



# LEWISHAM DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

[www.lewishamdistrict.org.uk](http://www.lewishamdistrict.org.uk)

THE KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS [www.kcacr.org.uk](http://www.kcacr.org.uk)

July 2010

## Spliced at Biggin Hill

It would perhaps be immodest for me to repeat the Vicar's comment that a certain wedding on 17<sup>th</sup> April was "the wedding of the decade", but it truly was an exciting day, full of bells. Not only did bells adorn the invitations, the service books, and the cake, but St Mark's bells rang joyfully before and after the wedding. That's what happens when two ringers marry!



It was tricky to arrange, but ringing friends, mostly from Chelsfield, and son-in-law Jeremy from America, gathered in the tower as an earlier wedding ended, and rang one couple out of the church with the start of a quarter-peal. We hope they enjoyed the sound! Timing was tight. As our bride progressed up the hill in grand state, she heard the bells. Oh dear! Would they finish on time? Would she have to sail around the block

again? But, wonderfully, as the car rounded the corner ready to draw up in front of the church, the bells rolled into rounds and stood, at exactly 4 o'clock!

Biggin Hill, Kent; Saturday, 17 April 2010

### 1280 Spliced Plain & Little Bob Minor

- |                  |                       |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Jeremy Johnson | 4 Clare Pruden        |
| 2 Philippa Rooke | 5 John Barnes         |
| 3 Lesley Barclay | 6 Nicholas Wilkins(C) |

Rung with the best wishes of the band immediately prior to the wedding of local ringers, Nancy Gay, tower captain, and Doug Fisher.



Doug and I couldn't get spliced without grabbing a rope ourselves, so after the wonderful service, photographs, kisses and hugs, we climbed the tower for a ring. Jeremy was

there, and my daughter Jenne, too. The 17<sup>th</sup> was also their wedding anniversary, so the following afternoon, Jenne and Jeremy went to Chelsfield and rang a quarter for themselves:

Chelsfield, Kent; Sunday, 18 April 2010

### 1260 Plain Bob Triples

- |                     |                       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Bobbie Fairclough | 5 Jeremy Johnson      |
| 2 Lesley Barclay    | 6 Nicholas Wilkins(C) |
| 3 Jennifer Johnson  | 7 Jim Rooke           |
| 4 Philippa Rooke    | 8 Garry Pinkerton     |

Sixth wedding anniversary compliment to the ringers of the 3<sup>rd</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> on 17<sup>th</sup> April.

After the wedding reception in the church hall, the church itself was cleared for a ceilidh, music furnished by the groom's sister and brother-in-law. Happy Mr and Mrs Fisher departed for a honeymoon on the canals, not, alas, Venice as planned, but the Grand Union. And a blissful time was had!

And many, many thanks to the ringers from Nancy and Doug!

Nancy Fisher



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## Margaret

On behalf of the family I would like to thank everyone who attended the Thanksgiving service and also the reception at Hall Place afterwards as a tribute to Margaret.

I think Margaret would have been slightly embarrassed by the number of people present who came to pay their respects. We decided that we didn't want a funeral service but something to celebrate her life and we think the service did just that.



Many people at the reception said that Margaret deserved the great send off that she had. It was nice to see many old friends again in these sad circumstances many of whom had travelled long distances.

There were many people who were responsible for the smooth running of the service and it would be unfair of me to name names; you all know who you are. Thank you for your support.

I am most grateful to all those people who have offered help from the time Margaret was taken ill up to the present time.

My two sons are now getting me organised with the computer so that I can do a few things on the internet, such as organising food, and on-line banking. It is going to be a long time before things are sorted out but with the help of so many friends this will eventually be done. Once again thanks to everyone for your support.

Barry Macey

## The Margaret Macey Tribute Fund

To remember Margaret and the contribution she made to the district, it has been suggested that a tribute fund be set up in her name. We hope to be in a position to officially launch the fund in a couple of months and full details will appear in the October newsletter. The tribute fund will be set up in the Lewisham District of the Kent County Association of Change Ringers. The trustees will distribute appropriate funds upon application to further the development of ringers in the District through approved ringing courses.

David Macey

# Editorial



Firstly I must congratulate Nancy and Doug on their wedding. I hope you like the article from Nancy and the photos – I had to include the one of them sitting in the church because you can see Nancy's amazing red shoes! You'll have to look on line to see them in their full glory.

