for organising the dinner, and ensuring that everything ran so smoothly. What started as a one-off event to celebrate the Millennium has become a very enjoyable part of the social calendar.

David Holdridge



Natalie Day, from St Mary's in Bexley, visited Carol Eastaugh, wife of Bexley's mayor, and Laura Coxhall at Erith's Christ Church

## Teams shown the ropes during church visits

The bells were ringing out across the borough when teams of bell-ringers visited each other's towers. The six church teams taking part in the promotional event were St John's in Sidcup, All Saints in Foots Cray, St Mary's in Bexley. St Paulinus in Crayford and Erith's Christchurch and St John the Baptist. Bexley mayor Councillor John Eastaugh visited the Erith churches. His wife Carol is a bellringer at Christchurch. Christchurch tower captain Rachel Backhouse said: "It was a smashing day. We had about 30 people joining in, from teenagers to those in their 70s."

Mrs Backhouse, 44, of Clive Road, Belvedere, comes from a family of bellringers. She said: "My grandfather was bellringing at the end of the First World War. "I met my husband in the belfry and my two sons have been ringing since they were 12."

For more information about bell-ringing, call 01322 439\*\*\*.



Bexley Mayor John Eastaugh tried his hand at bellringing in an event that raised more than £40 for charity.

Bells were sounded in six churches in the borough, and the money was raised for his Butterfly Appeal for arthritis victims.

He pulled the ropes at St John's Church in Erith, and said: "It's not as easy as it looks. You have to get the timing right."

The event was organised by the Lewisham District Bellringers' Association, which his wife,

Mayoress Carol, is a member of.

The Mayor and Mayoress attended three of the sessions, also at St John's Church in Sidcup, and Christ Church in Erith. The three other churches involved were in Bexley village, Foots Cray and Crayford.



---

# NEWS FROM THE TOWERS

## ASH-BY-WROTHAM

*Practice Saturday 9:30am*

## BECKENHAM

*Practice Thursday 19:50*

## BEXLEY

*Practice Thursday 20:00*

## BICKLEY

*Practice Wednesday 19:30*

## BIGGIN HILL

*Practice Wednesday 20:00*

## BROMLEY

*Practice Tuesday 20:00*

## BROMLEY COMMON

*Practice Thursday 19:45*

## CHELSEFIELD

*Practice Monday 20:00*

Ringling has continued much as usual at Chelsfield.

This amounts to regular Sunday ringling by the 'locals' and Monday practices which attract a number of visitors, particularly from Biggin Hill and Horton Kirby.

To enable those that attend Monday practices to have the maximum ringling time, an effort is made to keep the gaps between 'rings' to a minimum. As the evening progresses the ringling becomes more advanced so having started with, for example, Rounds and Call Changes, we usually finish with Spliced Minor.

Due to the continuing 'injuries' to some of our band we have not been able to ring our usual quota of quarter peals. So far this year we have rung just one; St. Martins Doubles on the back five to celebrate their casting 333 years ago in 1672.

On Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> March we held our Chelsfield ringers AGM. Due to pressures on my time from many directions, and after five years as tower captain, I have stood down and been replaced by Bob and Clare Pruden as joint tower captains and Angela Wilkins is deputy tower captain. Other



officers have remained as before.

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*

It has been a varied year so far at Crayford. We had the privilege of being the strongest team (we held all the others up!) in the Striking Competition at Biggin Hill - it's not the winning but the taking part that counts - yes, yes, yawn, yawn. We had an enjoyable outing to Kent in February (see page 8 -Ed). We've managed a couple of quarters and have some young recruits. Alison and Trevor's children, Matthew and Louise, have expressed an interest in learning to ring. At present they are on tied bell practice but look as though they'll pick it up quickly.

We had our AGM in Holy Week; Rupert has been re-elected Tower Captain and we are now looking at ideas as to how to attract new ringers. There is a Summer Fayre in July and we are thinking of opening the tower as an attraction.

Dorothy and Len Bowyer celebrate their Golden Wedding Anniversary on the 2nd April and our warmest celebrations are extended to them. We shall be attempting a quarter in their honour on the 10th April.

Once again our thanks go to Eltham for letting us gate crash on the odd Tuesday.

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*

The year got off to a good start, with the sixth annual

Dinner at Chislehurst Golf Club on 14<sup>th</sup> January, which was as enjoyable as ever.

The following Sunday, we rang a local quarter-peal, which I think is worth recording in full here:

Sunday, 16 January 2005 in 42mins

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

Treble. Pauline Morley

2. Peter Skinner

3. David Holdridge

4. Ian G Mills

5. Len Morley (C)

Tenor. Len Dumper

1 - 1st quarter

5 - 1st quarter as conductor

Rung with the bells half-muffled in memory of Catherine Alder, grandmother of the treble ringer

Pauline has always refused to ring a quarter-peal, but was persuaded on this particular occasion to take a rope. Afterwards, she said it wasn't half as bad as she'd expected – so we may even persuade her again! Not only that, but it was a first quarter as Conductor for Len (it surprised me that he had never done so before).

