



INVICTA

LEWISHAM DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

1st APRIL 1999

THE KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS

Bells may have Millennium Bug

Professor Ground-Pulley writes....

As the turn of the millennium approaches, many people find themselves concerned for the technological wonders around them; "Will my Personal Computer understand the new date?" "Is windows v3.11 YK2000 compatible? Can my JVC video cope? Might my car's management system decide that the oil filter fossilised 26 years ago? Will my washing machine dry-clean my panties? Will my toaster explode in a cosmic shower of resistors, diodes and triacs? Will I be able to watch Teletubbies on January 2nd 2000?"

These are just a handful of the questions that I have been asked since becoming D.N.T. (Director of Neolithic Technology) at Clapper College in Tuffnol Bush.

As a scientist, and after some thought, I would say dunno!!

However, this I do know- very few people seem to have pondered upon a problem of almost earth-shattering proportions, something so important as to directly affect the future of campanological progress, indeed so vast a problem as to threaten the very existence of the "apres-practice" pub visit.

The question that we should all be asking is this: "Are my bells millennium compliant?"

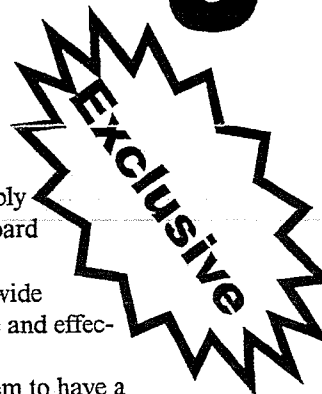
And "How can I tell". Well it is not as simple as one may think. There are many checks to perform before you can be sure. One such check/solution is to ring peals non-stop from now until 1st January 2000. By then the bells will be worn

out and require replacement anyway.

Modern 32-bit bells do not seem to pose a problem since they are invariably fitted with a Simpson-tuned motherboard and an "easy to interface flat-top" which makes communication with a wide variety of cast-iron headstocks simple and effective.

Some of these models do however seem to have a minor bug which may mean that they are not fully compliant- It is the not so self-lubricating tuffnol bush which has become so popular of late. They seem to get a little stiff

(Continued on page 8)



Next District Meeting

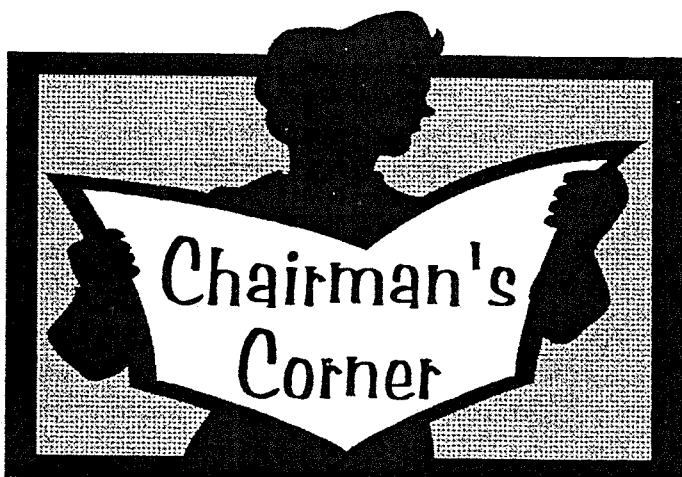
Saturday 17th April

Biggin Hill

Service 4-30

Followed by meeting, tea and evening ringing

Names for tea by previous Wednesday to Mrs Nancy Gay
01959-572170



This will be a short one because elsewhere I have written about Horton Kirby, and I don't want to have my name on every page!

In the last newsletter I gave you a brief description of my ringing career to date, and mentioned that I belong to the KCACR Training Committee.

This is one of the non-elected sub-committees of the KCACR. The committee is headed by Catherine Lewis, a Brasted ringer who has been organising training days for the Tonbridge District for many years. The people on the committee are not elected but are interested in supporting and supplementing the training that is already happening in their own districts. The events planned by the committee are publicised on a brightly-coloured poster which is sent to every tower via the District Secretary.