As there were not so many articles for this edition I've included a couple I already had that I especially liked. The 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Peal in Truro of the youngest peal band ever (a record which still stands) deserved to be included although I'm not sure that Lesley will agree with me! Also the article from The Wilmington Parish News about their ring of three passed on to me by one of our ringers—not a huge number of bells but still hung for full circle ringing. Then there is a very abridged version of an article from the Ringing World by Steve Coleman on girls ringing in Victorian England that is well worth reading in full if you haven't already seen it.

Thank you especially to all my regular contributors—without your news this slim edition would be even slimmer! Maybe it will inspire others to write something for next time. So..... thinking caps on and have a good summer.

Suex

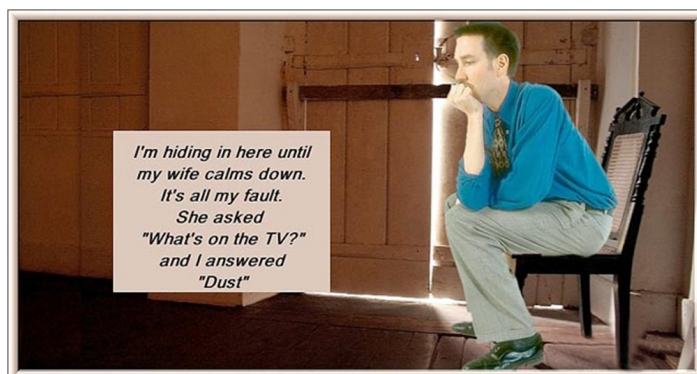
## Engagement

Dickon Love and Przemysław Benoński from Bromley Parish Church are pleased to announce their engagement. They were engaged on Dickon's 40<sup>th</sup> birthday on 7<sup>th</sup> April, and made the announcement in front of family and friends (including a good number of ringing friends) at a birthday party at a pub opposite St Magnus the Martyr in the City of London on 10<sup>th</sup> April. Dickon is Steeple keeper at Bromley, as well as Tower Captain at St Magnus. Przemek has been learning (on and off!) at Bromley and Beckenham. They are grateful for the good wishes and the various footnotes that have appeared in peals



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# Foundry Tales

## 5. A Local Founder and Some Notable Bells

One of the most successful London foundries in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, rivalling the long standing foundry at Whitechapel, was that of the Hodsons, starting with John from 1654, then John and his son Christopher from 1669, and John alone again from 1677.

A total of 77 bells from the London foundry were recorded surviving in Kent in the 1880s, including: 5 at Chelsfield; 3 at Farningham; 3 at St Mary Cray (since recast); 2 at Cudham; 2 at Eynsford (since recast); 2 at Shoreham; and 1 at West Wickham.

In 1677 John's son Christopher set up in business in **St. Mary Cray**, trading until 1687 then possibly relocating to Durham and Northumberland until 1696. The location of the foundry was recorded as "in the High Street, on or about the spot where the blacksmith's forge now stands ...at the foot of the hill on which the vicarage is built" or "at the end of Blacksmith's Lane".

A total of 26 bells from the St. Mary Cray foundry were recorded surviving in Kent in the 1880s, comprising: 5 at Deal (since recast); 5 at Godmersham; 3 at Dymchurch; 3 at Plumstead (2 still there); 2 at Charlton (no longer there); 2 at Rochester Cathedral (since recast) plus single bells at Bishopsbourne, Meopham, Rainham, Sundridge West Peckham, and Wilmington.

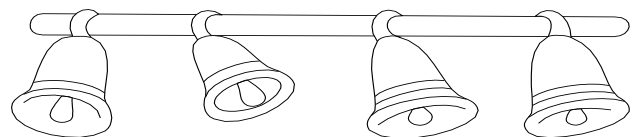
Bells cast at the St Mary Cray foundry can also be found in Essex (7), and Surrey (1), but in 1680 Christopher embarked on a remarkable project in Oxford, setting up a temporary foundry, recasting **Great Tom** for Christchurch College, casting 4 new bells for the cathedral (since recast), and casting a complete peal of 8 bells for **Merton College**. Other single bells were recorded in Berkshire (1681), and Buckinghamshire (1682), possibly cast on his way back from Oxford.

**Great Tom** of Oxford had been recast by other founders at least 5 times previously in the seventeenth century, culminating with 3 failed attempts since 1678, at which point Christopher Hodson was called in and successfully cast what was at the time the "greatest bell in England", weighing 6 tons 4½ cwt (6325kg). Great Tom is still the 10th largest bell in the country, is the oldest surviving bell weighing over 4 tons, and hangs in a tower specially designed by Sir Christopher Wren.