We entered the District 6-bell striking competition in March, ringing Plain Bob Minor for a change, but failed to retain the trophy. However, I was keen to ring something other than the usual Plain Bob Doubles this year, and it was good to see that the winning team from Beckenham also rang Minor.

Otherwise, the main focus of the band's activities have been non-ringing, with trips to both Malta in February and the Isle of Wight in March (although the latter did at least involve a bit of ringing!) Thanks to Len Morley for his organisation of these.



David Holdridge

## ERITH (Christ Church)

*Practice Monday 20:00*

## ERITH (St John the Baptist)

*Practice Wednesday 20:00*

## EYNSFORD

*Practice Friday 20:00*

## FARNINGHAM

*Practice Wednesday 20:00 by arrangement*

We continue to hold Surprise Minor practices every 3rd Wednesday, minimum standard is competent treble bobbing. Please call me for details and confirmation that the practice is going ahead on 01322 861\*\*\*.

Julian Hemper

## FOOTS CRAY

*Practice Wednesday 20:00*

Things are beginning to look up! We now have 4 learners, two, Jeff and Lisa started last October, are keen and doing well, we are planning on them taking part in their first service ringing on Easter Day. The other two, Clare and Colin, only started at the end of January and are also progressing well, Clare rang in rounds for the first time at our last practise and needed very little help. Colin had a shoulder problem which kept him out of ringing for a couple of weeks but is back with us now and keen to catch up with Clare. It makes a change to have positive news.

Some people have asked how we managed four new ringers. Well, Lisa and Jeff are to be married in September and have been attending Church since they became engaged, they showed an interest and eventually joined us last October. Colin and Clare were married at Fooks Cray last year and attended a social event we hold annually in January for those to be married in the coming year, to which the previous year's couples are also invited. We are lucky enough to have a Churchwarden who is proactive in encouraging people to get involved in the life of the Church and a chance comment to this couple received a positive response to learning to ring and so they joined us at the end of January.

We are now back to practising every week at Fooks Cray and would love to see ringers at our practices who can help our learners move on into ringing rounds and call changes. At the moment we have to have at least two learners in at a time – not ideal when they make up 40% of the band.

Margaret Macey

## GREENWICH

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

## HAYES

*Practice Tuesday 20:00*

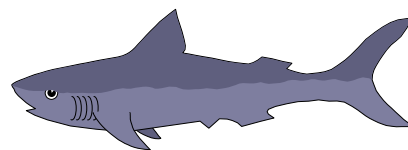
## HORTON KIRBY

*Practice Thursday*

## LEWISHAM

*Practice 5th*

*Wednesday*



## PENGE

*Ringing by arrangement*

## ST MARY CRAY

*Practice Wednesday 19:45*

## SHOREHAM

*Practice Monday 20:00*

## SIDCUP

*Practice Wednesday 20:00*

## WEST WICKHAM

*Practice Wednesday 20:00*

No real progress in ringing apart from the fact that we can now ring a course of Norwich, if the right six people turn up.

Ash Wednesday saw us swap the ropes for bowling balls, men against ladies, although the ladies lane seemed to have a camber on and the men were victors, but we all had great fun.

Judith fry

## WOOLWICH

*Practice 1st Wednesday 20:00*

---

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Mr. Common Sense. Mr. Sense had been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape.

He will be remembered as having cultivated such value lessons as knowing when to come in out of the rain, why the early bird gets the worm and that life isn't always fair. Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you earn) and reliable parenting strategies (adults, not kids, are in charge).

His health began to rapidly deteriorate when well intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. - Reports of a six-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition.

Mr. Sense declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer aspirin to a student; but, could not inform the parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

Finally, Common Sense lost the will to live as the churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims. Common Sense finally gave up the ghost after a woman failed to realise that a steaming cup of coffee was hot, she spilled a bit in her lap, and was awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust, his wife, Discretion; his daughter, Responsibility; and his son, Reason. He is survived by two stepbrothers; My Rights and Ima Whiner. Not many attended his funeral because so few realised he was gone.

# Crayford travel East

We had our annual Tower outing on the 19<sup>th</sup> February and decided to venture down into East Kent - Teynham, Faversham, Ospringe, Sheldwich and Throwley.

It was a bright and cold day with lots of snowdrops about. We were joined by Mark and Rachel Backhouse, David Kingston, Chris Webb, David Brown, Morag Todd and Ann Pavey. Teynham were a nice six, Faversham were, how shall we say,



idiosyncratic and a challenge! Ospringe were heavy but well worth the effort (not the place for a peal!) and we certainly worked up a thirst and an appetite, and repaired to The Ship at Ospringe for a very good lunch before making our way over to Sheldwich.



