

ROUNDS AND ABOUT Tonbridge District Newsletter – November 2022

Welcome to the second edition of the Tonbridge District Newsletter named Rounds & About. Members of the committee were asked to suggest a name – some of which were inappropriate – eg “Up Yer Belfry” and others unprintable so we hope you like Rounds & About.

Please do continue to send in items of news to: angelaclarkbuttons@btinternet.com

Upcoming District Events

See you there!

DISTRICT PRACTICE : Saturday 3rd December : Horsmonden : 10:00-12:00

CHRISTMAS RINGING : Saturday 10th December : Edenbridge : ringing from 16:30-18:30

Please come along. Delicious snacks provided!

DISTRICT PRACTICE AND QUARTERLY MEETING : Saturday 7th January : Speldhurst : 10:00-12:00

The first event of the New Year!

District Practice : Shipbourne : 5th November

by Angela Clark

Meeting during the morning for a practice is an excellent idea. There were at least 18 of us who met for 2 hours’ ringing. Every request and ability was catered for by Phil Jarvis - Ringing Master.

Highlights included watching Jacqui Fletcher battle with the rope on the 5th which insisted in coming undone, leaving her with around 2 yards of tail end.

It poured with rain all morning, but the volunteer gardeners soldiered on. Some splendid cakes etc were provided for them in the church, and an invitation was extended to us to participate – free of charge, eagerly accepted.

If you did not come along, please join these District practices in future, they are fun.

Stedman Triples Practice : Tonbridge : 12th November

by Robin Rouse

On hearing that there was to be a Stedman Triples practice at Tonbridge Parish Church I decided I really must attend it. I hadn’t rung Stedman since before Covid and even then I could only manage a shaky plain course on the treble. However before I could attend, being that the practice was on a Saturday evening, there was some tricky domestic footwork to accomplish. *“Surely you’re not going out ringing on a Saturday evening”*. As I said, tricky, but the promise of a round the world cruise next year muted the protests somewhat!

And I’m so glad that I did manage to attend because it was an immensely worthwhile practice and I feel I gained a lot from it. Phil Jarvis, as Ringing Master, ran it and didn’t waste a minute of the one and a half hours. Plain course, followed by plain course followed by a touch, on and on it went without a pause. I had several goes on the treble and when not ringing was able to stand behind another ringer.

I must say I think a whole practice devoted just to one method is excellent. For a beginner on a method like me, it is the equivalent of at least six months of tower practices and for those experienced in the method they had an opportunity to ring something they may not be able to in these days of less well attended practices.

So to the Ringing Team of Phil and Emma, thanks again. Phil asked us to perhaps make a donation to the tower. I'm a bit conscious of only putting in a shirt button (although off a very fashionable shirt from the West End) but of course I've now got this world cruise to fork out for!

Chiddingstone Funeral

by Angela Clark

Following the death of a lady, who had requested bells to be rung at her funeral in Chiddingstone, all 8 sounded on 18th November.

Because they do not have a regular band, Stella had to contact District ringers, and managed very well, resulting in many of us meeting up with old friends again and we had some excellent ringing.

The deceased had been a familiar face in Chiddingstone, undertaking various jobs, including cleaning at the Castle and had asked to have her Wake there - to which we were invited. Sheila, who conducted the service, was pleased to accept this invitation for a chance to visit Chiddingstone Castle, and says the tea was excellent.

Tonbridge District Wedding Ringing Survey - Summer 2022

by David James

Earlier this year 25 towers in the district responded to a questionnaire about ringing fees and arrangements. This was an astonishing 89% response rate – many thanks to everyone who participated.

Predictably, most towers only ring after weddings or before and after. Only a quarter offer to ring before weddings, although others will if asked. The most charged by a church for wedding bells is £160 (before only), £220 (after only) or £320 (before and after). The fees most frequently requested by churches for wedding bells are £120 (before only), £160 (after only) or £270 (before and after).

The most common amounts paid to each ringer for wedding ringing are £15 (before only), £15 (after only) or £40 (before and after). However, the payments at several towers are expected to increase in 2023. Two towers in the district do not pay local ringers to ring for weddings, although there are exceptions for students or visiting ringers. Instead at these towers all the wedding fees are paid into the Tower Fund which is used to pay KCACR subscriptions and for ropes, etc. Visiting ringers are almost always paid the same as local ringers, but one tower indicated that this may change in future to cover parking charges.

Where there is a difference between fees charged by the church and payments to ringers a quarter of towers make a payment to the KCACR Bell Restoration Fund (BRF aka Spliced Fund), 18 towers pay a contribution into Tower funds administered by the ringers. At 5 churches any difference between fees received by the church and payments made to ringers are retained by the church. Ringers frequently do not charge to ring for weddings of local ringers or their immediate families, and at some towers fees may also be waived for close relatives of others closely associated with the church (e.g. choir, churchwardens).

Most towers ring for between 15 and 20 minutes after weddings. Ringing before weddings is usually limited to 15 to 20 minutes, but may get extended if the bride is late. Although most respondents expressed frustration at the number of excessively late brides (e.g. over 30 minutes late), and many vicars have been made aware of the challenges this presents to ringers choirs and other volunteers, few towers have formal arrangements for that eventuality. Some respondents quoted examples where ringing after weddings was shortened, or even limited to ringing beforehand, for weddings starting excessively late.

