

# ROUNDS & ABOUT

Tonbridge District Newsletter No.5 – April 2023

Please send news and snippets (ringing related) to [angelaclarkbuttons@btinternet.com](mailto:angelaclarkbuttons@btinternet.com)

## EXTRACT FROM THE RINGING WORLD, April 1993

Anthony Leeves

Two cows from neighbouring farms were chatting over the boundary fence. "These milking machines aren't nearly so good as the old days when we used to be milked by hand", said Daisy. "I know," said Buttercup, "but at least when they break down, the village watchmaker comes round to milk us. He's so very gentle." "You're lucky," said Daisy, "our emergency milker is a bellringer from All Saints' Church." (Heard on local radio by G.C. Hall of Grimsby.)

## THE NEW RINGER'S BOOK

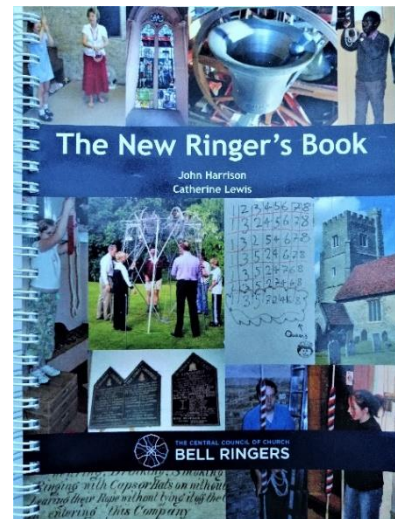
Ray Taylor

This book has been around for a while, but not quite as long as change ringing!

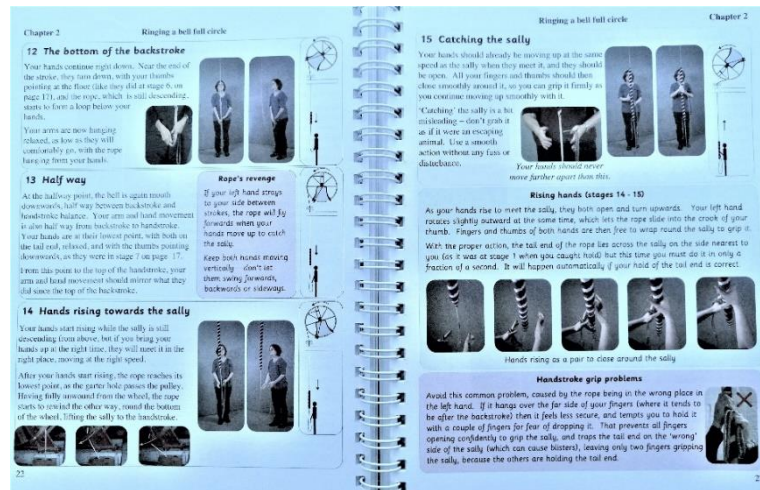
It is full of photos, diagrams and simple explanations of aspects of ringing that many seasoned ringers either take for granted or haven't been taught properly. It is written in plain English and tries to avoid ringing jargon that can be confusing for new ringers.

I skim through the relevant sections before leading a training session to remind myself of what new ringers need to understand and practise. Consider buying one to have lying around in your tower for your learners

The books are £10 each. Contact Catherine Lewis or me if you would like to buy or look through a copy.



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## TRAINING IN MARCH

Deb Williams

Three learners attended a training session at Speldhurst Church and from a learners' perspective it was a privilege to visit another tower and experience the bells.

The visual cues helped us keep track of the order called and we were proud of ourselves for recognising when Queens rang. After having lessons with silenced bells, it was great to have the simulator to hear when we got a strike in the correct place, whilst thinking of which bell to follow or not to follow as the case may be! There wasn't a dull moment.

Everyone was kept on their toes - there were calls up as well as down.

As learners the three of us came away with a smile and hopes of remembering what we had been taught. It was well worth having the session and we all got spoiled and enjoyed a very delicious chocolate cake.

Once again, the biggest thanks to all who attended to give us the opportunity to improve.