Sheldwich are a very light but extremely worthwhile eight with the biggest door key that anyone had ever seen. Throughout the day we managed to achieve a good standard of ringing, everything from Bob Doubles and Grandsire through to Stedman and Spliced Surprise Major.

I had my first taste of Little Bob Major, a relatively simple method but one that produces some really good music. We ended the day at Throwley; the best of the day in my view. It was a very good eight and it was nice to end on such a good note. One tip though, if you are thinking of ringing there during the winter, wrap up well, because the ringing room is like a fridge!

A big thank you as always to those valiant souls who helped us out and made the day such a good one. See you next year I hope.

Andrew Sinclair



# Farningham Surprise Minor?

The sleepy village of Farningham, Kent unknowingly played host to a Sayers-esque drama on the night of Friday, January 21<sup>st</sup>.last.

The local ringers had completed their Friday night practice before retiring to the local hostelry according to custom as old as the bells themselves. Except that things were different this evening. Normally Friday night practice took place at Eynsford, the adjacent village, but because the clappers were out at Eynsford the practice had been removed to Farningham. Also, one of the ringers had brought along his younger son for his first lesson. Perhaps it was these perturbations of the normal habits of the faithful band, usually so regular and ordered (according to blue lines and closing times), that laid the ground for the experience that befell two of their number that fateful evening.

As the keeper of the tower keys made his way to the Chequers in bibulous anticipation of the first pint he passed a parked car. It struck him that it belonged to the ringer with the novitiate son. Odd, he thought, that he hadn't passed them on the way out. But the lure of the camaraderie of the pub and the seductive essence of hops displaced the transient discomfiture that he had felt and soon it was far from his mind. But not for long.

Meanwhile, in the darkness of the tower so recently vacated, things were afoot. A dull thud was followed by muffled voices in the pitch black of the web-strewn staircase. "Just feel your way...." came the instruction of the elder to the younger, "....can't be much further now". Piped up the younger "What happens if there is nobody down there?" Quipped the elder "Have you brought your toothbrush?"

At the bottom of the stairs the awful truth was borne upon them by the unyielding presence of a locked door. They were incarcerated in the tower!

It seemed so farcical. They had only gone up to the bell chamber for a moment or two at the end of practice to take a look at the bells set at backstroke in anticipation of Sunday ringing. Surely the rest of the team had seen them go up? Surely they wouldn't have gone without checking? But faced with the doused light and the locked door they had to face up to the stark reality of a grim imprisonment.

A moment's scrabbling on the wall was rewarded by the discovery of the light switch. The illumination dazzled their



previously straining eyes. They looked at each other uncertainly for a moment. "We could ring a bell to raise the alarm" suggested the elder dramatically. "We could ring someone on your mobile phone Dad" said the son practically.

The tower key keeper's post-practice, pre-beverage peace was shattered by his brother's agitated report of a telephone call from "some bloke called Tony Fisher, says he's locked in the tower - what's it all about then". Not unreasonably,

he wanted to know. He hadn't come to stay with his brother for the weekend to get caught up in some gothic horror story.

The unwitting inmates of the tower were released from their impromptu captivity a short while later, the younger bursting with excitement at the unsought for adventure (was bellringing always like this?), the father contemplating the prospect of explaining to the boy's mother quite how it was that her precious son had become immolated in an old stone tower with his evidently completely incompetent father.

The tower keeper returned to the snug of the ale-house, agitated at the way that the evening had ended. If his brother had not been at home to take the crucial telephone call then he could have opened up the tower on Sunday morning to face two white-haired corpses with accusing looks fixed, mask-like, on their waxen faces and in their sightless eyes.

He shuddered at the thought. Perhaps he should have an extra pint to soothe his jangled nerves?

Tony Fisher



Farningham's Bells

# RICHARD BING 1946-2005

Richard was a product of the *post-war baby boom*, born in London, 5<sup>th</sup> April 1946. He came from well-to-do stock and was able to trace his family back to the time of William the Conqueror. His father was elected as the Labour MP for Hornchurch in the Labour landslide victory of 1946. The family lived in Clapham Common where Richard started his schooling and started singing in the choir at the local church. He went for auditions at several cathedrals before gaining a place in the choir at Southwark Cathedral, and attended St Olave's and St. Saviour's school, Tooley Street. He also studied the piano and flute and was a proficient performer.

After his voice broke, Richard went to a boarding school in Birmingham for a while and after his A levels continued his studies at Walthamstow Poly. Whilst he was there he took up ringing at St. Mary's in October 1964. From here he went to Oxford Poly to study geology – he met up with Roy Jones and they did a lot of ringing together. Richard decided that the academic life was not to his liking and started work with Blue Circle Cement where he was able to put his geology skills to good use. He did plenty of ringing in Kent and the London area at this time and did a lot of travelling by bicycle following his ancient OS maps. Richard kept these maps for many years and would update them in his own hand by pencilling in added roads and other features.

