



# LEWISHAM DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

JULY 1998

KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS

Kent County Association of Change Ringers  
8 BELL  
COUNTY STRIKING COMPETITION  
1998

**WINNERS**

LEWISHAM DISTRICT

held at  
St Michael Hernhill.

Paul Flavell  
Judge

David Robinson  
Judge

The evening of Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> June was proving to be pretty miserable. Standing under the lych gate at St Mary Cray talking to Philippa Rooke and Len Morley, waiting for the rain to stop and hoping that a key would arrive to open up the tower. Not a good start for a district practice.

Fortunately Nigel and Ruth Pointer soon pulled up, with big grins on their faces, clutching the County Eight Bell Trophy.

The evening had suddenly improved.

For the uninitiated there is an annual inter-district eight bell competition. It doesn't usually get much publicity because unlike the six bell competition there isn't a district competition to select the band to represent the district. The band, hand picked by the Ringing Master normally try and practice before the competition and then disappear off into to Kent to defend the district's reputation - currently quite good having now won this particular trophy eight times out of the fourteen times the competition has been held.

This year the competition down at St Michael's Hernhill was quite close. The judges Paul Flavell and David Robinson from Kingston upon Thames commented on the high standard of ringing on a light ring of bells which suffered particularly from the first and second being a little odd struck.

The test piece, a plain course of Lincolnshire Surprise Major, was tricky to strike well due to the five pull dodges at the

front that can so easily destroy the rhythm. Rather unusually the judges opted for a scoring system of 2 points for a good row, 1 point for a trip and zero for a serious crunch or method mistake - so rather than looking for a minimum score, a perfect score of 448 was the target.

The team of

1. Peter Swift
2. Ruth Pointer
3. Rupert Cheeseman
4. Mark Jones
5. Richard Pearce
6. Nick Wilkins
7. Nigel Pointer
8. James Hardy

were drawn third and in the words of the judges "had a really good start" and "scored really well". Surprisingly for a band from the Lewisham District containing Beckenham ringers they did not ring the fastest, ringing a peal speed of 2 hours 48 minutes - a speed popular with other bands as well.

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## July Quarterly Meeting

**Date:** Saturday 11th July

**Service:** 4-30 p.m. Cudham (followed by meeting)

**BRING YOUR OWN PICNIC TEA**

**Evening**

**Ringing:** Downe 7-00 to 8-00 p.m.

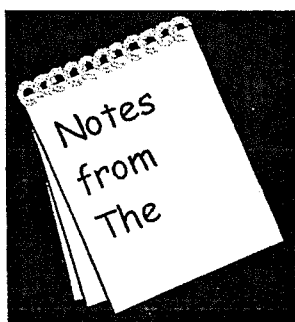
**Meeting to discuss papers on fundraising and the Institute of Bellringing Instructors - details inside**

(Continued from page 1)

The final placings were as follows:

1. Lewisham District	393 / 448
2. Tonbridge	389 / 448
3. Ashford	368 / 448
4. Canterbury	367 / 448
5. Maidstone	353 / 448
6. Rochester	342 / 448

Congratulations to all the members of the band - thank you James for organising the successful band however I hear as usual that you were not friendly to know until the results were announced.



### REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETING

2ND MAY 1998

There was a long discussion on the eligibility for 50 years membership certificates for those members who have broken service. It was decided to leave it to the discretion of the committee for each individual case.

The librarian stated that the memorial book for the dead of the 1914/18 war is going ahead. We are waiting to hear from the Cathedral authorities about placing it in the tower at Canterbury.

With regard to the replacement for the handbook editor interest has been shown by one of our newer ringers but he would like to work with Frank Lewis before making a decision.

Ideas are needed for the raising of £ 1,000 per annum from the districts and one suggestion that was discussed was an increase in wedding fees. This was not thought to be a viable proposition. The chairman is getting in contact with all the district secretaries.

I am pleased to report that the Centenary Fund has now been settled and arrangements are being made for a plaque to be placed in the church at Bickley.

The millennium committee for the county is now in place and David Manger is the chairman. Obviously advertising in all the churches is going to be essential plus contact with the local authorities.

On a personal note I would like to say that I have enjoyed being your District Representative for the past few years. I rec-

ommend that ringers should serve on these committees as it certainly makes you realise how many people give so much of their time and energy to the training of ringers and upkeep of the bells.

As you know John and I are moving to Leicester in the near future so we would like to take this opportunity of saying good-bye and wishing you all the best for your future ringing.

Mary Hill

BEEN OUT TO ANOTHER  
PRACTICE LATELY?



The recent survey of district ringing indicated that there are several towers who would appreciate help on their practice night. I have listed these below, together with the type of help they need. Please take time to read through it and see whether YOU can do anything to help. If your tower is on the list, please see if there is somewhere else that you could assist, and if your tower is not, then go out and help someone anyway - you'll have a good evening out, and might meet some new people. You never know what might happen when you go visiting - just ask the newsletter editor!