The 8 bells at **Merton College** are the oldest complete peal of 8 bells by one founder existing, with the tenor weighing 1 Ton 5¼ hundredweight (1280 kg). Hung at the top of the central tower, they were originally rung from the ground floor, but with the primitive bell hanging fittings of the day and the extremely long ropes they must have been incredibly difficult to ring. Nowadays they are rung from a frightening narrow gallery lining the walls of the tower, just 20 feet below the bells and not for the faint hearted as the central well in the gallery is a clear drop 50 feet to the floor below!

These successes for Christopher Hodson led on to other notable work in Kent, for in 1683 he recast the tenor and 4<sup>th</sup> at **Rochester Cathedral** and added a treble (all since recast), and in 1684 he recast **Great Dunstan** in **Canterbury Cathedral**, weighing 3 Tons 9 ¾ hundredweight (since recast).

### Mark Backhouse



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There's always one smart alec in every holiday snap.....

## West Wickham Tower Outing

On 15 May we set off to the east of Canterbury. Our first tower was Bekesbourne, a little church set in the village surrounded by fields and with the stream flowing at the bottom of the churchyard. The bells were heavy for their 7 cwt but the ringing started off successfully including Bob Minor.

Our next tower was the more challenging 6 at Wickhambreaux. We rang some simple methods, but I found the bells more challenging to handle than ringing anticlockwise. We then went on to Wingham, a 19cwt set of 8. The ringing chamber was an upper Gallery at the back of the church with views over the magnificent church. The bells rang well and Bob and Grandsire triples were scored.



Lunch stop was at the 5 bells in Eastry

After lunch we rang at Eastry which was inaugurated from a ring of 5 to a 16cwt 8 in 2008. I was surprised at the size of the ringing chamber, which meant the bells were very spread out, not the easiest for ropesight.

Our final tower was Goodnestone, complete with scaffolding from the recent restoration on the church. We felt at home on this 11cwt 6, although it required a thin ringer on the 5 and the 4 was very deep set, which bought a smile on the tower captain's face when I tried to pull the bell off.

I would like to thank Lawrence and Paul from Cudham and to Phillip, one of our old ringers who now lives near Canterbury, for joining us for the day.

Judith Fry

## Chairman's bit

Firstly please accept my Apologies for Absence from the July Quarterly Meeting on account of a rare, three generation family weekend away.

The three months since the last meeting seem to have flown by and doubtless many of you have been busy ringing for all sorts of occasions and particularly at this time of year weddings are coming thick and fast.

In May I went to Cornwall for a weekend break, staying at St Ives, and rang at Carbis Bay on the Sunday morning. Then a drive down to Sennen and round the coast took me through St Buryan to Newlyn. Little was I to know that the brief ice cream stop en route was to cost me a 'grab' as upon driving into Paul the ring down for the evening service was just ending at 6 o'clock. They say it's a small world and this was reinforced as, despite being over 300 miles from home, I was surprised to see our very own Christine Webb emerge from the spiral staircase at the bottom of the tower. Christine was on one of her regular Cornwall breaks and I will have to speak to her and David next time I visit Cornwall to make sure I don't just miss out on another ringing opportunity!



At the time of the last Quarterly Meeting we were reflecting on a most successful Quarter Peal week, so how about starting a debate on the idea of a Peal week?

Wishing you all an enjoyable summer and see you soon.

Nick



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# NEWS FROM THE TOWERS

## ASH-BY-WROTHAM

*Practice Saturday 9:30am*

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## BECKENHAM

*Practice Thursday 19:50*

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## BEXLEY

*Practice Thursday 20:00*

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## BICKLEY

*Practice Wednesday 19:30*

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## BIGGIN HILL

*Practice Tuesday 20:00*

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## BROMLEY

*Practice Tuesday 20:00*

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## BROMLEY COMMON

*Practice Thursday 19:45*

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## CHELSFIELD

*Practice Monday 20:00*

We hold well attended practices every Monday with the ringing standard ranging from plain hunt to Stedman and Grandsire Triples, Cambridge and Yorkshire as well as spliced minor as we remember our 6 bell roots. Visitors always welcome.

Nick

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## CHISLEHURST (Annunciation)

*Practice Wednesday 19.30—20.00*

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## CHISLEHURST (St Nicholas)

*Practice Wednesday 20:00*

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## CRAYFORD

*Practice Tuesday 19:45*

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## CUDHAM

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

*Downe*At Cudham we have had the tower rewired as well as the church. It does mean that we now have better lights, emergency lights, power points that are safe and wait for it.... heating! We will now be getting on with sprucing up the



ringing room and putting a spider in which will save us draping unused ropes around the clock platform.

