

ROUNDS & ABOUT

Tonbridge District Newsletter No.16 SEPTEMBER 2024

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

Training

HOW ON EARTH DO YOU HELP NEW RINGERS TO COUNT PLACES? Ray Taylor

I attended an ART course at Rochester at the end of August dealing specifically with ways of helping new ringers to count places. Lots of excellent exercises that I hadn't come across to get new ringers understanding places at the call change stage, well before attempting plain hunt. You may have heard of Kaleidoscope exercises? Simple and fun exercises. There are lots of resources on the ART website so you can cherry pick to suit your band and new ringers. ART course costs are reimbursed from the KCACR Training Fund. If you are looking for effective ways to help your new ringers then I highly recommend attending an ART course and looking at its resources. <https://ringingteachers.org/>

AUGUST TRAINING SESSIONS --- "TOWARDS METHOD RINGING" Ray Taylor

These sessions included leading, making places and dodging - the skills needed (in addition to hunting) in all method ringing.

SPELDHURST

Leader	Emma Tamkin	Speldhurst
Students	Edward Hutt	Hawkhurst
	Laurence Trim	Tonbridge
	Mahala Turnbull	Hever
Helpers	Anthony Leeves	Speldhurst
	Elaine Merrylees	Westerham
	Mike Worthington	Speldhurst
	Nick Byrne	Penshurst
	Tessa Worthington	Unattached
	Zena Seal	Speldhurst

HADLOW

Leader	Fran James	Leigh
Students	Deb Williams	Tonbridge
	Jeanette Parker	Oxford
	Katie Malpass	Speldhurst
Helpers	Ann Jenner	Hadlow
	David James	Leigh
	Howard Rogers	Hadlow
	Pam Thomas	Tonbridge
	Sara Hardy	Westerham
	Stan Jenner	Hadlow

News

GOLD AT SANDHURST

Angela Clark

We had an attendance of 14 at the District Practice when we went to Sandhurst at the beginning of August. This is our most distant tower, but well worth a visit. We were pleased to welcome David Chesson from Wittersham, a regular supporter. The bells are a lovely ground floor 6 and although an anti-clockwise ring, once you get going, they do not present much of a problem.

The Tower Captain, Alexis Wylie, arrived telling us she must rush off to watch the TV as her Godson Charlie Elwes was rowing in the Men's 8 Final at the Olympics. Even better, she came back to let us know they won GOLD.

Emma Tamkin ensured that all present were accommodated, ringing their requested method and those mastering Plain Hunt soon got the hang of looking to see which bell to follow. The sun streamed into the ringing chamber and Alexis made tea and brought out a home-made cake. A gentleman who was sitting out was almost charged for his tea, until we realised he is Sara's partner who had come along for the ride. Altogether it was a Golden Day.



FIRE IN THE GRAVEYARD

Angela Clark

Off we went to the pub in Tonbridge (The Chequers) following our practice during August, to be greeted by the Landlord expressing his surprise that we were able to ring. We looked blank and he produced impressive pictures of a fire in the graveyard at Tonbridge and assumed the church would have been badly affected.



Fortunately, all was well, apart from severe damage to a very old gravestone. The Fire Brigade had dealt with the blaze and the area was cordoned off. We never knew this had taken place a few hours before our practice. Apparently, a pile of grass cuttings etc had over-heated and gone up in flames.

SUNDRIDGE, SEPTEMBER 24

Angela Clark

The practice arranged as the last event before the ADM took place at Sundridge, a heavy 6 which were great fun to ring. The ringing was organised by retiring Joint Ringing Master, Phil Jarvis who ensured every ringer was included and all requests were met. I am very sorry that Phil (and others) are leaving their posts on the District Committee and hope we shall see them at future District events.

There were 25 of us, lots of Call Changes, Plain Hunt and Plain Bob Doubles, and the A Team rang Norwich Surprise, Bourne and Kent Treble Bob – not a Stedman in sight!!!

The local team provided endless tea and coffee in the church and also ascended the many steps to join the ringing. A new visitor to District events, Oscar from Farnborough, impressed us with his ringing skills (he will soon be 14). He is a keen tennis player, and pianist - earlier that morning he completed a Park Run. – we look forward to seeing him again soon.

PENSHURST BELLS

Roberta Weatherley

As many of you know the Peshurst bells have a somewhat interesting reputation. They are characters. The treble needs a firm hand, the 2 is bouncy (rather like a friendly labrador, willing to please but uncontrollable at times), the 3 is pleasant, the 4 is tricky, the 5 is dependable, the 6 is just plain naughty, the 7 and 8 are heavy and solid and if handled properly just get on with it.

However this is all about to change next year when the bells will be rehung. Full funding has been achieved and we are now waiting for the final go-ahead from the Diocese. The aim is for the work to be completed by the end of April 2025. This project has been in the making since 2013 when a report by Whites of Appleton identified a number of problems with the bells and their mechanisms. However it was not until 2023 that the project really started to gain impetus, driven by parishioners Charles Fuller-Rowell, Zaria Maltz together with Peshurst's tower captain, Janice Byrne.

In June of this year a presentation in Peshurst Church launched the project, and the fundraising began in earnest. A sponsorship scheme was devised whereby people could sponsor a bell for £1000, a wheel for £500, a headstock for £250, a rope for £100, or give any amount. We also received grants from the Kent County Association of Change Ringers, and from the National Heritage Lottery Fund.

So much hard work went into this and those who ring at Peshurst are very excited. We shall of course miss the old characters but will be welcoming the new ones, which does of course include the ringers.

CHIDDINGSTONE WEDDING

Angela Clark

The sun shone down on a lovely wedding at Chiddingstone on a Thursday in September and the 6 ringers (before and after) were joined by Ben from Chevening who was a guest at the wedding.

The instructions from the church requested that we did not start ringing until 12 noon because the school children were taking their 11+ exam, so we started getting the bells up at 12.15.

Two of the six bridesmaids led the procession up the aisle, both leading dogs – presumably belonging to the happy couple. On completion of the service, we rang some nice call changes to accompany "Are You Ready for Love" by Elton John, then off they all went to High Rocks for the reception and the weather remained perfect.

REMEMBERIG DAVID FEATHERSTONE

Angela Clark

A quarter peal of Grandsire Triples was rung on 7th September 2024 at Withyham in memory of David Featherstone who many District members will fondly remember. He rang at Tonbridge in the 70s and, following a move to Tunbridge Wells, rang both there and at Withyham.

The quarter was also in memory of Rebecca Player, daughter of the tenor ringer, who learned to ring at Withyham in the 80s.

Future Delights

5 th OCTOBER	ANNUAL DISTRICT MEETING	HAWKHURST	10.00 Ringing 11.30 Tea, Cake, Handbell Ringing 12 Noon ADM
2 nd NOVEMBER	DISTRICT PRACTICE	TUNBRIDGE WELLS	10-12 NOON
7 th DECEMBER	CHRISTMAS RINGING	SPELDHURST	1600-1700 Ringing

Tail End

[...and you thought bellringers were odd!](#)

I was sitting outside a local belfry recently, minding my own business, when a lady wandered up and looked in towards the belfry stairs.

When enquiring if she were a bellringer, she replied that she was not. She then asked me if I liked cucumbers and I replied that I did, whereupon she opened her bag, handed me a cucumber and walked away.

Tessa Worthington