The current one is bright green - is it on the wall in your tower? If it isn't, ask your Tower Captain why not!

The next event, on Saturday 3rd April, is very important - it is a forum to discuss District Ringing Events. Yuk, I hear you cry! It's tedious enough to have to go to boring District Meetings, let alone go somewhere else to discuss them! But this forum is intended to be a lively discussion to which EVERYONE is welcome, to talk about how District events of all kinds (practices, meetings, training) can be improved/expanded/alterd to make them more effective.

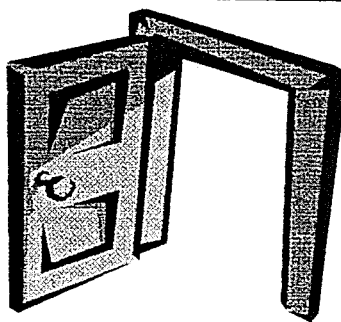
The more people attend, the more ideas will be flowing. Now is the chance to air your views in a neutral environment! The morning will be chaired by Bob Cater (whose credits are on the poster...). If you would like to attend please contact Catherine Lewis (01959 563767) as soon as possible, as she needs to have an idea of numbers attending in order to book a suitable venue.

I haven't made much progress in my aim to visit all the towers in the district - for which many apologies. I'll try to do better in the next couple of months! I look forward to seeing you at the quarterly meeting on Sat 17th April at Biggin

Hill. In the mean time if you want to talk to me about anything to do with ringing and the District or County, feel free to call me on 01689 812236.

Best wishes

Philippa Rooke



Open Day Thank You

A big thank you for all the help given at Christ Church for our third open day another successful event. We had many enthusiastic people achieving their first ring of a bell. Thank you to Philippa who explained it all to them in such an interesting and understanding way. I am not naming all the helping hands, as I cannot remember all their names, but every body who was there pulled their weight and did a grand job. The 'News Shopper' is following the day up by writing an article on our recruitment drive for the Millennium, with a contact phone number in case people had the misfortune to miss the event (thank you Jeremy). The article will be published in many of the 'News Shopper' editions as far out as Bromley, Orpington etc. and hopefully we will all benefit from it.

Again thank you all very much for your time and support.

Carol Eastaugh.
Christ Church, Erith.

The article in the Newshopper was published in the issue of 24th March 1999

Building a new band at Horton Kirby

On Saturday 6th February we held the first training day for the volunteers for Horton Kirby. David Crowhurst had persuaded/coerced 16 people to sign up for an initial go, and that number has since risen to 20, so there's a lot of work to

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

be done! With that many people it was not going to be possible to teach them all at once, so the group was split into morning and afternoon sessions, with a pub lunch for the tired trainers in the middle! I picked Sidcup as a good place to start because the bells are of a similar weight and rope draft to that expected at HK. The bells were available all day and access to them (for silencing purposes) is very easy.

The HK volunteers are an ideal bunch for a local band as they range in age from 9 to...er..'over 60'. Since there were a couple of youngsters present, I took the opportunity to warn the adults that people all learn to ring at different speeds, so to speak, and the kids would whizz past them onto difficult things very quickly, and they'd just have to accept that.

One of the youngsters certainly did very well in the one session he had; but another person goes wobbly on spiral staircases which is going to be a problem at HK. The ladies who came in the afternoon brought copious amounts of coffee and biscuits, so they've obviously got the right idea!

I'm now trying to find a way forward for teaching so many people at once, with help from the District and great support from Catherine and Frank Lewis from Brasted. One small item that must be rectified is that the enthusiastic leader of the whole enterprise, David Crowhurst, has not yet had his first proper lesson because of work commitments!

David and his team have already worked incredibly hard trying to raise the money needed to obtain their dream of 6 bells, but there is still some way to go. The good news is that they expect to have four bells in and ringable in October. If they are able to raise enough money two more will follow.