We also had a great tour last Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> June. We went to Wadhurst, Frant, Ticehurst (known locally as the suicide 6), Mayfield, and Rotherfield. We stopped for Coffee in Ticehurst and had a great lunch at the Rose and Crown in Mayfield. It was interesting ringing all day, fab weather and 21 ringers, which was great because everyone could ring as much or as little as they wanted.

Laurence

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## DARTFORD

*Practice Wednesday 20:00*

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## DOWNE

*Practice 1st Monday 20:00 Joint Practice with Cudham*

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## ELTHAM

*Practice Tuesday 20:00*

It's been a busy month for us here in Eltham with two Operations in full swing. There is more on Operation Outreach elsewhere in the newsletter but Operation Refurbishment has also begun this year.

This was initiated at our AGM (yes they do have a purpose) when it was agreed that we had enough funds built up to give the Chamber a facelift. Of course most of the work will involve time and effort by the ringers but tea and biscuits to keep people going don't come free. Work started with the basic tidy and cleanup during which we discovered our fan has blue blades!

A start has been made on the painting but this will form the bulk of the next day's work. The ultimate end goal will include repaired benches, new carpet and even a door mat at the bottom of the stairs. Chamber-warming party isn't booked yet though as we've a lot left to do and only so many free weekends.

Katherine Trill

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## ERITH (Christ Church)

*Practice Monday 20:00*

We regularly welcome a number of visitors to our practices and there are times when we are crowded and seating is at a premium. For a long time we have had plans to construct some free-standing bench seating and storage in the empty corners of the room, and the first one is now complete. In best belfry tradition the cost has been almost nothing, a second hand school cupboard being cut down into a corner cupboard, stood on framing made from second hand softwood, with the seat top in front made from hardwood from school science benches! All our bench seating now also has cushions re-worked from seat tops and backs second hand from Bishop Ridley church in Welling!

Elizabeth Brett

## ERITH (St John the Baptist)

*Practice Wednesday 20:00*

## EYNSFORD

*Practice Friday 20:00*

On Friday 11 June Eynsford and Farningham ringers Tony Fisher, Jack Barker and Martin Luffman rang their first quarter peal of Bristol Surprise Major. Congratulations to them all. Previously they had rung no more than a plain course.

Eynsford

Fri 11 June in 43 mins 1280 Bristol S Major

- 1 David Hilling (C)
- 2 Christine Webb
- 3 David Brown
- 4 Lesley Barclay
- 5 Antony Fisher
- 6 Martin Luffman
- 7 Richard Barker
- 8 Nicholas Wilkins

David Hilling



Tony

Jack

Martin

## FARNINGHAM

*Practice Wednesday 20:00*

Once again the ringers supported the local fete (12 June) by opening the tower and providing information to visitors on ringing and on the restored ring of bells. The tower roof was also opened for views of the Darent Valley. The entrance fee was £1 and several visitors noted what excellent value they had received! There is good space in the bell chamber and the photo shows Tony Fisher describing things to a group of visitors.

David Hilling



## FOOTS CRAY

*Practice Wednesday 20:00*

## HAYES

*Practice Tuesday 20:00*

## HORTON KIRBY

*Practice Thursday 20.00*

We put a band in for the Farningham Trophy competition and although we rang Grandsire doubles perfectly at our Thursday practice and even for the Sunday service it all went horribly pear shaped come the afternoon. We could blame it on the heat, or the football or any number of things but when it comes down to it with lapses of memory, disorientation and flying ropes it just wasn't to be our day!

At least we rang second so those who wanted to could dash off to watch the football – but that was another lost cause!

Away from ringing three of our ringers, Lesley, Karen, and Sue Cameron took part in the London Bridges bike ride in aid of the Stroke Association and Lesley also took part in the London to Brighton bike ride in aid of The British Heart Foundation. Another of our ringers, Issie, took part in the Bluewater 10K run to raise funds to build a school

in Kenya and in another 10K run in aid of Cancer Research.  
Well done everyone!  
Sue Allport

## LEWISHAM

*Practice 5th Wednesday*

## PENGE

*Ringings 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*



## WOOLWICH, GREENWICH & DEPTFORD The Meridian Ringers

*Woolwich Practice 1st Wednesday 20:00*

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

*Deptford Practice 5th Wednesday 20:00*

# 120 Club

There are 93 shares taken so far this year for the 120 club.  
Thank you to all of those who have joined so far, and it's not too late if you haven't got round to it yet.

