

Officer's Reports 2022

General Secretary

The past year seems to have been one of transition in many ways as ringers began to emerge from behind their masks and computer screens into towers, to resume their ringing activities. Since Covid reached the endemic stage, ringing in towers and the holding of District meetings, the AGM, 8-bell competition, and Ringing Festival were able to be held in person. Unfortunately, though, the 6-bell competitions had to be cancelled due to lack of support. Many bands appear to be struggling with lower numbers and an emphasis on teaching new ringers is increasingly urgent and taking precedence.

During the first quarter of 2022, people (and Covid advice) remained cautious but gradually relaxed as the year progressed, towards something akin to pre-pandemic life. The first three General Committee meetings continued to be held by Zoom with the November meeting held in person for the first time since February 2020. Nonetheless the General Committee and Officers have remained active throughout the year and should be commended for their dedication on behalf of KCACR.

A Service of Dedication for the Tom Barlow Memorial Handbells was held in January 2022 and a set of carrying cases and insurance cover were purchased soon after. These enabled the bells to be used regularly by the Kent Young Ringers and at other Association events.

Due to uncertainties with covid restrictions, a scaled-down/hybrid AGM was planned and held at Chislehurst. Attendees brought their own lunch and others were able to watch via computer link. This proved popular with some, but most look forward to a return of the "normal" arrangements for AGMs in future. It is hoped this will be achieved in 2023.

As is not unusual at an AGM, some rule changes had been put forward and were agreed. These were fully documented in the AGM papers in advance and available to view in the draft minutes on the website.

Several elections amongst officers took place at the 2022 AGM although the post of Publicity Officer has remained vacant all year. Neil Jones, Chairman and Peter Joyce, Treasurer were elected and have continued the excellent work of their predecessors. Works to relocate the KCACR Archive have remained in abeyance but new Librarian, Philippa Rooke, remains confident she will find sufficient time soon to progress this interesting project. New Training Officer, Rupert Cheeseman and Health & Safety Officer, Becky Winter and Central Council Rep, Dickon Love were also elected. After 5 years in post, the General Secretary is now looking forward to handing over to someone else in 2023.

The Association 8-bell competition in 2022 was combined with a Festival of Ringing in an attempt to bring a wider audience, publicity and sociability to the competition. Kindly hosted by the Tonbridge District at Goudhurst and surrounding towers, a barbecue and mobile ring were available. Although the first year was poorly supported, it is hoped that a similar event planned for 17th June 2023 will receive better attendance.

Due to the demise of HM Queen Elizabeth II in September, it was appropriate to postpone the Association 6-bell competitions whilst ringers were extra busy with ringing preparations for the state mourning, funeral, and proclamation of King Charles III. Unfortunately, the revised date at the end of October did not receive sufficient support so the event was cancelled entirely for 2022. It is hoped that both the 6-bell Call Change and Change Ringing Competitions will proceed on 30th September 2023 in the Canterbury District. Meanwhile, the General Committee planned revision of the 6-bell competition rules will give greater clarity in the purpose and entrance qualifications for the event.

The Memorial Choral Evensong at Rochester Cathedral in November with choir and handbells was not as well attended as the first year. This may have been due to the date clashing with ringers' own church events so the next event has been arranged for 19th November 2023.

The General Committee received the kind donation of the Madam's Court Mini-Ring (to be known in future as the Kent Mini Ring). This is now available to use by KCACR Members at any Training/Ringing Publicity/Fund raising events or Open Days. Details are on the KCACR Website. The purchase of Video Conference Equipment will enable hybrid meetings (in person and via computer) and be useful for those unable to attend AGMs or District Meetings in person. A grant

from the Training Fund has enabled Frittenden to purchase a simulator for training purposes. Grants from the BRF were agreed for works at Ightham, Marden and Bethersden.

