

ROUNDS & ABOUT

Tonbridge District Newsletter No.7 – JULY 2023

Please send news and snippets (ringing related) to angelaclarkbuttons@btinternet.com

TRAINING BUT NOT AS YOU KNOW IT.

Training took a slightly different direction recently. Two groups from various Towers in our District met at Brenchley Church and Fordcombe Village Hall (near Penshurst and Speldhurst) for sessions on Bell Maintenance and Rope Splicing. Brian Butcher, KCACR Bell Restoration Officer, gave a presentation that covered various types of installations and was also able to advise on the specific installations of some of those present. At Fordcombe there was only time for a demonstration of a short splice, but at Brenchley those who stayed on were able to have a go. All in all, a very useful introduction to bell maintenance and many thanks to Brian for agreeing to lead the sessions.



I hope that information about training is cascading down to everyone via tower captains/contacts. I arrange training sessions on the 3rd Saturday of each month if there is sufficient demand, help, and no conflicting ringing events. Get in touch with me if you'd like to be added to my training mailing list, or if there are any aspects of ringing that you think would be helpful or interesting for me to arrange for the District.

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COULD YOU TEACH BELL HANDLING?

We have had lots of new KCACR members in the Tonbridge District recently, and more new ringers are coming through! Teaching bell handling has largely fallen on a few people in our District who have volunteered to take on the task. It would be great if more ringers in our District had the confidence and skills to teach.

The Association of Ringing Teachers (ART) offers a course in 'Teaching Bell Handling'. The course is suitable for those who already teach bell handling and want to update their skills AND for those who have never taught anyone to handle a bell. It provides the skills and techniques necessary to take a ringer from their first lesson to having competent bell control.

You will learn through a mixture of practical and classroom sessions:

- How to teach a skill
- How to break down bell handling into easy stages that the new ringer can master
- About different learning types and how to adapt your teaching for them
- The benefits of intensive teaching

The practical sessions give plenty of time to practise new skills in a safe environment. Working in pairs you will also have opportunity to hone your observation skills and get feedback.

ART is prepared to run a 'Teaching Bell Handling' course in our District if enough people are interested in attending. Please get in touch with me if you would like to find out more. I will organise a course if there is sufficient interest.

Ray Taylor
Tonbridge District Training Coordinator
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JULY QUARTERLY MEETING

Westerham hosted the District's quarterly meeting on 1st July beginning at 10 a.m. 28 were present, shown in the group photo with ringing in the safe hands of Phil Jarvis. The local band provided a splendid running buffet throughout the morning which was much appreciated by everyone;

The following six new members were elected:
Julia Church, Edenbridge.
Hayley Lindsay, Brasted,
Carolyne Sullivan, Shipbourne,
Steven Sullivan, Shipbourne,
Debra Williams, Tonbridge, and
Dmitry Zhuravlev, Tonbridge.

Pictured receiving their Welcome Pack: Julia, Dmitry, Deb and Hayley



JULY TRAINING SESSIONS

The monthly training programme in July was arranged at the usual 3 towers which have simulator facilities: Brasted, Hadlow and Speldhurst with Catherine Lewis, Catherine Heathcote and Richard and Steph Barclay respectively "in charge".

The title being "Towards Plain Hunt", with an emphasis on bell control involving "place making" and moving up and down the rope to go faster or slower as appropriate.

The Training Days involve considerable planning and organising, involving 6 helpers, 1 leader and 3 students at each tower. Inevitably, those who sign up frequently have to chop and change creating much work for Ray and Emma. If you can help on these occasions, do please let the committee know.



"Work in progress" at Brasted with Camilla Winson and Dmitry Zhuravlev

THE GUIDE TROOP AND RINGING

We had a request from the local Guides pack at Tonbridge for the ladies to come to the Ringing Chamber to watch. Naturally we were pleased to welcome them but perhaps hadn't immediately realised there would be 20 of them, plus Leaders. Jacqui sensibly suggested they split into two groups and Hamilton explained (twice) how a bell works, what Plain Hunt is all about, and showed them a method called Plain Bob Doubles, which we demonstrated for them.