Draw held at Bromley Parish (District Meeting) on April 17<sup>th</sup>

1 <sup>st</sup>	8	Tony Fisher (Eynsford)
2 <sup>nd</sup>	78	Carol Eastaugh (CC Erith)
3 <sup>rd</sup>	43	Tom Scarth (CC Erith)
4 <sup>th</sup>	9	Tony Fisher (For Andrew) (Eynsford)

Draw held at Downe (Training Day) on May 22<sup>nd</sup>

1 <sup>st</sup>	10	Geoff Mills (Eynsford)
2 <sup>nd</sup>	84	120 club
3 <sup>rd</sup>	96	120 club
4 <sup>th</sup>	78	Carol Eastaugh (CC Erith)

Draw held at the Farningham Trophy on June 27<sup>th</sup>

1st	97	120 club
2nd	99	120 club
3rd	30	Deryck Jones (Dartford)
4th	68	Alastair Scott (Bromley Common)



## The Cinque Ports Ringing Centre at Dover

# Saturday, 30<sup>th</sup> October 2010 “INSIGHT INTO ROPESIGHT”

at St Mary's, Dover  
from 1.30 pm to 4.30 pm

Suitable for those who ring Plain Hunt and Plain Bob only “by  
knowing the numbers”

Suggested course donation £3 per student

Enquiries and applications by email to Barbara Dale, barbara-  
dale@fastmail.fm or telephone 01304 823217

## Operation Outreach

### Campanology in the Community

One of the problems we have as a tower ring, rather than a ground floor one, is that we are quite removed from the rest of the church. I'm sure we're not the only tower that has had a few members of the congregation comment on the ringer's elusiveness. So we decided that this year, prompted by being in an interregnum period, rather than try to recruit we would focus more on just getting ourselves and the part we play in Church life known to the locals.



We started with a practice run (no pun intended) after Service one day, when we opened up the Tower to the congregation. A half dozen or so braved the spiral staircase, but as we expected, they talked to others, and the lines of communication were opened.

This led to a request to attend the church fete. A full 4 hour session was covered on rota by available

ringers manning a stall downstairs, where luckily we stood between the punters and the tea & cake which meant a fairly steady stream up to the Chamber. There they were greeted by calm and calmer – Steve “sonic screwdriver” Fitton and Len “teacher” Morley – who were demonstrating ringing and answering questions.

Best of all though, Steve had rigged up a camera feed from the Belfry of the two bells being rung, and we had monitors both in the Chamber and downstairs on our stall. This meant that, with the aid of an umbrella in sunny moments, we were able to show the bells in action even to those for whom the stairs were a challenge. This combined with the teaching materials such as the 2D bell, which you can obtain via the Sherbourne Teaching Aids website if you are interested, meant ringing was introduced to a wide range of people.



The day went so well that we are hoping to repeat it again during the church's Patronal Festival celebrations. And if we happen to sow the seeds of interest in a few people's minds then this will be an added bonus.

Katherine Trill  
Eltham

## For Whom the Bell Tolls

The most famous bell, in this country at least, is probably Big Ben, or more correctly “The Hour Bell of the Great Clock of Westminster”. We set our clocks and watches by it and listen to its chimes on the radio and television. At 13.5 tons it is the largest bell ever cast at the famous Whitechapel Bell Foundry and whereas it only took 20 minutes to pour into the bell mould, it took a full 20 days for it to cool!

Unfortunately there are now only two bell foundries left in Britain. Whitechapel can trace its history back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century (with possible links as far back as 1420) and the current Foundry buildings date from 1670, just four years after the great fire of London. In addition to Big Ben many famous bells have been cast here including the Liberty Bell in 1752, the Great Bell of Montreal and the post war “Oranges and Lemons” peal of St Clement Danes.

The other bell foundry is the John Taylor Bell Foundry in Loughborough which can also trace its history back through many centuries. Its most famous bell is Great Paul cast in 1881 which hangs in St Paul's Cathedral. This weighs in at a massive 17 tons and is the heaviest bell in the country.

However, St Michael's Church has its own connections with history. Two of its bells were cast by William Land in 1616 and 1636, with the third cast by Christopher Hodson in 1685. The latter was a respected bell founder with premises in nearby Crayford and is known to have cast bells for many churches in



Kent and elsewhere. His most famous bell is Great Tom at Christ Church College, Oxford, but you will also find bells from his foundry in Durham Cathedral. So next time you hear the peal from St Michael & All Angels (known to one former resident as “Come to Church” bells with their three “notes”) just give a thought to the history in our midst.