Richard returned to London where he had digs in Tooting and joined the ringers of the London County Association and especially at St. Mary's, Lambeth where David Town was the Tower Captain (a friendship that was to last). On practice night, Valentine's Day, 1972 a young student, Hazel Topping, went to ring at Lambeth. Richard was immediately smitten and after the visit to the local hostelry offered to drive her home – even though she had to help push the car for part of the way!! At the end of the evening, Richard told Hazel that *you've got to go to Clerkenwell – they're the sweetest ring of eight in London*. Richard and Hazel's relationship blossomed and they went to five practices every week: Clerkenwell, Lambeth, Chelsea, Tooting and Kensington and also attended many LCA events.

At one time, Richard was Junior Steward of the LCA and took part in the monthly quarter peals with Monty Meyer (*keep 'em moving*) at Fulham. Hazel and Richard also went

on some of Frank Udall's ringing tours.

In 1973, at Bill Theobald's suggestion, Richard was able to take up a vacancy at the Whitechapel Bellfoundry and due to his musical abilities Richard took on the running of the handbell section. In order to understand more about handbell ringing Richard joined the Whittington Ringers and rang with them for many years.

Richard and Hazel were married on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1974 at St. Philip's, Cheam (no bells) but John Lott and three LCA ladies duly obliged by ringing handbells after the ceremony. The Bings then moved to Abbey Wood, South East London and joined the congregation at St. Michael and All Angels Church (no bells). The nearest tower was Woolwich and Richard and Hazel joined the band. Richard soon became the Tower Captain/Secretary in 1975, a position which he held for about twenty years. In 1976, Rev. John Ardley became Vicar at Abbey Wood – John had been curate at St. John's Caterham, where the bells of St. Mary's, Lambeth were now installed. Richard encouraged John to continue his ringing with the Woolwich band. At Abbey Wood, Richard, John and Rev. Mike Harding, the Curate, were instrumental in establishing the bar in St. Michael's Hall – Richard was the chairman for many years and supported it in many ways!!

As well as the usual ringing at Woolwich, Richard organised many outings, many of which involved the choir and congregation of Abbey Wood and we would sing Evensong as part of the outing as well. I became

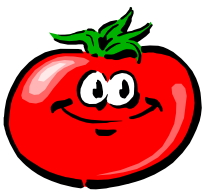
Director of Music at Abbey Wood in 1981 and at the time was taking a break from ringing. One evening in the church bar Richard announced that there was a surplus of Barley Wine bottles which needed to be sold off at a cheap rate – when I announced that *It's a shame Olive's not here to help out* my secret was out of the bag (Richard being perceptive as ever) and I was soon encouraged back to ringing again! [The Olive was, of course, Oliver Rogers, whose favourite drink was barley wine. I had rung at All Hallows, Twickenham whilst at college in Isleworth; Olive and Harold had helped out with the ringing there for a while].

Eventually at Abbey Wood we had a ringing band of nine ringers – not bad for a church with only one bell (but the



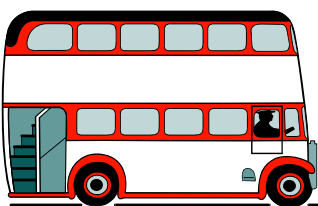
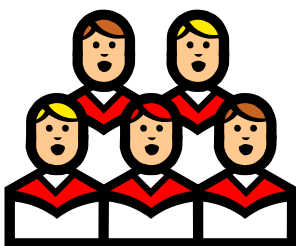


church bar and Richard's encouragement helped!) and in 1983 we rang a 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the church quarter peal at St. John's, Erith. Richard then turned his hand to organising several ringers' holiday weeks and we had some wonderful times together. On one of these holidays whilst visiting a tower somewhere near the Welsh border, Richard remarked that one of the local ringers *had the sort of teeth you could suck tomatoes through a tennis racquet*. This was typical of Richard's quick wit, turn of phrase, sense of humour and fun!



In 1988, Richard decided that he needed a change from working at The Whitechapel Foundry and he did consider starting his own handbell business. However, he thought it best to look at other options and was successful in being accepted for the Civil Service and worked for some years in the Property Services Agency. When this post became redundant he went to work for the Woolwich Building Society and then for Glaxo Wellcome. This job also came to an end but Hazel was working at Charlton Park Special School and at the time the school needed someone to help in the administration department for a short while. Richard took up the challenge and his skills proved to be so invaluable that he was made a permanent and highly valued member of staff.