#### Bickley

They are now sharing practices with Bromley Common, ringing at each tower on alternate weeks.

#### Biggin Hill

Need people with experience. They would appreciate visitors to get their learners up to plain hunt standard.

#### Crayford

Would like experienced ringers to visit occasionally.

#### Cudham and Downe

As with Crayford, they would appreciate occasional visits from more expert ringers to help promote good striking.

#### Dartford

Support would be appreciated to help bridge the gap between plain hunt and plain bob.

#### Eltham

They would like willing helpers for teaching and support for method ringing.

#### Erith (CC)

They would like visiting ringers on practice nights.

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### Erith (St John)

Visiting ringers on practice nights would be welcome.

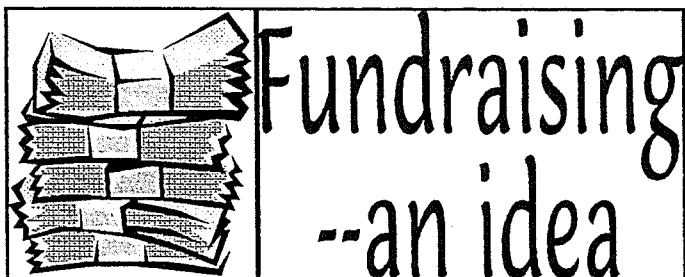
### Hayes

Occasional visits from experienced ringers to enable band to ring more advanced methods would be helpful.

### Sidcup

Need help to progress.

Sara Hardy



The following article comes from the Ashford district and is one of the items that we are being asked to discuss at the next district meeting.

**To:** All Tower Secretaries  
**Subject:** Kent County Association of Change Ringers  
Bell Restoration Fund

As you are probably aware, at least 50% of all our members' annual subscriptions, together with all the money from any fund raising events throughout the county goes into 'The Bell Restoration Fund'. Over the last few years, thanks too the hard work of many and the extreme generosity of a few, especially the legacy of the late Bert Luck, we have been able to make grants of up to £ 6,000 to those churches requesting help with essential bell maintenance and restoration work. As this money is relatively unconditional it can act as a significant 'pump primer' allowing other grants to be obtained from many other sources which are conditional on matching money being available from elsewhere.

Not only is the money used for direct grants, but it is also used to pay the expenses of the highly skilled team of voluntary workers in the county who carry out a great deal of maintenance work and give direct assistance to the professional bell hangers when major work is being undertaken. They also provide 'expert' advice on all matters to do with bell maintenance and restoration. Their practical help in these matters, would cost many thousands of pounds annually if they were not available. Due to dwindling funds, we are unable to continue giving at the present rate without significant increases in the income.

Many ways have been suggested of raising money, including; increasing the annual subscriptions for ringers, encouraging people to leave legacies to the KCACR Bell Restoration Fund,

all manner of social activities, etc. Most of the ideas have been tried and the increases in giving gratefully received. Unfortunately, nearly, all rely on tapping the same sources of income - the bell-ringers or the local churches.

At a recent meeting, of the Ashford District of the KCACR when this topic was again being discussed, the suggestion was made from the floor, 'that it would be a good idea to ask each of our churches to raise the fees for bells at weddings by £10 and this to be given by the tower to the KCACR Bell Restoration Fund'.

The whole of the meeting thought this was an excellent idea, having, many advantages over our normal fund raising activities; it would bring in money other than from ringers, and in many instances from outside the church; the sums raised would be fairly substantial; for many wedding couples the sound of the bells is an absolutely essential part of the wedding, but the cost to them for the several hundreds of thousand of pounds of equipment, and the dedication of 6, 8, 10 or even 12 highly trained ringers for up to 2 hours is minuscule in comparison with the cost of, for instance, the photographer.

I took this idea back to my own church authorities and after initial explanation, there was instant unanimous agreement, the only significant question being 'is £ 10 enough?'. It has been estimated that there are approx. 2,000 weddings per year in churches that are in union, with the KCACR if only half the churches committed themselves to increasing the fees for bells by £ 10 per wedding, this would provide an additional income of £10,000 annually.

I therefore implore you to discuss this idea with your ringers and then to make a formal approach to the relevant authorities in your church. Even if it is too late to implement in 1998 it should be in time for 1999, or 2000.

PG Sims  
Chairman - Ashford District, KCACR 11/3/98

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**Copy deadline**  
Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> September

Please send articles to  
**Jeremy Byers**  
2 Carlton Court  
23 Beckenham Road  
Beckenham  
Kent  
BR3 4PP

☎ 0181-289-5675 ✉ [jeremybyers@virgin.net](mailto:jeremybyers@virgin.net)

Copy on disk or by email preferred!

