

# ROUNDS & ABOUT

Tonbridge District Newsletter No.14 June 2024

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

## COMMEMORATION OF THE 80<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF D DAY 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024

Ringling was requested by the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers at every tower possible from 6.30 to 7.30 pm (or thereabouts). Our District ensured that most towers rang their bells in honour of this unique occasion. Some ringers travelled from one tower to another in order to help where they were short of ringers.

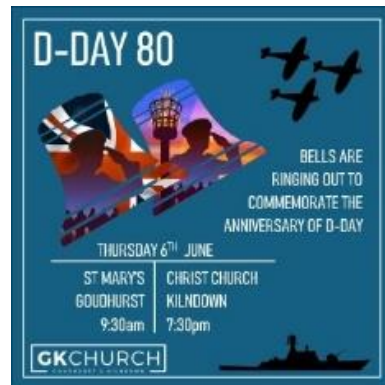
THE FOLLOWING TOWERS IN OUR DISTRICT RANG ON 6<sup>th</sup> JUNE

BRASTED BRENCHLEY COWDEN CRANBROOK

EAST PECKHAM Emma and Phil Jarvis rang handbells for the lighting of the beacon at 9:15.

EDENBRIDGE

GOUDHURST



HADLOW



Front row (l-r): Rebecca Norton, Stan Jenner, Ann Jenner

Back row (l-r): Esther Haswell, Janice Massy, James Evans.

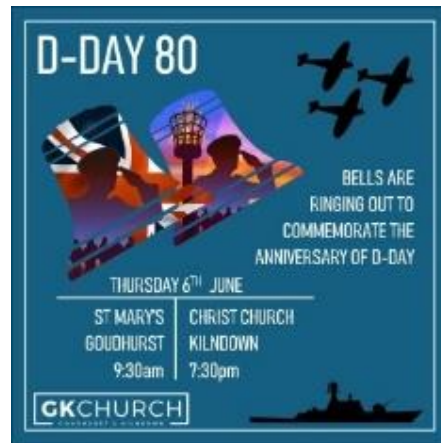
HAWKHURST

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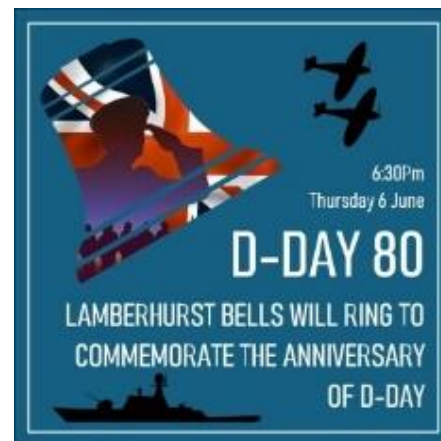
HORSMONDEN

KEMSING

## KILNDOWN



## LAMBERHURST



## OTFORD PENSURST

### SANDHURST

A bugler played The Last Post at the top of the tower to accompany the ringing by ringers who travelled from nearby Benenden.

### SEAL

### SEVENOAKS

A visiting band rang a quarter of Bristol Surprise Major.

## SHIPBOURNE



## SPELDHURST

When parking her car at the George and Dragon, Emma (Tower Captain) saw some people sitting at the tables outside the front of the pub and warned them they were about to ring the bells. They said that they knew and that they had come to listen. Clearly our notice in the Speldhurst News (village magazine) and Emma's entry on a Speldhurst Facebook group had been read. Speldhurst rang call changes and Grandsire Triples.

SUNDRIDGE

TONBRIDGE



TONBRIDGE rang 8 from 7.15 to 7.45. A poster announcing the ringing to keep passers-by informed was displayed outside the church. The ringing was recorded by “Tonbridge Daily” and included on their Facebook page.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Ian Cochrane tolled the 6<sup>th</sup> for 30mins.at 6.30 on the 6<sup>th</sup> June

WESTERHAM

....and from **TESSA WORTHINGTON**

Mike and I were on holiday in the Brecon Beacons on 6<sup>th</sup> June when I spotted an advert in the local bus stop, near where we were staying, that the bells at a nearby tower would be ringing for the occasion. We therefore went along to this isolated church St.Meugans, Pencelli at the appointed time. It turns out they are a beautiful sounding set of 8 bells. We were made very welcome by the locals along with other visiting holiday-makers from Cheshire and Oxfordshire. A lovely way to celebrate the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary and as we left, we noticed a reputed 2,000 year-old yew tree in the churchyard.