## MARCH DISTRICT PRACTICE

Catherine Lewis

As is usual this took place on the first Saturday in the month - 4th March. It was at Penshurst where the 17½ cwt 8 are not the easiest bells to ring. However, we had a very worthwhile and enjoyable practice on them – everything from rounds to Surprise Major.

We were welcomed with continuous tea, coffee and biscuits. Very many thanks to Cherele.

Owing to the ringing chamber being at the back of the church, we were able to welcome more than one group of non-ringing visitors. Always a good thing – you never know what might come of it in the long term.



## WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Since our ADM in October 2022 we welcome our new members:

PAUL BROWN	SUNDRIDGE	Elected at Chevening
SHIRLEY RAYNOR	SEVENOAKS	Elected at Speldhurst
ALISON SAUNDERS	SEAL CHART	Elected at Speldhurst
ALISON AXON	WESTERHAM	Elected at Cranbrook
DAVID OFFEN	WESTERHAM	Elected at Cranbrook
TIMON COLEGROVE	WESTERHAM	Elected at Cranbrook
TINO FRADD	SPELDHURST	Elected at Cranbrook
GAVIN KNIGHT	TONBRIDGE	Elected at Cranbrook
CATHERINE CATCHPOLE	BRENCHLEY	Elected at Cranbrook

We are delighted that these 9 new members have been elected to the Tonbridge District of the KCACR.

It is encouraging that so many new members and learners in our District are attending District Practices and Training Sessions. Ringing often, and with a strong band, is the best way to improve. A lot of new ringers are being taught, so hopefully every tower in our District will have enough to Ring for the King.

## EASTER RINGING AT ST PETER'S, TUNBRIDGE WELLS. Tonbridge District Secretary

The town of Tunbridge Wells has only one set of ringable bells and unfortunately now only 2 Association members. Its fortunes have waxed and waned, like many other towers, and now the bells can only be allowed to ring once a month for Sunday service or for special occasions. However, this one service ring does take place and a loyal band of ringers from several other towers around make sure this happens.

Ian Cochrane, one of the two surviving members, is our contact with the church and he is the one who winds the clock in the ringing chamber and also goes amongst the bells to service them from time to time.

However, his recent cycling accident and resultant fractured femur has meant that, indomitable as he is, even he decided a lubrication job up with the bells was not possible and as a result they had become increasingly difficult to ring.

Oliver Engleback, one of the volunteers, decided to see what he could do and after a few hours of toil amongst the bells, rendered them vastly improved and once again a pleasure to ring.

As a result, all 8 bells rang out on Easter morning and sounded quite lovely. The mixed band of ringers, despite other commitments, managed to mark the special day and ring for the service. The sound must have been quite something as the attendant babe in a cot was lulled into sleep for the whole session.

We are planning to ring for the King's Coronation and also hope to welcome a new ringer to join us once a month who lives locally and is at present being trained up by Catherine Lewis who must surely have lost count of the number of ringers she has taught to ring over many years.

## QUARTERLY MEETING AT CRANBROOK

Angela Clark

How fortunate that we went to Cranbrook for our April Quarterly District meeting – with its large ringing chamber it adequately coped with the 32 attendees.

Furthermore, Emma Tamkin who organised the ringing made sure everyone got to try whatever they needed whether it was Rounds or Cambridge. I heard folks in local shops remarking how good it was to hear the bells.

Refreshments are served in the church every Saturday, so we were encouraged to join in before the meeting, which began at 11.30. Six new members were elected and the photo shows the three from Westerham who were present.



## TONBRIDGE ON THE RADIO!!!!

Gavin Knight

Not content with just advertising ourselves by posters, hitting social media, 'Ringing World' and the renowned 'Rounds and About', Tonbridge tower was on the radio. We are not considering ourselves celebrities yet but the well-known local editor of this rag, is getting close to it!

West Kent Radio had a stall in Tonbridge High Street during the Christmas festivities and we approached them, tongue in cheek for some free publicity. They said yes and the rest is history. We had a charming reporter named Marion visit us at a learner practice and we chatted away to her microphone answering all manner of questions. We made her day as she had always wanted to visit a bell tower but had never done so before. She even managed to climb the tower and see the bells and only when she had climbed the stairs did, we find she was really quite worried about the height and narrowness of the stairway. With trepidation she descended successfully, and went away promising a 5-minute slot on the radio.