## An Institute of Bellingring Instructors

A discussion paper written by Michael Henshaw has been circulated throughout the country with a suggestion for the formation of an "Institute of Bellingring Instructors"

Its objectives would be to promote good practice in the teaching of bellingring in both practical and theoretical aspects. It is suggesting that there would be various levels of membership, associate membership might be granted for the adoption of the Institutes objectives with higher levels of membership being attained through training and testing.

One of the points the paper raises is that "membership of such a body may become a criterion for authority to teach" and that this could lead to a reduction in the numbers of teachers and the demise of ringers. The counter argument to this is that it is only a matter of time before the need for a qualification to teach is imposed and that it is better to form a body from within ringing rather than have it imposed.

Unfortunately the full document is rather lengthy and as such cannot be squeezed in this month. If anyone is interested they can obtain a copy from Mary Andrews or myself

Jeremy Byers

## 1st Quarter Success

As Christopher has been ringing for nine months now and making good progress we thought it would be appropriate to mark his confirmation on May 3rd with his first attempt at a quarter peal. A wedding at Christ Church on May 4th provided us with the ideal opportunity. My parents had stayed the night (Grandad taught Christopher to ring last summer in an intensive week of lessons) and my uncle came over from West London which meant that there were five of us in the band who had rung a quarter peal for Christopher's christening in 1985.

While waiting for the bride to arrive there was an almighty thump from amongst the bells and the sound of only 7 bells not 8. On investigation we found that the clapper of the 6th had fallen out! Luckily it wasn't broken so that during the wedding Mark and my father were able to effect the necessary repairs. They couldn't, however, repair the slider that had been broken by the clapper falling out. Mark volunteered to ring the 6th and just had to remember to be careful when we had finished ringing!

The quarter peal was scored in 46 minutes and Christopher rang extremely well.

1260 changes of GRANDSIRE TRIPLES

1. CHRISTOPHER BACKHOUSE
2. MICHAEL, SPRACKLING
3. PAULINE SMITH
4. RACHEL BACKHOUSE
5. NIGEL PARSONS
6. MARK BACKHOUSE
7. ALAN SMITH (CONDUCTOR)
8. MARY HILL

Rachel Backhouse



If it were that easy and I had the formula I would bottle and sell it!

This is one of the many areas that the current millennium committee is trying to help with but as usual there isn't an easy answer - if there was we wouldn't have a problem. This article is an attempt to give you some ideas that might help.

Looking at the world today the thing that you notice is that everyone is very busy. As such when looking to recruit new ringers you have to appreciate that you are going into a market place. You are going to be competing with hundreds of activities all looking to utilise peoples precious leisure time.

In order to stand a chance of attracting new ringers you have to make people aware that

- ringing exists
- it is fun and enjoyable

### General Awareness

Making people aware that ringing exists and that new ringers are welcome is probably the first stage.

There is a need to breakdown the general perception that "bells ring themselves" or that it is all mechanical. The average persons understanding and perception of ringing stops at the Church door, it doesn't even get as far as the tower.

So how do you get over this hurdle?

The Millennium and all the press and television articles have no doubt helped on a national basis. However you still need to follow this up at a local level. Articles in church maga-

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zines, the local press, tower open days and the like are all good ways forward. Remember don't stop at one article and wait for the rush - keep putting articles in magazines - if people start seeing that you are an active group then they may become more interested

Also what's your advertising like in the Church. If you are anything like Beckenham, you might just find a faded K.C.A.C.R notice advertising ringing times - if you can read it I bet it isn't up to date.

With all the home PC technology there must be someone around who can knock up some bold notices to welcome visitors into the tower. If you are hoping to recruit from the church congregation you have got to make them realise they are welcome - before they take their life in their hands and start climbing that spiral staircase.

It's so simple isn't it - not at all. I realise that this sort of effort is hard graft. Often with no apparent reward and you can easily start with good intentions and within two or three months have given up.

Try it - if you get depressed about the response try talking to other towers in the district, see if they have come up with any cunning plans to recruit ringers.

#### **Making it fun and enjoyable**

Having got new recruits try and keep it fun and enjoyable. We all know that learning to ring is very difficult and at times soul destroying. You turn up to practice for weeks and weeks, get ten minutes on the end of a bell if you are lucky and seem to end up going backwards - result one ex-recruit who disappears very quickly.

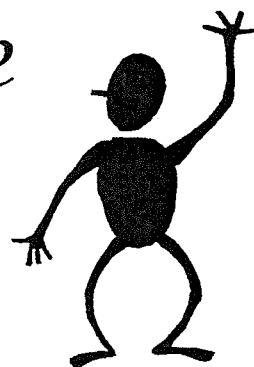
An important point is to get your new recruit's address and contact phone number. This means that you can phone them and keep up the contact - surprising what a difference feeling wanted makes!

After that it is just a question of trying to use all the means available to encourage your new recruits. At Beckenham the use of One per Learners has been the mainstay for several years yet it has only been lately that we have used the Bell Club award packs. The use of individual progress charts has been useful at times when our learners have been looking fed up - when you break handling down into stages you realise how much they have progressed.