In sad contrast, the renowned and even more fabulous ring of bells at St. Mary's Priory, Abergavenny remained silent, as they do on most Sundays, owing to the lack of local ringers, despite efforts of the dwindling few for several months.

It was a great shame that none of the ringing efforts up and down the country were mentioned on the national news nor, as far as I know, the papers.

## Training

### **PRACTICE MEETING – JUNE AT BRASTED**

**Angela Clark**

The anti-clockwise ring of 8 at Brasted was not a problem to the 16 ringers attending the monthly District meeting which included visitors from far and wide: Pete from Swanscombe, Oscar from Farnborough with David Chessum and Jackie from Yorkshire.

Ringing was in the capable hands of Emma Tamkin where there was something for everybody: Call Changes, Plain Bob, Treble Bob Hunt, and for the clever clogs – Stedman, Cambridge and Single Oxford.

There was a delightful relaxed atmosphere, with much laughter. Please do consider attending training events, either to learn or to help out.

### **TRAINING SESSIONS**

Training Events take place each month. If you would like some practice at anything “in the ringing department” please contact Ray Taylor on ray142536@gmail.com or telephone 07973 123 323 and it shall be arranged. Whether it is Call Changes, Plain Hunt, or Glasgow spliced with Double Dublin – Ray is your man.

There are three towers normally used for training: Brasted, Speldhurst and Hadlow. The training sessions are good fun and there are plenty of helpers.

## News

### BOBBIE FAIRCLOUGH

BOBBIE FAIRCLOUGH, who has not enjoyed good health in recent years, has moved house. Bobbie has not forgotten us and has written for Rounds & About. She wrote:

*Until the year 2000, St Bart's, Otford had just two bells hung for chiming only. Local business man, Ken, was bereft when his wife died. He was a lost soul. One day whilst at the check-out in Tesco's, Riverhead he was chatting to the cashier. He asked her what she was going to do that evening, after work. She replied: "I'm going bellringing."*

*Soon after this exchange Ken hatched a plan. He hadn't heard any bells ringing in Otford so he decided to seek out the incumbent, the Reverend Pat Hopkins, to ask if he might pay for the Church to have some bells installed in memory of his wife, Joan. Ken could not have known what he had set in motion.*

*Over a relatively short period of time, considering what needed to be done, the faculty had been granted, the order was placed for four new bells and the existing two were to go to Whitechapel to be overhauled and retuned to make a ring of six in all.*

*Meanwhile, back in Otford, Catherine Lewis was already recruiting church members to learn to ring. There were two people who could already ring, Janet Raynor and Laurie Young. The rest of us were totally new to the activity.*

*Catherine, with her never-ending enthusiasm, set about arranging teachers and towers to get us all learning. I was in the group who learned at Shoreham church. It was scary, it was exciting and everything in between! But, gosh, it didn't take long to get hooked. I recall being the first learner at Shoreham to be called to ring an open bell to rounds. As our tutors took the other ropes I pulled away and said that I couldn't possibly ring with all those experts! I was so nervous. With hindsight, I guess I am rather honoured to be one of the first Otford learners to ring rounds on open bells.*

*Those experts included Stan Jenner, Frank Lewis, Roy Pankhurst, Graham Everitt, Brian Jeffery and more. Many others of the great and the good from the District were doing the same. The parish of Otford should be so grateful to these people, especially Catherine, for their help to get us launched. We owe them so much.*

*Following the installation and dedication of the bells we all settled down to gain confidence whilst ringing the new six.*