The General Committee meets four times a year and is open to applications for grants towards Training and Bell Restoration projects as well as suggestions for Ringing Activities and support. These can be channelled through by your District Representatives, Bell Restoration Officer or direct to the General Secretary. The above is a summary of the year's activities, full details (and those of the equipment available for members' use) are all on the KCACR Website. Please use them.

J Susan Bassett

Youth Officer

Highlights of 2022 included celebratory ringing for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee in June. This was followed in September by more sombre muffled ringing to mark her death and funeral, interspersed by a quick moment of open ringing at the proclamation of King Charles III. Some of our youngsters were heavily involved in putting muffles on, off and on again and featured in the Ringing World publication. The newest learners at Seal Chart were thrilled to have made enough progress to be able to ring on these occasions and are now making huge progress and have been able to reinstate the ringing for Sunday Services once or twice a month. Huge thanks go to Alison Saunders for her vision of getting her primary school pupils to learn at the next-door church. Although she retired from teaching at the end of March, she has become inextricably linked with ringing at the school next door! 8 of their pupils have now joined in with Kent MINI-Ringers. Great strides have also been made by the new learners at Loose and at Lynsted and we look forward to seeing more of their progress. At least 20 youngsters have taken up ringing around the county in 2022 and are ringing unassisted in their own towers.

Kent Young Ringers enjoyed participating in the regional striking contest in Essex, pipped at the post this time by Essex who were also worthy winners of the national contest (RWNYC) in Exeter in July. Our young ringers thoroughly enjoyed the weekend and rang very well; we particularly enjoyed the fun Denmisch Mini Ring at Exeter School and were disappointed that the clapper falling out of the tenor at Exeter Cathedral thwarted us from ringing on this fabulous 12 in all its glory!

We have continued our KYR monthly sessions at Aylesford, Hollingbourne, Marden and Staplehurst. Kent MINI-Ringers have met at East Farleigh, Frinsted, Kemsing and Seal Chart. These young ringers are certainly doing their bit in their own towers; two outings had to give way to weddings! I believe there are 63 school-age ringers in towers around the county (several of whom are very happy to ring at their own towers and not join in with Kent Young ringer activities) and at least another 12 aged 18- 25 years are supporting their local towers. Our Young Ringers have rung three quarter peals of Plain Bob Doubles this year. Daniel, Adam and Callum rang the first peal by Kent young ringers on the "Barlow Bells": Plain Bob Minor in St Nicholas Church Chislehurst immediately before the KCACR Annual Meeting. Several youngsters continue to expand their handbell repertoire on these bells.

Jennifer Thomas

Bell Restoration

Bethersden	Fundraising and faculty application for a complete rehang.
Bobbing	Enquiry re: bells safe for a funeral.
East Malling	Maintenance enquiry.
Eastry	Tenor bearing plate loose. Repaired as requested.
Hunton	Maintenance and repairs.
Hythe	New clapper fitted to 7 th .
Ightham	Chiming hammers being upgraded.
Mersham	These bells had not received much attention for a long time. General overhaul and some adjustments. These are now much improved.
Kippington (Sevenoaks)	Repair rope on a single bell.
Lydd	Clapper problem.
Marden	Rehanging work planned.
Meopham	Repairs to louvres.
Newington-next-Hythe	Maintenance.
Pluckley	Inspection and maintenance.
Ramsgate, St Augustine (RC)	Pugin's masterpiece and Pugin centre. Inspection of the single bell with a view to installing more bells as was originally planned. Interesting ringing room as the existing rope drops beside the high altar.
Selling	Repairs to sound control doors.
Shorne	As per a doctor's appointment, diagnosis and repair of loose bolts advised by telephone!
Sundridge	Inspection and maintenance.
Temple Ewell	Inspection and rope repair of single bell.
Warehorne	Inspection and maintenance.
West Malling	The tenor bell has cracked. Offer of a possible replacement bell has fallen through.
Wickhambreaux	Inspection and maintenance.

Brian G Butcher