In an attempt to help as much as possible I am going to try and put together some idea's and some sources of information that towers might find useful. If you would like one (when I've written it) or have anything that you think could usefully included in it please let me know.

Jeremy Byers

# Goodbye John



Hill is a family name that we have had in the tower for 61 years. John's Father had been "Tower Captain" for 30 years, when he passed away in 1967 and it was then that John took over.

After 31 years of being Tower Captain himself, he finally retired from the position at our AGM on the 26 April. Being dedicated to the job, as John was, I don't believe that it was an easy thing to do after such a long time. Mary and John are to retire to Oadby in Leicestershire, close to Diana and Andrew. This will be a great loss to many campanologists especially the Erith ringers. John did a splendid job, he has a wonderfully kind and understanding nature, he always had time and patience to train new ringers, which can be a thankless task. He would put in hours of his time training enthusiastic new ringers, to reach a good ringing standard, only for them to give it up for one reason or another. But that would never deter John, he kept going, he taught more people than anyone here at Christ Church can remember, as well as the tower at St. Johns.

I would like to say thank-you John and Mary, on behalf of all the ringers at Christ Church and those who have since moved to other towers, for doing such a fine job and being two great people. May your retirement be a long and happy one.

Carol Eastaugh.

## Ring in "2,000"

### Committee

A quick update on what we've been up to since the last meeting

The plans for the fund raising for a bursary scheme are being discussed and we hope to have something to report on this in the near future.

On the 5<sup>th</sup> July we are hoping to get enough people together ring the bells at Deptford with a view to encouraging members of the congregation to learn to ring. We are hopeful of a good response.

Moves are afoot to write to all the vicars of all the district churches to let them know about the ringing on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2000. We are planning to contact those churches which

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have bells that can only be chimed as well.

If you are interested in what we are up to please contact any of the committee members who are

Cathy Hall, Rupert Cheeseman, Mark Jones, Caroline Poll, Margaret Macey, Philippa Rooke, Len Morley, Ruth Pointer, Keith Tolputt, Jeremy Byers, Jessica Vale, Sara Hardy and Don Pointer

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## Editor's Column

This quarters newsletter comes to you packed with articles that until a few days ago I did not think I would have and consequently thought you would be faced with a few articles that have appeared in the press over the last few months.

In case you get overwhelmed with information overload I would like to draw your attention to two that we have been asked to comment on at the next district meeting. These are

1. Ashford Districts fundraising idea
2. The Institute of Bell Ringing Instructors

Ashford's idea for raising funds by asking churches to raise wedding fees charged to wedding couples and donate the surplus raised is a sound one and has the major advantage of widening the pool of donors for ringing fund raising from that of ringers alone to the public fairly easily. Clearly the suggestion made by Ashford needs to be considered by each individual tower alone, however I would urge all towers to consider whether some of any such funds raised could not be directed towards the "Ring in 2,000" fund raising project that we discussed at the last quarterly meeting.

As to the Institute of Bell Ringing Instructors idea I would urge members to get their hands on a copy of the discussion paper and let Michael Henshaw have your views. My own personal opinion is that although this sounds like an excellent idea in theory the practical implications are rather worrying. In my mind it would turn ringing from a hobby to something more commercial. Ultimately exams and training would have to be funded, and I can see that the easiest way would be to charge fees for training, exams and membership. This would be moving away from the current ethos of ringing which I find particularly enjoyable - helping others to learn, donating my time and efforts because I wish to - I spend my life selling my time as a professional during the week, I have no desire to start selling or having to pay for other people's time when it comes to learning to ring.

Finally on a totally different note I would like to thank all

those ringers who helped Fiona and myself have such a wonderful wedding day. That includes the bunch of lunatics who came and rang Rutland Surprise Major before my stag night, all the ringers involved on the day and those who rang a peal for us. You are all totally mad, but we had a great day, I hope you enjoyed it too.

Jeremy Byers

The views expressed above are the personal thoughts of the editor and are not the views of any committees that he is currently associated with.

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## Fancy a day out

Anyone fancy a day out ringing?

No qualification needed except that you ring methods preferably simpler ones.

At the moment it is proposed for sometime in August - hopefully to take some of the younger ringers in the district out for a day.

A perfect opportunity to get rid of the kids and know that they're only out ringing and not annoying the neighbours any other way.

If you are interested please call Philippa Rooke (01689-812236) or Margaret Macey (0181-302-4992) and they will consider arranging something if there is enough interest.

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## Noise Complaints in 1909?!

*Taken from the Beckenham Parish Magazine January 1909*

The matter of the Parish Church Bells was also discussed in view of not a little acrimonious correspondence on the subject of the ringing of the bells in the local Press. Mr Churchwarden Borrowman gave a long and extremely interesting address on the history of the Beckenham Bells, and the Rector explained the law on the point. By law the Churchwardens are responsible for seeing that bells are duly rung at proper times, but Rector has a legal right to lock the belfry to prevent the bells from being rung at all, if he sees sufficient cause.