A team of bell ringers from East Anglia visited the church recently to ring the bells. Their captain inspected the bell tower and proclaimed the bells to be in fine fettle.

*With thanks to Sheila Kennard and the Wilmington Parish News.*

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# London Bridges Bike Ride

We'll just let the pictures tell the story.....

Well done to Rupert, Sue Cameron, Karen Robinson, Lesley Barclay, Carol Eastaugh and Brenda Barton.



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# Truro DG Youngest Peal Band 40th Anniversary

Early in 2009, I realised that at the end of the year it would be the 40th anniversary of her first peal, which was also the band which rang the youngest peal for the Truro Diocesan Guild, a record which still stands. It seemed like a good idea to arrange a rerun with as many of the original band as possible.

## **Truro Diocesan Guild**

**Sennen, Cornwall**

St Sennen

Monday, 22 December 1969 in 2h 23m (6 cwt)

### **5040 Doubles**

4m: Grandsire, Longparish, St Helen, Newborough

- 1 E Lesley Evans
- 2 Robert J Perry
- 3 Kathyne R Pearce
- 4 Robert Peel Pearce
- 5 Timothy J Bell (C)
- 6 John Copping

First peal and youngest member of the youngest peal band for the TDG – 3.

That would always be the most difficult part of this venture. Kathy, now living in Hampshire, knew she would not be able to muster all six ringers as, sadly, Tim Bell had died. Kathy's brother, Robert who had not rung for a few years but now living back in Cornwall immediately agreed to take part, which was fabulous start. Next was Robert Perry from Truro – again a very swift "yes" came back from him.

This left Lesley Evans and John Copping. Kathy had not been in contact with either much since the 1969 peal and was unsure how to track them down. With help from her sister in law who was into family research she found that Lesley had married and was now called Barclay. A web search gave a surprising result, she had recently been proposed as a member of the Winchester & Portsmouth Guild by Roy le Marechal. A quick note to Roy gave us an email address for her. A rapid response from Lesley and that was 4 of the original band.

Unfortunately, no such luck with John. He was tracked down to a school in Italy, but had left there some while before. In the end Kathy had to, reluctantly, call a halt to her search. Kathy's husband Toby and son, John, who coincidentally would be the same age as Kathy when she rang her first peal agreed to ring so it was band complete.

An email to the tower captain of Sennen, Mike Jeffries, explaining the reason for the peal was greeted with

excitement and so the stage was set, accommodation sorted, what could go wrong? Then the snow fell. After all the arrangements were we to be confounded by the weather? Lesley had the longest journey, from Kent but we heard on the Saturday before that she was on her way which just the Arkless clan to get there

Tuesday dawned bright and we all arrived at Sennen. We were met by the local ringers who made us very welcome. A good peal was successfully and uneventfully rung and we opened the tower door to be greeted by the local ringers with a glass of Cornish 'champagne' and a mince pie. Lunch followed with everyone agreeing to be there to ring for the 50th year anniversary.



## **Truro Diocesan Guild**

**Sennen, Cornwall**

St Sennen

Tuesday, 22 December 2009 in 2h 37 (6)

### **5040 Plain Bob Minor**

Seven different extents

- 1 John P T Arkless
- 2 Robert J Perry
- 3 E Lesley Barclay (nee Evans)
- 4 Robert Peel Pearce
- 5 Kathyne R Arkless (nee Pearce)
- 6 Toby Arkless (c)

Rung on the fortieth anniversary of the youngest band's peal rung for Truro Diocesan Guild in affectionate memory of Timothy J Bell (1951-2001).

Karen Arkless

# The Farningham Trophy

A very hot afternoon, a village setting, five bands ready to demonstrate their skills, a BBQ fired up, tea brewing, six pleasant and manageable tower bells and twelve handbells hopefully manageable though that remained to be seen! Yes, the Farningham Trophy was taking place on Sunday 27 June, the church's Patronal Festival.



The trophy is a small bowl, complete with bolt holes, turned from the elm of an old Farningham headstock. The restoration of the bells in 2008 provided all new fittings.

The intention of the competition is to accommodate ringers whatever their ability. Method choices this year were call changes, Stedman Doubles, Grandsire Doubles, Plain Bob Minor and Beckenham Bob Minor, with no prizes for guessing which team selected that method.