In latter years, after giving up as Tower Captain at Woolwich, Richard decided to take up his choral skills again at Abbey Wood (I had moved on as Director of Music by then – I wished he had joined the choir during my time.) However, he still continued to ring with us at times especially for weddings, special events and quarter peals. Richard was often to be found in Rose's pub, Woolwich and was a connoisseur of real ale. He was always prepared to talk to others in the pub, regardless of who they were. He brewed his own beer, of good quality which went down well at parties in the Bing household. Richard enjoyed walking in the countryside – with his old OS maps and regularly took part in the church walking holidays. He also had his own allotment and grew some wonderful vegetables, although Hazel always felt that he could have grown more if he didn't chat so much to others when he was there!



Richard was a true gentleman and never had a bad word to say about anyone but, at the same time, he did not suffer fools gladly and on many occasions would make himself known, especially when things like public transport did not run to plan! Whilst talking about transport, Richard was a cautious driver but a very difficult passenger!

2004 was a special year as Richard and Hazel celebrated their 30<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary by going to Toronto for the World Symposium for Handbell Ringers - they had a great time although Richard had started suffering from a sore shoulder. In October 2004 Richard organised the *Bing Ring* which was to celebrate his 40 years of ringing. Unfortunately, Richard's ringing was hampered by his shoulder condition but he was very pleased with the quarters and other ringing which took place. Soon after this it was discovered that Richard was suffering from a virulent form of cancer and there was little hope of him making a recovery. Richard fought bravely – with a great sense of humour and faith. Shortly before he died, he said to the Curate at Abbey Wood: *You know, I feel very sorry for those who die without faith*. In his last days Richard was strengthened by his faith and he devised his own Requiem Mass and chose all the music. Richard died early on 4<sup>th</sup> February in the company of Hazel and their sons, Daniel and Edmund. There was a full church of family and friends for Richard's Requiem Mass and ringing took place at Woolwich afterwards.

Richard was a true gentleman, a great friend and fun to be with - we will all miss him very much.

Woolwich, St. Mary

21<sup>st</sup> February 2005

A Quarter Peal of 1288 Grandsire Triples

Treble	Christine Northeast
2	David Town
3	Bill Lanyon
4	David Ely
5	Eddy Sullivan
6	Tony Nunn
7	William Willans (comp/cond)
Tenor	Paul Norman

Rung half-muffled after the funeral of Richard Bing, local ringer and former tower captain. General ringing also took place with Graham Long, Jim Odell, Mike Medway, Nigel Parsons and Penny Parsons.

Woolwich, St. Mary

2<sup>nd</sup> March 2005

A Quarter Peal of 1410 Plain Bob Doubles

Treble	Mike Medway (first on treble, at first attempt)
2	Penny Parsons
3	Graham Long (Joint cond)
4	Jim Odell
5	Bill Lanyon (Joint cond)
Tenor	Alan Munden

50<sup>th</sup> quarter together 3 & 5

Rung half-muffled in fond memory of Richard Bing. General ringing took place afterwards with Ken Deller and Tricia Dale. Susan Collins, Jan Odell and Freda Cannon wish to be associated with this ringing.

Graham Long



### PEALS RUNG IN THE DISTRICT

Date	Place	Changes	Method	RW page no.
10 January 2004	Chelsfield	5040	Minor 4m.	04/105
04 December 2004	Horton Kirby	5040	Minor 6m.	04/1256
14 December 2004	Cudham	5040	Yorkshire Surprise Royal	05/9
28 December 2004	Crayford	5040	Grandsire Triples	05/57
29 December 2004	Beckenham	5056	Beckenham Bob Major	05/57
19 January 2005	Beckenham	5040	Grandsire Triples	05/130
22 January 2005	Woolwich	5056	Cambridge Surprise Major	05/131
30 January 2005	Eynsford	5072	Plain Bob Major	05/182

Andrew Sinclair who rang the 4<sup>th</sup> at Crayford to Grandsire Triples for his first peal.

Julian Hemper and Lesley Barclay who rang the Treble and 4<sup>th</sup> respectively in the Cambridge Surprise Major at Woolwich for their first on 8.

Richard Barker who rang the 5<sup>th</sup> in the Plain Bob Major at Eynsford for his first on 8 and Julian Hemper who rang the 3<sup>rd</sup> in the same peal for his first on inside 8.

Lesley Barclay who rang her most Minor methods in the peal at Horton Kirby.

Ross Hartley, Dominic Meredith, Rhiannon Meredith and Jim Hardy who rang their first of Grandsire Triples in the peal at Beckenham.

All the peals were rung for the KCACR except the Grandsire Triples at Beckenham, which was rung by the Beckenham Guild on the exact 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first peal on the bells.