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Meanwhile the bell-ringing in moderation and at proper times seems to give pleasure, for our peal of bells is now of the finest in the county, and they are excellently rung by the present bell-ringers. No doubt for those living close to the Church the noise of the bells if a practice is unduly prolonged, is very distracting to some temperaments but in cases of serious illness in any house near the Church the ringing is always suspended when due notice is given, and it was suggested that the Practice on Thursday nights (which is, of course, absolutely necessary if a fine level of ringing is to be maintained) might begin at 7-30 p.m. (specially for those who are learners of the art), and close at 9p.m., while invitations to strange ringers to ring long peals (a custom amongst Church bell-ringers, which cannot be quite ignored), should be given only at rare intervals, as it is this very long prolonged pealing which gives most trouble to near residents. Mr Borrowman said that some mechanical shutters in the belfry were being made with a view to lessening the sound. It seemed to be generally felt in the Council that no notice need be taken of the anonymous and offensive letters in the Press.

**Some things never change!!!**

## Names for the Millennium Please

Tower captains and secretaries will probably remember filling in a questionnaire for the millennium Committee, which was designed to give us an idea of the state of ringing in the district.

One of the things to come out of the responses is that nearly all towers are claiming that they will have more people available to ring on 1 January 2000 than they have currently ringing for Sunday service! This may indicate that some towers have included regular visitors in their total, or the numbers may include learners who are not yet ready for service ringing. This, together with other discrepancies means that it has not been possible to get a meaningful figure for the number of ringers in the district.

As a result, we have decided to try to compile a list of names of ringers. We will then be able to see whether some people are being counted by two towers, and hopefully get a better idea of the number and distribution of ringers. **PUTTING YOUR NAME ON THIS LIST DOES NOT COMMIT YOU TO RING ON 1 JANUARY 2000.**

We will be looking at that aspect nearer the time.

We cannot get this information from the handbook, as not all ringers are members of the association.

We would like individuals to be aware that this list exists and for people to ensure that their name is on it. If you are not attached to a tower, please give your name to a member of the Millennium Committee (a list appeared in the April newsletter).

Towers captains and/or secretaries, please could you give a list of names, including all learners, to your designated committee representative (see April newsletter) by 30 July. We will be looking to update this list at the end of the year.

We realise that this is an extra job for you all, but we hope that it will be a worthwhile exercise.

Thank you all for your help.

Sara Hardy

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**B**eckenham Tower Open Day - just enough room to squeeze in a note about the Beckenham Tower Open Day on 9th May. The tower was opened as part of the church open day and arts festival. We managed to squeeze in the Jubilee, the Central Council Display Boards, a video presentation, tower tours and demonstration ringing - overall a lot of hard work but a lot of fun and Demelza House Childrens Hospice is £ 27-94 better off. Thank you to everyone at Beckenham who helped  
James Hardy

## For who tolls the bells of Britain

Part One - by Byron Rogers

Taken from the Saturday Telegraph Magazine of 2nd May 1998 - if you missed it hope you find it interesting.

**I**t will be the simplest of all the proposed celebrations, but in later years this could be how we remember the Millennium. We may forget the Dome; we will not, however forget that at noon on January 1, 2000, all the bells of Britain were rung. There are 40,000 bells; the only thing is, there are just 30,000 bell-ringers. Who will ring the bells of Britain?

The Millennium Commission has made grants totalling £ 3 million. Some churches are buying new bells, others those of redundant belfries. New ringing frames are being installed, old machinery greased, as high above towns and village, in places of dust and bat-mess, with the wind howling through the slats, men find themselves staring at bells, some of which were old when the Plantagenets ruled in England.

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This is the story of three churches: Blakesley, Wicken and Pattishall, in Northamptonshire – so close together you could drive from one to the other two in an afternoon. You could also climb all three belfries.

For this is their place, these men and women who hold in their heads mathematical permutations so complex that the changes they could ring on 12 bells would last 90 years without the same sequence being rung twice. They use terms the rest of us do not understand. They recognise heroes we don't know, the memorials to whose feats hang in these belfries, to peals long ago. Yet this is a uniquely English tradition. There are 5,205 churches in England with belfries in which change-ringing can be practised; abroad there are fewer than a hundred. So who are these men and women?

“The most average people you could ever meet” says Christopher James, bell-ringer. “You could pass us without a glance, we are that ordinary, yet once inside those towers the outside world does not exist.” “Like gypsies and farmers, they keep to themselves,” says the Revd Alfred Ridley, vicar of Blakesley. “Socially they mix with other bell-ringers, and the tradition gets passed down in families, grandfather to father to son.” There is a wistful note in his voice. Mr Ridley is trying to raise a team for his own belfry.