After a few weeks we got to hear a 5-minute radio presentation covering, Ringing for the King, why we ring and how to do it and were informed it was going to hit the radio 3 times on the following Thursday.

We have not heard anyone say they heard it yet, but all publicity is good publicity as we all try to recruit ringers for our towers.

So, lesson to be learnt.....don't ask, don't get and when you do its surprising how much media attention one can get. Good luck with your own canvassing and remember Angela is probably now a celebrity star available for special events.

## BELFREE WIRELESS SIMULATOR

Ray Taylor

Our District currently has a Belfree Wireless Simulator on loan from the Association. Up to 6 bells can be fitted with sensors and it takes minutes to fit each sensor. It comes complete with a laptop and Abel ringing program. It has been tested at Tonbridge and performs extremely well. It will remain installed there until other towers express an interest in using it for teaching. Contact Ray Taylor for more information. [rayt142536@gmail.com](mailto:rayt142536@gmail.com) 07973 123 323



## BELLRINGING DOWN UNDER

Janice Byrne

Whilst on holiday in New Zealand, I had contacted the local ringers to see if there was any chance of ringing in Wellington Cathedral. I was invited to ring with them for the Sunday service and a couple of days before I was walking around the cathedral and spotted this notice just outside the entrance to the belfry.

I did not get to ring there in the end – they had forgotten I was coming and arranged for a quarter peal. I think I was really quite relieved.

We did get to ring at a few towers in Sydney, Australia. All were within easy walking distance of our hotel. We were made very welcome at the practices and met lots of interesting ringers. The highlight for me was ringing at St Mary's Cathedral which I was told by one of the ringers has a twin set of bells to Canterbury Cathedral. They were really lovely bells to ring.

In Melbourne we rang at St Patrick's Cathedral. These bells, in contrast, must be the most out of tune bells I have ever rung on. We were however given a very warm welcome and had a fun evening. At the end of the practice a lady appeared. She had heard the bells and was trying to find out which church the sound was coming from. It turned out she was a ringer from St Mary's Putney where one of our very good friends - who we introduced to ringing - is now is steeple keeper. It's a small world. We were invited to ringing practice at another of the local churches the following night and we all went for a drink together.

Now ringing might not be everybody's idea of a relaxing way to spend holiday evenings – it certainly wasn't Nick's, who was more interested in touring the local pubs in search of real ale. But he did have to concede that the ringers at the towers we visited certainly knew the best places to go & drink after practice .... and he had plenty of other people to chat with after being stuck with me all day!



## DISTRICT PROGRAMME

Please note: Training Sessions are held on the third Saturday each month

DATE	TIME	LOCATION	RINGING
6 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> May 2023		Whole district	Quarter peal attempts throughout the district to celebrate the Coronation
3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2023	1000-1200	Oxford	District competitions
17 <sup>th</sup> June 2023		Ashford district	Festival of ringing and 8 bell striking competition
1 <sup>st</sup> July 2023	1000-1200	Westerham	District quarterly meeting
5 <sup>th</sup> August 2023	1000-1200	Cowden	District practice
2 <sup>nd</sup> September 2023	1000-1200	Hawkhurst	District practice
30 <sup>th</sup> September 2023		Canterbury district	6 Bell County competitions
7 <sup>th</sup> October 2023	1600-1900	Hadlow	Annual District Meeting

## TONBRIDGE DISTRICT 120 CLUB

4th March 2023 draw at the District Practice at Penshurst	1	£20	97	Janice Byrne	Penshurst
	2	£15	112	David James	Leigh
	3	£10	14	Jean Westacott	Chevening
1 <sup>st</sup> April 2023 draw at the District Quarterly Meeting at Cranbrook	1	£20	14	Jean Westacott	Chevening
	2	£15	62	Caroline Stockmann	Sevenoaks
	3	£10	50	Bellringers	Lamberhurst