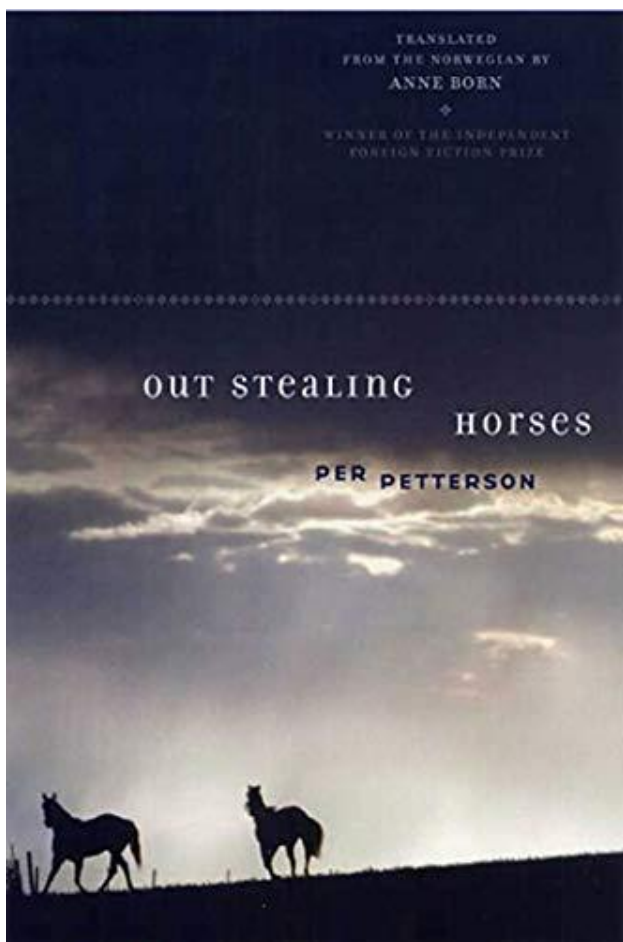
A longer version of this report is available on the website.

Many apologies to Fraser Clift.

In the first edition of Rounds & About a large portion of Fraser's article was omitted.

The full entry should have been as follows:

Fraser's Book Corner ...
... is temporarily closed due to stocktaking!



Fraser Clift (Kemsing)

PS. I don't have a copy of this book on my shelves!

Tonbridge District 120 Club

The draw took place at the	1	£20	108	Catherine Lewis	Brasted
District Practice at Shipbourne	2	£15	82	Emma Tamkin	Speldhurst
on 5 th November 2022	3	£10	104	Karol Leeves	Speldhurst

Draws take place at a District event each month. Please contact me to find out more about the Tonbridge District 120 Club or to buy a share, £10 each. Ray Taylor rayt142536@gmail.com 07973 123323

Are You Looking Forward To Being 80?

Well you should be, because if you are 80 when you pay your subscription to the KCACR it is free !!!

During December you will receive a reminder for the renewal, please do this **AFTER 1ST JANUARY**. You will need your membership number and your password.

Any difficulties – contact Hamilton Woods 01732 463240 or hamwoods@kent2.co.uk

Nominations For New Members In January

If you are planning to nominate new members at the Speldhurst Quarterly Meeting on 7th January 2023 please ensure they complete the Application for Membership form on the KCACR website, and submitted, with the appropriate fee **IN ADVANCE** of the meeting. This will ensure the preparation of the Welcome Pack which will be ready for presentation at Speldhurst.

Are You Stuck?

by Ray Taylor

If you (or a member of your band) are finding it difficult to progress your ringing, or you would just like more practice, then please contact me and we can discuss some options. Attending District Practices (on the first Saturday of every month) and visiting other towers is a good way to start. Maybe you just need some extra help at your own practices, or it could be that a separate practice or training session would help. Get in touch and hopefully we can find the best approach for you.

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Here is a report published in the Ringing World in 1976 (23 July issue – page 630) relating to a hoax Otford outing. I did not see anything in subsequent issues of the RW to say that it was a hoax, so either no-one noticed or no-one could be bothered to comment:

OTFORD OUTING

Saturday, July 3 proved to be an excellent choice for the annual Otford (Kent) ringers' outing. This year private cars were used the venue being north-east Kent.

We enjoyed the first tower, Lullingstone, though nearby campers did not. At the delightful eight at Crockenhill, the best ringing of the day took place, but at Horton Kirby there was a hunt for the key (every outing seems to have one!). The recently restored ring at Swanley (St. Mary 's) was the last tower before lunch and the locals are to be congratulated on their work, getting these bells back in to tip-top condition.

Suitably refreshed — it certainly was a hot day! — we moved on to sample the delights of the stately five at Bickley; these bells seem out of place in such a huge church, one would expect at least a 10! The tiny tower at Keston is not the ideal place to be on a day when the temperature reached over 90 but nevertheless everyone found this little six quite an experience. The final tower was SS. Peter and Paul, Shoreham where a very hospitable welcome from both the local ringers and the vicar rounded off a most enjoyable day.

G. E. H.

Anthony writes as follows:

Otford at the time had 2 bells and certainly would not have had a local band. Lullingstone and Crockenhill had 1 bell, Horton Kirby 3, Keston 4 hung dead. Swanley unknown and Bickley's 5 were not hung for ringing then. Of the towers listed, only Shoreham (8) had a ringable set of bells. The places listed are also best described as North West Kent (not North East Kent).