He has four churches. One has a solitary jangle bell of the sort that once summoned schoolchildren in from play; another has two, one of which is cracked; and a third has a frame no longer able to take the tons of cast metal in motion. But there is a fourth church.

The little door is in what passes for a broom-cupboard in the church at Blakesley, a cold high room where the bell-ropes hang. The church itself is rigid with Victorian restoration, but when you pass through the door you enter the Middle Ages. Crouched and dusty, you stumble up a spiral stair that is a reminder of how small your ancestors were, whose hands have worn smooth as alabaster this central column. There are three floors to every belfry: ringing platform, clock, bells.

Church bells first tolled in the fifth century. The towers in which they hang came later still, being added to spread their sound and to summon people from distant fields. At Blakesley the spiral stair has been blocked beyond the clock, so you climb a swaying ladder and emerge with your head actually inside a bell, an eerie experience which underlines that where you are is a place of danger. Here everything you touch moves – the bells, the ropes, the wheels on which the ropes turn.

Five bells hang in Blakesley, the smallest number on which it is possible to ring a peal that involves 5,000 changes. “And all unrung for five years until I came” says Mr Ridley. The reasons were the usual ones: a ringer died; someone moved away; there was the social change of a village becoming a

dormitory where men no longer knew their neighbours. It may not be the grandest set of bells. “Down the road in Towcester they’ve gone quite mad” says Mr Ridley. “They’ve been shopping so they’ve got 12 bells now. Twelve bells! That’s what they’ve got in Westminster Abbey.”

The Blakesley bells are not even the oldest. In the tiny church of Slapton, two miles away, the newest bell was cast in the reign of Edward II. This hangs beside one cast in the reign of his father Edward I.

Ray Reynolds, a mason, who is re-roofing the tower, came on this inscription, cut in the wood of the bell-frame more than 200 years ago; “Whosoever seeth this frame/Will know that Joseph Kelchur of Wood End maketh same.” Belfries were always places for quiet graffiti. The Kelchur family still lives locally.

The oldest bells in Blakesley, the 12 cwt. Tenor, was cast in 1673, when Charles II was king. The newest a 19<sup>th</sup> Century bell, was cast at the Whitechapel Bell Foundry, and here again you touch a legend: the foundry, one of the two surviving in the country, is the oldest manufacturing company to be continually in business in Britain.

“If you don’t count books,” says works manager Richard Brewis. “The Oxford University Press is older, but our records go back to 1570. Our records. We think we were in business before records existed.

On its original site, the foundry was a going concern when Elizabeth I was queen. It has moved twice since then and is still in Whitechapel Road. It makes 80 bells a year, from those of a 24 inch diameter (£ 2,400 plus VAT) up to the tenor bells, five feet in diameter (£ 22,500). It can also still make the odd big casting, like the five-and-a-half-ton Bicen-tennial Bell which the Queen, on behalf of the British people, presented to the United States.

In Blakesley belfry, a little framed statement on the wall has been put up by people equally without doubts about their own place in history. “On Saturday 23/2/74, at the Church of St Mary, Blakesley, in two hours 50 minutes, a peal of 5,040 Doubles of St Simon, St Martin, Reverse Canterbury, and Plain Bob.” A list of names follows: Betty Linnell, Treble, Roy Bull 2<sup>nd</sup>, James Linnell, 3<sup>rd</sup>, George Walker, 4<sup>th</sup>, William Yates, Tenor. Conducted by William Yates.” “My dad, Bill Yates,” says Richard Yates, ringing master for the Towcester and District Guild. “He’ll be ringing with us tonight.” William Yates a retired farm-worker, now in his 70’s, a bell-ringer for 48 years. Richard Yates, his son, bank employee. “I climber out of my pram, a rope was put into my hands, and that was it really.”

More to come next time if space permits - if you see any more articles like this published in the national press please let me have a copy.





# QUARTERS AND PEALS



## QUARTER PEALS

RW PAGE

1997

[1]	14/12	CRAYFORD	1260	Grandsire Doubles	98/369
[2]	21/12	FOOTS CRAY	1260	Plain Bob Doubles	98/342

1998

[3]	04/01	ERITH CH CH	1260	Rev. Canterbury Pleasure B D	98/370
[4]	08/02	BECKENHAM	1260	Plain Bob Minor	98/320
[5]	16/02	ELTHAM	1280	Bristol Surprise Major	98/316
[6]	08/03	BROMLEY	1260	Grandsire Doubles	98/340
[7]	08/03	CRAYFORD	1260	Grandsire Doubles	98/369
[8]	09/04	BEXLEY	1296	Stedman Triples	98/536
[9]	25/04	ELTHAM	1259	Grandsire Triples	98/582
[10]	26/04	CHELSEFIELD	1260	Doubles 3m.	98/511
[11]	04/05	ERITH CH CH	1260	Grandsire Triples	98/523
[12]	24/05	CHELSEFIELD	1260	Plain Bob Doubles	-
[13]	25/05	CRAYFORD	1250	Yorkshire Surprise Major	98/586
[14]	?	EYNSFORD	1260	Plain Bob Minor	98/341

