

# ROUNDS & ABOUT

Tonbridge District Newsletter No.17 October 2024

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

## Training

### TRAINING DAY 21st SEPTEMBER

#### **Hadlow**

Leader	Ray Taylor	Hadlow
Students	Deb Williams	Tonbridge
	Esther Haswell	Hadlow
	Katie Malpass	Speldhurst
Helpers	Ann Jenner	Hadlow
	Howard Rogers	Hadlow
	Jacqui Fletcher	Tonbridge
	Jane Kostelnyk	Unattached
	Sara Waldron	Westerham
	Stan Jenner	Hadlow

#### **Speldhurst**

Leader	David James	Leigh
Students	Adey Grummet	Cowden
	Bob Turnbull	Hever
	Mahala Turnbull	Hever
Helpers	Emma Tamkin	Speldhurst
	Fran James	Leigh
	Jen Thomas	Brasted
	Mike Worthington	Speldhurst
	Tessa Worthington	Unattached
	Zena Seal	Speldhurst

#### HADLOW

#### DEB WILLIAMS

The training session at Hadlow started with the theory of the circle of work for Bob Doubles and a look at where each bell has to start and what their first piece of work would be.

We did bell control exercises, which was determined by the throw of a dice to know how many pulls before setting the bell. As learners we were all hoping for an even number. We rang rounds to practice our listening skills.

The experienced ringers then rang for us .....

Ray ... was leading but his backstroke was too quick !

Sarah bell 2 ... too close at handstroke!

Jacqui bell 3 .. clipping bell 2 at backstroke!

Stan bell 4 ... too close to bell 3 at handstroke!

Howard bell 5 .. too slow at backstroke!

Jane bell 6 ... also too close at backstroke!

This was a great exercise for us learners to again use our listening skills. Luckily for the neighbours the simulator was being used . As learners we all had a go at making places and at dodging - ready for when we attempted Bob doubles. We did an exercise dodging 3/4 up then stayed in 4th place for 4 pulls then dodged 3/4 down staying in 3rd place for 4 pulls. Then it was crunch time to put our theory and practice all together and do a plain course of Bob Doubles - Esther did a very good job of a touch.

As learners we all had a good session and came away positive.  
Many thanks to all who made this possible.

## SPELDHURST

## MAHALA TURNBULL

Speldhurst was the location for our ringing session today. These training days are always popular and my husband and I find them hugely beneficial. With one other trainee and six very competent ringers, we find 'light-bulb' moments (albeit a very low wattage!) during every one. The opportunity to practise in small groups with a capable 'expert' on our shoulder means that the issues that plague us can be explained and, with any luck, corrected. The trainers are always hugely patient and take into account the difference in bell weight and pull for each of us so we have the opportunity to turn the bell over before setting off on our training journey.

Dodging, Plain Hunt together with Bayles Bob Doubles were covered together with Place Making and, though my head is in a bit of a spin, I know that, eventually all the dots will join up. But for now, the whole learning process is alternately exasperating, rewarding, baffling and hugely exciting when one of those pennies drop.

A big thank you to those people who give up their Saturday mornings to impart their knowledge - it's massively appreciated.



## Future Events

2 <sup>nd</sup> NOVEMBER	DISTRICT PRACTICE	TUNBRIDGE WELLS	10-12 NOON
7 <sup>th</sup> DECEMBER	CHRISTMAS RINGING	SPELDHURST	1600-1700 Ringing
4 <sup>TH</sup> JAN. 2025	DISTRICT QUARTERLY MEETING	BRENCHLEY	10-11.45 RINGING 12 NOON MEETING

### DISTRICT METHOD STRIKING COMPETITION

RAY TAYLOR

### We were Second!!

Four bands met at Beckenham on 28th September 2024 for the Inter-District 6-bell Method Striking Competition, with Hadlow representing the Tonbridge District. Ringing took place on the front 6 (6cwt) of the 10 bells (14cwt). All bands rang 240 of doubles. Cathy and Simon Dixon from the Peterborough Guild were the judges. Our ringing was quickest at 8 mins 10 secs; Rochester rang slowest at 8 mins 50 secs. The most notable comment from the judges was that we had "some good ringing trying to get out". We thought we'd blown it but actually came second and were very happy with that result. Canterbury's ringing was solid throughout and they won deservedly by a clear margin.

1ST CANTERBURY – 43 FAULTS

2nd TONBRIDGE - 64 FAULTS

3RD ROCHESTER - 78.5 FAULTS

4TH LEWISHAM - 96.5 FAULTS

### ANNUAL DISTRICT MEETING

Angela Clark

We held the ADM at Hawkhurst in October 24. The heavy 8 were easy to ring for most. Curiously nearly all the 24 ringers present were very experienced and this was reflected in the ringing which was well organised by Phil Jarvis who was putting in his last appearance as Ringing Master. Apart from some Plain Hunt and a few Call Changes, there was a lot of Stedman and some surprise methods. We were pleased to welcome Neil Jones, Chairman of the KCACR who later gave a most helpful report to the meeting on the way forward for ringing.

The meeting took place in the church which was being decorated for Harvest Festival and the Hawkhurst ringers supplied welcome refreshments which were much appreciated. We also had two Spaniels with us - Jasper Jarvis and Team Steele from Frittenden who joined us in the Ringing Chamber, good as gold and only four months old.