### QUARTERS RUNG IN THE DISTRICT

Date	Place	Changes	Method	RW page no.
24 October 2004	Crayford	1280	Plain Bob Major	05/65
14 November 2004	Crayford	1260	Plain Bob Doubles	05/62
27 November 2004	Cudham	1264	Plain Bob Major	04/1262
28 November 2004	Dartford	1260	Plain Bob Doubles	05/62
28 November 2004	Erith Ch Ch	1296	Cambridge Surprise Minor	05/14
19 December 2004	Crayford	1260	Reverse Canterbury Pleasure Place Doubles	05/65
26 December 2004	Bromley	1280	Lincolnshire Surprise Major	05/111
31 December 2004	Bromley	1250	Spliced Surprise Major (CNSY)	05/111
07 January 2005	Chelsfield	1260	St Martins Doubles	05/238
16 January 2005	Eltham	1260	Plain Bob Doubles	05/161
06 February 2005	Farningham	1260	Plain Bob Minor	05/262
28 February 2005	Eltham	1260	Grandsire Triples	05/261

Congratulations to :

Pauline Morley who rang the Treble in the Plain Bob Doubles at Eltham for her first quarter and to her husband Len who called it for his first as Conductor.

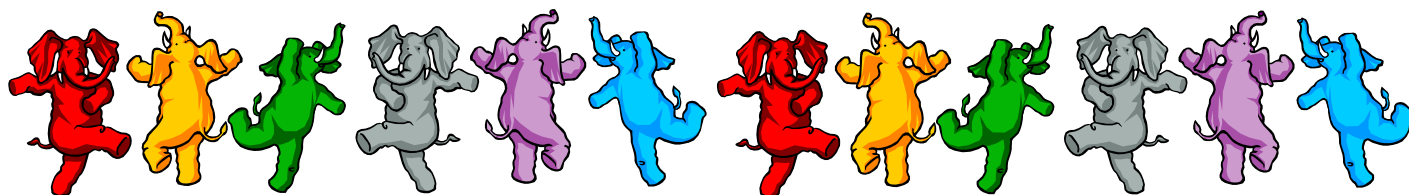
Marian Wansbury who rang the 3<sup>rd</sup> and Esther Corriea the 6<sup>th</sup> for their first quarter in the Plain Bob Doubles at Dartford with 7,6,8 covering.

Andrew Sinclair who called the Plain Bob Doubles at Crayford for his first as Conductor.

The St. Martin's Doubles at Chelsfield was rung on the back 5 to celebrate the 333<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the casting of those bells and was Nick Wilkins' 150<sup>th</sup> quarter on the bells after which he had circled the tower 23 times.

From The Ringing World up to edition No. 4899 March 18, 2005.

Jim Rooke





## KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS

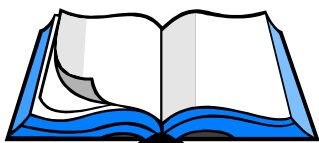


### LEWISHAM DISTRICT

*The meeting stood to observe a minute's silence in memory of Peter Rose of Dartford.*

#### 1. Welcome

The Chairman welcomed members to Beckenham as part of the centenary celebrations of the Beckenham Guild of Ringers, it being exactly one hundred years since Beckenham first hosted a Lewisham District meeting.



#### 2. Attendance book

As a new innovation an attendance book was circulated for signing by those attending the meeting.

#### 3. Apologies for absence

36 members attended the meeting with apologies for absence received from Mary Andrews (Bexley), Monica Hanscomb, Marc Hanscomb (Biggin Hill), Dominic Meredith, Ross Hartley (Beckenham), Andrew Sinclair (Crayford), Esther Correia (Dartford), Carol Eastaugh (Christchurch, Erith) and Philippa Rooke (Chelsfield).



#### 4. Minutes of the ADM held at St Mark Biggin Hill on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2004

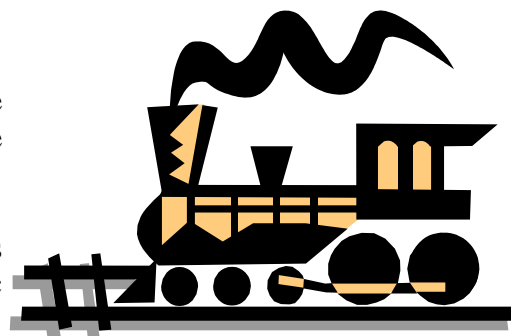
The minutes were approved on the proposal of James Hardy, seconded by Nancy Gay.

#### 5. Matters arising

##### Training

Nancy Gay thanked James Hardy and Margaret Macey for the assistance they had given to Biggin Hill by attending their practice night.

James Hardy said that he was planning to run three training courses this year: Plain Bob Doubles, Basic Conducting and Basic Maintenance. Details to be announced later.



##### Call Change Competition

Five teams entered and the winners were Crayford. Rhiannon Meredith reported that the judge had been very pleased with the standard of ringing.

##### District Carol Service

The Chairman said that this had been a very pleasant occasion and thanked the Horton Kirby ringers who had put so much hard work into organising it.