### Congratulations :

- Anne Townsend 1st attempt [10]
- Christopher Backhouse 1st quarter [11]
- Neil Thompson 1st quarter [6]
- Andrew Holmes 1st in method [4]
- First in method for all [3]

## PEALS

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[1]	07/03	CUDHAM	5002	Pudsey Surprise Royal	98/332
[2]	28/03	BIGGIN HILL	5760	Bob Minor 8m.	98/438
[3]	11/04	WEST WICKHAM	5040	Surprise Minor 22m.	98/482
[4]	12/04	EYNSFORD	5056	Spliced Surprise Major 8m	98/458
[5]	02/05	BROMLEY	5152	Spliced Surprise Major 15m	98/555

From Ringing World up to edition No. 4546, June 12, 1998.

# KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS

## LEWISHAM DISTRICT

Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting held at Hayes on Saturday, 25th April 1998

The Chairman, Mr. J. J. Rooke, welcomed everyone to the meeting, which was held in the church.

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs. R. E. Pointer of Beckenham Mrs. R. A. Backhouse of Christ Church, Erith, Mr. M. E. Luffman of Eynsford, Mr. N. R. Parsons of Greenwich and Mr. W. D. Lanyon of Woolwich.

### 2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting, which had been circulated, were confirmed and signed.

### 3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING

There were no matters arising.

### 4. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

### 5. MILLENNIUM SUB-COMMITTEE: FUND-RAISING PROJECT FOR THE MILLENNIUM

On behalf of the Millennium Sub-Committee, Mr. J. R. Byers said that they had had two meetings. Questionnaires had been sent out and the returns were being analysed. It was thought that the District should take advantage of the fact that Greenwich was one of its towers and Dr. P. V. D. Swift had kindly offered to compose a date touch which could be rung there on New Year's Day 2000.

This could also be a fund-raising event, perhaps by sponsoring the ringers or by "selling" the ropes to those who wished to ring.

Mr. Byers asked the meeting:

1. Would the District be prepared to support such a project?
2. What would we raise funds for?

Two suggestions had been made

- (1) a special project, as had been the case at Bickley, or
- (ii) a bursary, possibly county-wide, to provide help for ringers who wanted to attend training courses.

Mr. R. D. Bing enquired how much money would need to be raised?

The reply was that £2,000 would be the aim.

Miss F. Cannon reminded members that at the Easter Money meeting all Districts had been asked to raise a substantial sum for the Bell Restoration Fund.

Mrs. M. Hill, who had been involved with the District's Centenary Project at Bickley, said that fund raising for that had been difficult.

Miss Cannon thought that there might be an auction for the ropes if the date touch was attempted at Greenwich.

Mr. Byers thought that, in view of the fact that Dr. Swift had agreed to compose the date touch, he should be sponsored by the District.

Mr. J. J. Hardy said that he thought that whatever was agreed, it should be kept within the District.

Mr. D.H. Kingston felt that it was a good idea "notionally" to sell the ropes at Greenwich to non-ringers.

The Chairman put the question of a fund-raising for a special project or for a bursary to the vote and, on the proposition of Mr. J. R. Byers, seconded by Mr. L. G. A. Morley, it was agreed that a scheme for a bursary should go ahead. This was carried, 23 in favour, none against.

## 6. ELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS

The following new members were elected:

### BIGGIN HILL

Mrs. N. E. Gay (re-election)	)	P. Mr. J. R. Byers	S. Miss M. R- Andrews
Miss A. L. A. Hallinan jnr.)	)		
Miss N. Z. R. Hallinan jnr.)	)		
Mrs. M. M. Hanscomb	)		
Mr. S. E. Silver	)		
Miss K. L. Simmons jnr.)	)		
Mrs. E. M. Stewart	)		

### DARTFORD

Mr. Deryck Jones	P. Mr. K P. A. Tolputt	S. Mr. M. L. Cook
Mr. Mike Hotton		

## 7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

### Newsletter

Mr. Byers apologised to Miss Fisher for omitting to put her telephone number in the Newsletter in connection with the request for names for tea.

### Evening Practice

Mr. Byers said that the June practice would probably be at Eltham This arrangement was awaiting confirmation.

### Service Cards

A warm vote of thanks was expressed to Mrs. M. Sanderson of Bickley for producing additional laminated service cards at no cost to the District.

### Handbooks

Handbooks were available for collection.

It was pointed out that mention was made in the Handbook of the A. G. Hill Memorial Fund. Both Mrs. Hill and the Secretary were under the impression that this Fund had been wound up and the money made available to Dr. Young for the purchase of books for learners. The Secretary agreed to take this matter up with the Association Treasurer, Mrs. Catherine Hills.