While Trophy ringing was taking place, bands were also taking turns at practicing for the handbell tune ringing challenge. Rachel and Mark Backhouse had provided the handbells and the score for Pachelbel's Canon. After some fun practices, the



Farningham Churchwardens band

actual performances were more than adequate – and the tune recognisable! Six members of Farningham church with the organist directing provided a worthy performance though the winning accolade went to the Chelsfield band.

Trophy judge Nigel Thomson (member at Westminster Abbey

and St Paul's Cathedral) provided helpful comments while noting that some bands though reaching the required 240 changes, had to start more than once.

The hosts Eynsford and Farningham were the victors with a score of 90%.

Treble Sylvia Mackenzie  
2 Bobbie Fairclough  
3 Martin Luffman  
4 Geoff Mills  
5 David Hilling (C)  
6 Tenor Jack Barker



Winning team captain with Churchwarden Gerald Roome

Other placings were:

2.	Erith Christ Church	87%
3.	Beckenham & Bromley	85%
4.	Chelsfield	83%
5.	Horton Kirby	75%

This is a competition for all and where bands can amalgamate. If you missed this year's, maybe you will be at Farningham on the last Sunday of June 2011 - for some Trophy fun and conviviality.

David Hilling



Down & out .....  
.....?

Just in case the barbeque got out of hand!



# The Sight of a Gentle Maiden Deftly Handling a Rope

About 100 years ago The Girls Own Paper, an improving journal for middle and upper middle class girls, issued advice to girls in ringing. The article starts with the heroine deciding to help her father, the vicar, by chiming every morning at Matins. This chiming is what we now call the five minute bell



and in those days, the normal way to do it was to tie a loop in the end of the rope and then chime the bell with your foot in the loop. Soon our heroine finds that

*"Bell ringing has a peculiar fascination of its own, which is well nigh irresistible, and when a person has once got thoroughly used to the feel of the bell rope between his fingers, the desire to do more than chime very soon follows".*

So she asks her brother, conveniently a bell ringer, *"Could you not teach me to ring a bell? Chiming is rather dull monotonous work"*. So our heroine becomes a proper bell ringer, albeit not a change ringer because being a girl she is obviously not sufficiently mathematically minded to handle this degree of complexity.

The Girls Own Paper ensures proper justification for a girl to enter the male world of bell ringing. As a start

*"Now here is an opportunity for exercise, which in these days it is agreed on all hands, is so necessary for our girls" and further "After mastering the elementary principles of the art .... a girl ... may easily hold her own with boys and men".*

Of course ringing could not just be fun, it also had to be fitted to the good works category.

*"There is genuine work for the Master [God] to be done by our sisters, if they will try bell ringing. The ringers in a country parish are often drawn from the quite rough happy-go-lucky lads of the village (some things never change .. Ed) who we have too often seen, having called the people to worship, themselves troop out of the church just before the service begins" (as if !..... Ed)*

So bell ringing would not only be good exercise but also valuable missionary work, or as the writer puts it

*"Her presence in the belfry will tend to humanise and civilise the lads... it will suppress coarse words and idle jesting .. and gradually lead them to a reverence... of her maker and theirs".*

Naturally the writer does not ignore the practicalities of

clothing and jewellery.

*"The skirt of the dress should be plain and of fairly heavy stuff...the bodice should be quite loose fitting and wrist bands should be quite easy".*

In terms of headwear (women had to cover their heads in church in those days), the writer advises

*"a close fitting outdoor cap...secured by elastic and not by long pins. There is some little risk attached to the wearing of any head gear with a brim".*

Jewellery was another matter

*"Rings are to be avoided as they have the effect of allowing the rope to slip through the hand and they are efficacious in the manufacture of blisters, bangles are merely a nuisance".*

The dead hand of Health and Safety was present even then *"a not inconsiderable danger attends the timid ringer"* and

*"A heavy thing like a bell is not a plaything for a child, and a mistake might very easily result even in the death of the ringer; the bell rope in coming down, if it got in any way twisted, might drop round the neck of the ringer and on its return journey perform the office of hangman"* but more cheerily *"... with care and guarding against the feeling of presumption, there is no real danger".*



All Girls Own Paper articles needed to end with advice. Some technical

*"Keep your knees firm and only bend them a little",*

some behavioural

*".... so discourage in every way possible talking about outside things and especially any joking"*

and, of course, some spiritual

*"You will have many opportunities of getting to know the characters and tempers of those with whom you may be ringing, and also many opportunities for influencing them for the good. Try therefore to use the opportunities gently, firmly, humbly and prayerfully for The Master's glory and salvation of souls"*

***\*This item is a heavily abridged version of an excellent article by Steve Coleman in The Ringing World of May 7<sup>th</sup> 2010.***



# THE KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS



## LEWISHAM DISTRICT

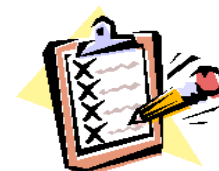
Minutes of the Quarterly District Meeting held at Bromley on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2010

### 1. Minute's Silence

Before the meeting started a minute's silence was held in memory of Margaret Macey.