*Janet Raynor was our first Tower Captain and, after a couple of years, she stepped down and I tried to follow in her footsteps. We all did our best and a few more recruits joined over the ensuing years. I'm pleased to write that most are still ringing. One learner was my daughter, Astrid, who quickly picked up everything that had challenged the rest of us. How did she make it seem so easy? Youthfulness, of course.*

*So the years have passed. I've thoroughly enjoyed ringing even though I have struggled with more complex methods especially as I've got a bit older. I often got very frustrated with myself. Sadly, for me, my health has been a bit of a problem over the last few years and I regret, bitterly, my inability to ring anymore. I miss all the friendship which is such an important part of the Exercise.*

*John and I have, recently, moved down to Dorset, mainly to be nearer our family. Astrid has a little daughter, Persephone, who is nine months old now. She is a delight but, of course, I am biased. Wimborne Minster, where Astrid was married to Ben, has twelve lovely bells and is only twenty minutes away but the ringers are real experts and, even if I was able to ring again, I could only dream of ringing there.*



*Perhaps I may take this opportunity to say thank you to all the ringers who also became friends and close friends. I so miss you all and all the fun we had.  
Good luck and good striking to everyone,  
Bobbie*

**A note from Catherine Lewis:**

Bobbie was a brilliant pupil, picking ringing up with such enthusiasm. It is just very sad that her health has stopped her ringing now. I'm sure we all wish her and her family all the very best for the future.

**TONBRIDGE TOWER BBQ**

**Angela Clark**

In Tonbridge (before Covid) we arranged a meal out each year in a local restaurant which we much looked forward to. This was revived this year and Hamilton Woods kindly offered his garden on 2nd June for a Barbeque.

It was the first day this year when the weather was really fantastic and we were joined by ringers from Shipbourne who are good friends of ours. There were over 24 in attendance drinking Pimm's, wine, beer or soft drinks with smashing BBQ fare all supplied by Hamilton.

The Chefs for the day – Dmitry on Hamburger duty (they were delicious, helped along by the lovely sauce he made) and Pizzas hand made by Laurence Trim and cooked in an outdoor oven. Puddings were brought along by the guests.

A really delightful afternoon.



**120 CLUB JUNE 2024 Congratulations to the Lucky Winners**

1st No.8	£20	Jane Nielsen	Chevening
2nd No.44	£15	Alan Dunster	Brenchley
3rd No.68	£10	Caroline Stockmann	Sevenoaks

## Future Delights

### FUTURE EVENTS

6th July	Quarterly Meeting	Sevenoaks	10-12am
3rd August	District Practice	Sandhurst	10-12am
7th September	District Practice	Sundridge	10-12am
5th October	Annual District Meeting	Hawkhurst	10-11.20 Ringing 11.30 Tea, and Handbell Ringing. 12 Noon - Annual District Meeting
2nd November	District Practice	Tunbridge Wells	10-12am
7th December	Christmas Ringing	Speldhurst	1600-1700 Ringing Mulled wine and handbell ringing until 1800

### PLANNED MAKEOVERS

Angela Clark

Tonbridge – The faculty has been granted by Rochester for Tonbridge bells to undergo a rehang and the “official notice” is displayed next to the West Door. Once 28 days have elapsed, and as soon as Taylors have space, work can commence.

Penshurst – There was a party in Penshurst church on 8th June to kick off the rehang of their ground floor 8. Local folk were all invited and were served Canapes made by the ringers (none of your sandwiches and crisps here).

We hope it will not be too long before work can commence.

## Tail End

### WEDDING CERTIFICATES.

Tessa Worthington

A recent article in the Ringing World caught my eye. A band of ringers had realised that weddings, and fees for the bells, were becoming very costly. As a result, they decided to produce an official looking certificate for the happy couple to keep as a memento.

To emerge from the church to the sound of bells is something many couples opt for -be they churchgoers or not, and I believe it is a service we should and often happily provide. However so often the belfry is out of sight, as are the ringers, and therefore the producing of a certificate - nicely done with dates, names of the ringers, time and place etc. would be a reminder to them of the day and those involved, apart from family and friends.

A local printer would be able to come up with what was wanted and well worth thinking about for the future.