### Lewisham

Miss Cannon mentioned that there would be a practice at Lewisham on the following Wednesday.

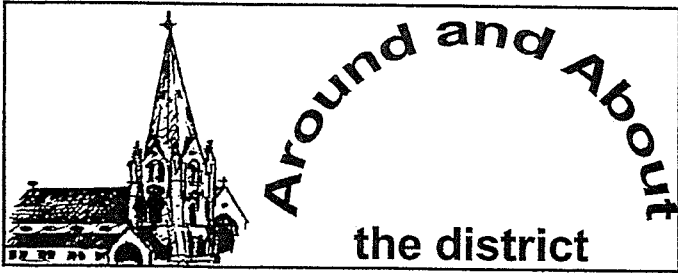
### Training Day

Mr. Byers said that there would be a Plain Bob Doubles, theory and practice, Training Day. The number of learners who could be accepted would depend on the number of helpers who were available.

### Votes of Thanks

Miss P. J. Rooke proposed a vote of thanks to The Revd. Peter Thomas, Rector of Hayes for taking the service and for the use of the church and the bells, to Mr. John Leng for playing the organ, and to the Hayes band for preparing tea, which members were looking forward to having.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting.



**Christ Church, Erith**

Due to various members moving away at Christ Church the tower captain is now Rachel Backhouse ☎ 01322-439038 and the tower secretary is now Carol Eastaugh 36A Slade Gardens, Erith, Kent, DA8 2HT, ☎ 01322-342995.

**New Arrivals**

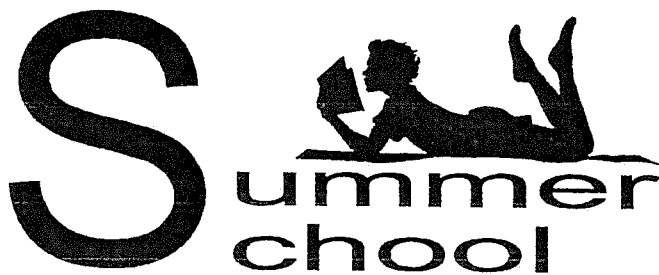
Belated congratulations to Peter and Maureen Swift on the arrival on 17<sup>th</sup> March of their adoptive daughter Lucy, eleven months old and a sister for Philip

Congratulations to Helen and James Normington on the arrival of a baby boy born on the 19th June weighing 8lb 3 1/2oz. A brother for Eleri. (Sorry I didn't know the name at the time of writing).

**Byers - Price**

Fiona and Jeremy are pleased to announce that they were married on the 30<sup>th</sup> May at Farningham. As yet there are no plans for divorce, not until Fiona tries to squeeze all her possessions into the flat. We are now resident at

2 Carlton Court,  
23 Beckenham Road,  
Beckenham,  
BR3 4PP,  
☎ 0181-289-5675 or ✉ jeremybyers@virgin.net



August can be boring in Lewisham District - rain rain rain, England getting knocked out of the World Cup and we've lost the Test match again

Here's the antidote

Come and improve your handling, get ringing rounds and

call changes

Margaret Macey and Philippa Rooke are looking to run a series of practices during the day in August. Aimed at those looking to work on their style, and get practice handling a bell, the practices will be run during the day probably two a week for a couple of hours a time.

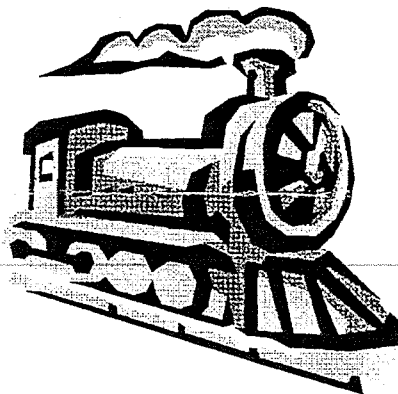
This is an ideal time for those with time on their hands, just when the school holidays are getting tedious.

Come and help and have fun - with Margaret Macey involved you are bound to end up having laugh and a joke.

Competent helpers will be needed to help at all or some of the practices

Please contact Philippa Rooke ( 01689-812236) or Margaret Macey (0181-302-4992) to arrange your attendance.

They are eagerly awaiting your call.



**29th August**

**Training Day**

Seen the yellow posters - meant to do something with the tear off strip. Well this is your absolutely final last chance.

The response has been underwhelming. So far I have five students names and three helpers.

Therefore **I URGENTLY REQUIRE HELPERS FOR THE COURSE** otherwise we won't be able to help those five keen ringers thirsting to improve themselves.

**PLEASE HELP OUT IF YOU CAN.**

I am still prepared to accept two or three more students if you are quick and get your names to me by the district meeting.

Be assured I will do everything in my power to run this course even if I have to press gang helpers.

**You have been warned!!!!**