We lost some members of the Committee who decided not to stand again: Tessa Worthington who has done an excellent job of Acting District Secretary for 3 years, but will remain as KCACR District Rep along with Caroline Levy-Cooper. Other changes include Phil Jarvis as Ringing Master, Ray Taylor, Training Co-ordinator and Eric Roughley as joint District Rep. We are, however, delighted to announce that the District Secretary job has been taken up by Dmitry Zhuravlev (Tonbridge).

NOTE: Since the meeting both Deb Williams (Tonbridge) and Katie Malpass (Speldhurst) have agreed to join the Committee.





## STRIKING COMPETITIONS ARE FUN!

CAROLINE LEVY-COOPER

As there had not been a Tonbridge District 6-bell striking competition during the year, the Cowden band were asked to put a band in as we had won the Horton Trophy last year (when the competition took place absolutely miles away – in Monkton). We were not able to enter the same band this year, but we persuaded two relatively new ringers to join us as we thought it would be a useful and enjoyable experience for them. This time the competition was held at St. George's, Beckenham, - a ten-bell tower and we were to ring the back six. First of all we had lunch in a pub near the church where we bumped into Neil Jones, Chairman of the KCACR, entertaining the two judges! How tempting it was to offer to buy their lunch!

We got to the church in good time for the draw which resulted in our ringing fourth. There were five teams this year - one more than last year and these were Rochester Cathedral, Bredgar, Kent Young Ringers, Lewisham and us. Our nerves increased a little as one by one the first three teams did their ringing (five minutes of practice time followed by ten minutes of call changes). At last, it was our turn and we did our best before the Kent Young Ringers rang and completed the bands taking part. After half an hour or so it was time for the results, which were delivered by the two judges, who came from Peterborough. Although we came fifth we all agreed that we had had a very enjoyable day and all of us would like to encourage bands to enter the competition next year. It is an enjoyable day out - probably to a new tower - and a good chance to meet others who ring in Kent. Bands should not feel that they "are not good enough". The main thing really is that the competition takes place in a friendly and not too serious way, it is a very good experience and concentrates the mind on good striking knowing that people really are listening. If ringers do not



Andy Wickenden, Robin Rouse, Caroline Levy-Cooper, Adey Grummet, Clive Lumsden, Julia Church

support these events, which take time and effort to organise, then they will cease to happen and that would be a tremendous shame. I think the competition will be hosted by Maidstone District next year.

### 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE COWDEN TRAIN CRASH

CAROLINE LEVY-COOPER

On the 15th October 1994, early in the morning, there was a terrible train collision just beyond Cowden railway station on the single track between Cowden and Ashurst. Two trains collided head on, killing five people and injuring 13. Rescue efforts were hampered as the crash occurred in an embankment surrounded by fields, and road access was not possible.

This year, 2024, marks the 30th anniversary of that terrible event and commemorations took place on 15<sup>th</sup> October at Cowden Station during the morning, with around 200 people in attendance.

The event started with a memorial service led by a Railway Chaplain, followed by wreath laying. Refreshments were served in a marquee located in the Old Station Master's House garden. There were several speeches and presentations and finally the unveiling of a 30 year memorial plaque.

A quarter peal was rung in Cowden during the commemorations. Anthony Leeves kindly agreed to conduct it for us. The other ringers were: Andy Wickenden, Catherine Lewis, Oliver Engleback, Dmitry Zhuravlev and me, Caroline Levy-Cooper



### 120 CLUB

Results from draw at the Hawkhurst ADM

£40 No.68	Caroline Stockmann	Sevenoaks
£30 No. 84	Hope Pym	Sundridge
£20 No. 60	Chris Horsman	Speldhurst
£31.50 Bonus No.82	Emma Tamkin	Speldhurst

## GOODBYE TONBRIDGE BELLS

ANGELA CLARK

Tonbridge bells have been despatched to Taylors in Loughborough for a tidy up, a retuning and, possibly, a diet. Since no serious work on the eight has been undertaken since the 50s, it is not before time.

For some while we have agreed that they were getting more and more difficult to ring and “something should be done” but we were spurred into action when an anonymous bequest from a member of the congregation left £30K for “the bells”. This sum, together with our savings and some very generous grants from various organisations resulted in enough to apply for a faculty and place the order.

At the beginning of October Taylors gave notice they would like to start work on the 14th of October or it would be some months before they could start. Gavin Knight saw that all the paperwork was in order for the contract, liaising with Taylors and the church PCC as well as sorting help from Brian Butcher’s team. The Tonbridge band along with Hugo Tracy and one of Brian Butcher’s men dismantled the ropes, stays, wheels and roller boxes, and moved them to the ringing room before more of Brian Butcher’s men and the Taylors man arrived to lower the bells. First bell to come down was the tenor and getting it past the clock caused, let’s say, a little excitement but it passed through well enough. The bells were lowered to the West Door blocking the church entrance for the week.

The lowered bells caused endless wonder for the congregation who realised just how large they are. Local residents had to be asked to move their cars to enable the lorry collecting the bells access, and the church wished the ringers good health during their last ring with some welcome Prosecco.

Seven of the bells were loaded then spent the night at Clacket Lane Service Station, where there is adequate security, and the tenor was loaded the following day. The bells will be away for up to 4 months



Preparation: Stays, wheels, ropes and roller boxes removed to the ringing room.