##### Rule Changes

Rachel Backhouse noted that the County AGM was to be held at Otford, which was conveniently close for those who felt strongly about the proposed rule changes to attend the meeting and make their views known.



---

## 6. KCACR Committee Report

### Recruitment & Retention of Ringers Committee

The secretary reported that this County Committee, on which Len Morley was the Lewisham District's representative, had produced its report. This was to be discussed by the General Committee before distribution to the districts.

### 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

The secretary reported that a poster was available for every tower and had been enclosed with the Newsletter. Further information was also available on the County website. Memorabilia was now available and on sale at the meeting (tankards £5, mugs £3 and pens 25p). May was to be a quarter peal month and all towers were urged to ring a quarter peal to celebrate the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary or, if this was not possible, a specific number of call changes. District secretaries have been asked to collate all details and send them to David Manger, together with any donations for *The Ringing World*.

125 in 2005

## 7. Events

Forthcoming events included:

### District

22 January	District practice at St Mary Cray
5 March	6 bell competition at Biggin Hill (subject to confirmation after recent complaints.)
9 April	Quarterly meeting at Bromley

### County

26 February	8 bell competition at Beckenham
6-7 August	Dover Regatta – districts invited to ring quarter peals
? September	6 bell competition to be hosted by Maidstone district

### Other

17 September	Essex trophy – 10 bell competition
--------------	------------------------------------



## 8. District Open Day

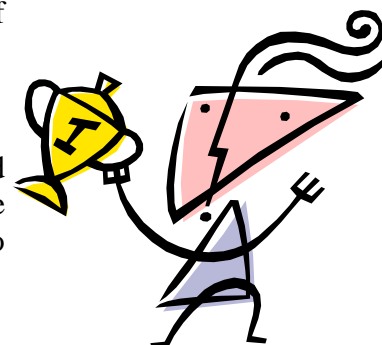
The Chairman thanked Margaret Macey and Rhiannon Meredith for all their hard work in organising this especially as ill health had prevented Philippa Rooke from playing such an active part in the arrangements.

Thanks were also due to all those who helped on the day, opening towers, stewarding, providing refreshments. £1,080.32 was raised for the BRF.

Nancy Gay apologised for Biggin Hill bells being unavailable at short notice on the day. The vicar had imposed restrictions on ringing after a complaint had appeared in the local press. The story in the press was not entirely accurate and the Biggin Hill ringers were being given a right of reply to try to set the record straight.

## 9. 120 Club

Rachel Backhouse reported that, as registration with the local authority had yet to be completed, it was not possible to sell tickets at the meeting but she would record any expressions of interest. Full information would be sent to towers as soon as the formalities had been completed.





---

## 10. Election of new members

The following new members were elected:

### EYNSFORD

Anthony Peter Fisher                      Proposed by David Hilling                      seconded by Martin Luffman

### WEST WICKHAM

Roger Michael Davie                      Proposed by Judith Fry                      seconded by Jon Fry

### ST JOHN'S ERITH

David Brian Broadbridge                      Proposed by Margaret Heald                      seconded by Barbara Edwards

## 11. Membership subscriptions

Members were reminded that membership subscriptions were now due, £9 for adults, £4.50 for those under 18 and over 65, and should be paid to the Mark Jones, the Membership Secretary.

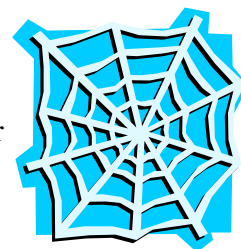
## 12. KCACR AGM

The secretary reported that, although the County Chairman was due to stand down at the AGM, he had been asked to stay on to oversee the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Catherine Lewis, who is the County Training Convenor, is looking for people in the Districts who are willing to organise training events.

## 13. District website

James Hardy reported that Rupert Cheeseman was going to take over responsibility for updating the news section of the district website.



## 14. Young Ringers' Group

Rhiannon Meredith reported that she was planning to set up a Young Ringers' Group for ringers in the district who were under 25. The aim would be to organise ringing activities such as practices, outings and possibly social events to enable young ringers in the area to get to know each other. Members were invited to publicise this initiative to young ringers in their tower.



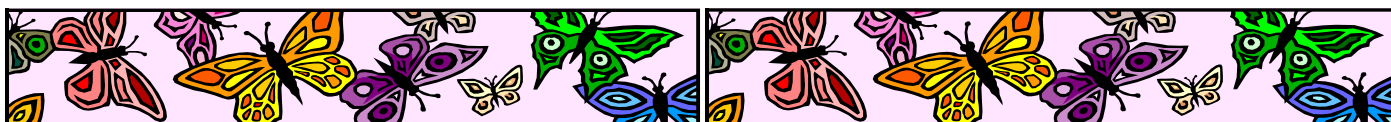
## 15. District Newsletter

Cathy Cheeseman thanked all those who had contributed to the Newsletter, copies of which were being sent out to all towers. Newsletter subscriptions remain at £5 for this year and were now due.