Ham then asked "would anyone like to have a go" and all hands shot up which I don't think he had expected. They all had a wonderful evening; the only complaint was "the stairs". Who knows, we may possibly have some requests to learn to ring.

SKINNER'S DAY AT TONBRIDGE

A tradition going back many years at Tonbridge is for the bells to be rung at 8 am to wake up the Governors of Tonbridge School on "Skinners Day" when a ceremony is held led by The Skinners Company. It is also the day on which the boys break up for their Summer holiday.

In previous years the Governors stayed at the Rose & Crown within easy distance of the church, in times past, the ringers rang at 7.00 am!! The Governors no longer hold their annual dinner there, but we are still asked to ring and they make a generous donation to our funds. This year we were most fortunate to ring all 8 on 1st July, sadly, we only ring the front 6 on Sundays and practice nights.

The Worshipful Company of Skinners Beadle, Phillip Ludgrove, comes to the Ringing Chamber at 8 o'clock to thank us for ringing and he is pictured here this year with Tower Captain Jacqui Fletcher.



REHANG AT TONBRIDGE

Tonbridge bells have received loving care and maintenance in recent years from both Gavin Knight and Hamilton Woods. Despite their efforts, the bells have become steadily more difficult to ring and mutterings have been heard regarding their need for "attention".

We have recently been told by the Church Treasurer that a substantial gift has been made by an anonymous donor for the bells' refurbishment. This has spurred us into action and the gift, together with our savings and various grants, means we can now make arrangements for works to be undertaken to address the problems which have been identified.

It will be a mammoth task – the bells will be taken out and retuned, rehung on modern headstocks, and closing shutters installed, together with the purchase of a permanent simulator.

Representatives from Taylors have paid us a visit and discussions have also been undertaken with Whites. The Taylors' "team" are coming again at the end of July during a practice to observe all 8 ringing whilst they check the frame. Diocesan approval will be required and hard work is needed by our ringers. This will, of course, mean our bells will be out of action for 2-3 months in early 2024, but is exciting news for us and the District.

DISTRICT PROGRAMME

5 th August 2023	1000-1200	Cowden	District practice
2 nd September 2023	1000-1200	Hawkhurst	District practice
7 th October 2023	1600-1900	Hadlow	Annual District Meeting
1 st –14 th November 2023		Whole district	Quarter peal and ringing triumphs fortnight
4 th November 2023	1000-1200	Kemsing	District practice
2 nd December 2023	1600-1800	Goudhurst	Christmas drinks and bells
6 th January 2024	1000-1200	Penshurst	District Quarterly Meeting

ADVANCED PRACTICE – Speldhurst 29th July 19.00- 21.00

Methods: Stedman, Double Norwich, Standard 8.

Contact Emma Tamkin to register an interest.

120 CLUB

The final draw of the season took place at the District Quarterly Meeting at Westerham. Results below

1st July 2023 draw at the District Quarterly Meeting at Westerham	1	£20	72	Eric Roughley	Speldhurst
	2	£15	119	Jane Nielson	Chevening
	3	£10	77	Janet Beeken	Cranbrook

TAIL END

From the Ringing World 1st June, 1951 - spotted by Anthony Leeves:

“AFTER WWII AT HAWKHURST -

When the Archbishop of Canterbury visited the roofless church of St. Lawrence, Hawkhurst, he commented: ‘I thought I was to see another ruin. But then the bells rang out from the undamaged tower and I knew the church was alive.’ So impressed was the archbishop that he climbed the tower and spoke to the ringers, telling them of his high regard for bellringers and their very real contribution to the life of the Church. Every Sunday the bells of St. Lawrence’s call people to worship at the newer church of All Saints, half a mile away.”

NOTE: St.Laurence church at Hawkhurst was named as St.Lawrence by the RW.

Many thanks to Alison Parsons for the following: “According to the window dedicated to the craftsman who repaired the church, the damage was caused by a flying bomb on 13th August, 1944. The church was finally rededicated on 25th June, 1957”.