### 2. Apologies for Absence

21 people attended the meeting.



Apologies for absence were received from Carol Eastaugh (Christchurch Erith), Doug and Nancy Fisher (Biggin Hill), Jim Rooke (Chelsfield), Sue Cameron (Unattached), Brenda Barton (Dartford), Rhiannon Meredith, Peter Valuks and Jeremy Byers (Beckenham)

### 3. Matters arising from the minutes

Naomi Valuks is a member at Bromley, not Beckenham as reported in the minutes.

Pending this amendment, the minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.  
Proposed: Ross Hartley; Seconded: Mark Backhouse

### 4. Election of new members

The following new members were elected:

New Member	Tower	Proposed By	Seconded By
Laura Tomkins	Beckenham	Helen Valuks	David Macey
Jonathan Payne	Bromley	David Kingston	David Brown
Pat Powell	Bromley	David Kingston	David Brown
Jean Soanes	Bromley	David Kingston	David Brown
Ben Valuks	Bromley	Helen Valuks	David Macey
Anthony Scarth	Christchurch Erith	Rachel Backhouse	Mark Backhouse
Shirley Scarth	Christchurch Erith	Rachel Backhouse	Mark Backhouse

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## 5. 120 Club Results

	Number	Name	Tower
1 <sup>st</sup>	8	Tony Fisher	Eynsford
2 <sup>nd</sup>	78	Carol Eastaugh	Christchurch Erith
3 <sup>rd</sup>	43	Tom Scarth	Christchurch Erith
4 <sup>th</sup>	9	Tony Fisher	Eynsford

## 6. KCACR Committee Meeting Report

All towers should endeavour to complete a risk assessment. A draft form can be found on the KCACR website under 'County Page'. It has been suggested that the assessment should be displayed in the tower so members and visitors are aware of any risks.

## 7. AOB

The County Eight Bell Striking Competition will be held at Margate on 26<sup>th</sup> June.

The Farningham Trophy will be on 27<sup>th</sup> June.

An attempt is being made to recruit a band for Lewisham. Any enquiries should be directed to David Macey.

### A G Hill Memorial Fund

The secretary reported that the response to his enquiries had been disappointing as only a few towers had replied. It was decided that the District Committee should select some books to purchase and then distribute them to district towers.

Rupert Cheeseman thanked everyone who had taken part in the District Quarter Peal Week, which saw 32 quarters scored at 25 different towers. A large number of firsts were also scored including nine first quarters. Nick Wilkins expressed his thanks to Rupert and the rest of the committee for organising quarter peal week.

It has been proposed that a fund be set up in memory of Margaret Macey to help fund teaching in the Lewisham District. More details to follow.

## 8. Vote of Thanks

David Kingston proposed a vote of thanks to Michael Camp for conducting the service, to Mark Jones for playing the organ and to the Bromley band for organising the tea.

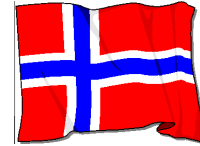
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# Wonderful English from Around the World

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Cocktail lounge, Norway

Ladies are requested not to have children in the bar



Doctors office, Rome

Specialist in women and other diseases



In a restaurant, Nairobi

Customers who find our waitresses rude ought to see the manager

On the main road to Mombassa, leaving Nairobi

Take notice: When this sign is under water this road is impassable



On a poster at Kencom

Are you an adult that cannot read? If so we can help you

In a city restaurant

Open seven days a week and weekends



In a cemetery

Persons are prohibited from picking flowers from any but their own graves

Hotel, Zurich

Because of the impropriety of entertaining guests of the opposite sex in the bedroom, it is suggested that the lobby be used for this purpose



On the menu of a Swiss restaurant

Our wines leave you nothing to hope for

In the lobby of a Moscow hotel across from a Russian Orthodox monastery

You are welcome to visit the cemetery where famous Russian and Soviet composers. Artists and writers are buried daily except Thursday

A sign posted in Germany's Black Forest

It is strictly forbidden on our Black Forest camping site that people of different sex, for instance, men and women, live together in one tent unless they are married with each other for this purpose.