The Secretary urged anyone who was interested in taking over the production of the Newsletter to talk to Rupert and Cathy Cheeseman about what was involved as soon as possible. The current editors do not want to continue after this year and as the Newsletter has proved so popular and successful it would be a great pity if it were to end for lack of anyone willing to take on the editorship.

## 16. Vote of thanks

Margaret Macey proposed a vote of thanks to the Reverend Malcolm Hancock for taking the service and for the use of the bells, to Mark Jones for playing the organ and to the Beckenham ringers for a splendid tea.



# 125 in 2005

## A celebration of 125 years of the KCACR

**Saturday 14 May 2005**

- 11am: Service at Canterbury Cathedral
- 12 noon: panoramic photo session
- 1pm: Anniversary Luncheon in the International Study Centre at Canterbury Cathedral (licensed bar available)

Tickets for the 3-course Luncheon cost £25 from  
Frank Lewis, M      , Main Road, Sundridge,  
Sevenoaks TN14  
(cheques payable to KCACR please)

I have just had a letter from the General Secretary, Margaret Funnell, with some information about the 125th Anniversary Service. I have included most of it in a mailing (part electronic, part snail mail) to all tower secretaries (tower captains in some cases) about the 6 bell striking competition but I thought I would also use the e mail group to give the information the widest possible airing!

Each District has been asked to supply one Usher for the Service. Is there anyone who plans to attend who you think would like to take on this role?

Are you going to the Service? Do you want to sing in the choir which will be made up of County Members? Anyone who wants to be in the choir, please let me know so that I can pass on your names to Margaret Funnell.



Are there any clergy in the District who would like to robe for the Service? I couldn't off hand think of any ringing cley in our District who might be planning to attend the service but if you know better, please can you let me have their names, again so I can pass them on to Margaret.

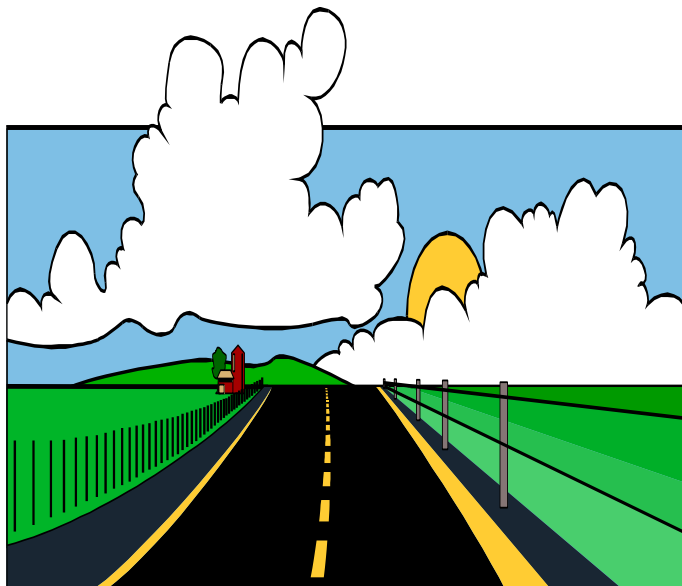
Chris Webb

# 120 Club

Thank you to everyone who has so far supported the 120 club, approximately 80 shares have been sold so far. The first draw will take place at the April district meeting and then roughly monthly thereafter.

I still have plenty more shares to sell, please send them direct to me (forms should be available in your towers or can be found on the district website [www.lewishamdistrict.fsnet.co.uk](http://www.lewishamdistrict.fsnet.co.uk)) or bring your applications along to the meeting. You can still join after April but you'll just miss out on the first draws.

Rachel Backhouse



## Upcoming District Events

Sat 9<sup>th</sup> Apr District Meeting: Bromley Parish, 3p.m. bells, 4.30p.m. service

Sat 9<sup>th</sup> Jul District Meeting: Deptford. 4:30 service

Sat 8<sup>th</sup> Oct ADM: Crayford. 3pm bells, 4:30 service

Sat 19<sup>th</sup> Nov Call Change Comp: Horton Kirby. 2:30 draw

Sat 10<sup>th</sup> Dec Carol Service: tba

This years District practices have not been organised yet but the proposed dates for them are 16<sup>th</sup> Apr, 7<sup>th</sup> May, 11<sup>th</sup> Jun, 16<sup>th</sup> Jul, 13<sup>th</sup> Aug, 10<sup>th</sup> Sep, 15<sup>th</sup> Oct and 12<sup>th</sup> Nov.

Please contact Jim (020 8659 2\*\*\*) or Rhiannon if you want to find out the venues and are not on the district egrouop. To become a member of the egrouop send an email to: [lewisham\\_district-subscribe@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lewisham_district-subscribe@yahoo.co.uk)