On 20th February I went along to 'help' clean out the tower which has not been touched for many years. In the event they were so well organised that I just watched all the men get dirty! The tower is central on the cruciform church, and access is via a very worn stone spiral staircase through a door in the chancel. No chance of sneaking out after Sunday service ringing without being seen!

The ringing chamber is a good size for six ringers and many visitors and already has two long wooden pews along the walls. As we cleaned the dust off the walls we found pencilled inscriptions marking ringing for a wedding in 1886 and marking the start of WWII, as well as many names dotted randomly over the wall.

The 3 existing bells are still in their original oak frame which is apparently sound and so will be reused by Whitechapel when they do the new installation. One bell is cracked and has a large piece missing out of the top and a broken wheel. I'd never seen a damaged bell before and I found it quite upsetting! They are currently in one corner of

the tower and there will be plenty of room for six with space at one side for access. From the bell chamber there is access to the roof of the tower via a long ladder. There is a great view up and down the Darent Valley and I hope HK are able to offer (safe) trips up the tower as a sideline - it will be worth the climb!

Many thanks to Catherine & Frank Lewis, David Hilling, Margaret Macey, Jim Rooke, Nigel Pointer and Jim Hardy for all their hard work before and on the first day of training. Also to Sidcup for the use of their bells.
Watch this space!
Philippa Rooke

District Practice Dates

| | |
|------------|------------|
| 24th April | Foots Cray |
| 22nd May | Woolwich * |
| 19th June | Beckenham |
| 24th July | Lewisham * |

* denotes to be confirmed

Practice times are 7-00 to 9-00 pm

Ring in "2,000"

Thinking about the arrangements for 1st January 2000.

It might seem to be a long way off, but 12.00 noon on 1 January 2000 is getting ever closer and now is the time to think about who will be ringing the bells on that day.

We all like to ring in our home tower, but this is one occasion where perhaps we need to put home tower loyalties on hold for 15 minutes and think of the whole picture of ringing across the country. If everyone rings at their own tower, then there will be some places where there will be no bells rung to celebrate the Millennium. The Millennium committee has the task of co-ordinating ringers in the Lewisham District to ensure that there are as few silent towers as possible. We

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

will only be able to do this with the co-operation of every ringer in the district.

I would like you to think about where YOU will be on that day.

Has your tower got more ringers than bells? If so, volunteer to be one of the people who can go elsewhere.

Think about the band as a whole – novice ringers are less likely to be able to ring in other towers, if you are experienced then your expertise might be needed elsewhere.

Think about the task that we are facing. Anyone who has ever organised ringing for a wedding will know how difficult it can be to persuade people to commit themselves in advance. Make this date an exception – most people plan their holidays in advance and commit themselves to going. Just for once, say “Yes, I will be there.” Rather than, “I suppose I might be able to make it.”

Please ensure that your tower has its ringing organised for that day. **I would appreciate it if tower secretaries could get in touch with me by 30 June with the following information:**

- a) Whether you have enough people to ring your own bells on 1 January 2000;
- b) If not, what your shortfall is;
- c) A list of names of people who would be willing to ring somewhere else if necessary.

If you are not attached to a tower, please get in touch with me direct, and let me know if you are available to ring somewhere on that day.

Sara Hardy
68 Birkbeck Road,
Beckenham
Kent
BR3 4SP

0181 659 2631



In the News!!!!

Ringing once again has found it's way into the papers - both local and national.

The Daily Mail carried a story of how bells came to the rescue of a church committee locked into a church. After trying a skylight, then flicking the lights on and off they resorted to bells and the now defunct Morse

Code to sound out SOS. The unfortunate cause of trouble was the last ringer out after the ringers had finished practising for the night who locked the committee in unknowingly.

Several Nationals also covered the story that restrictive covenants are being put over a new property development in Thurlestone West Devon, that won't allow owners of the newly converted barns to complain about the near by church bells. The covenants were written at the request of the church and the parochial church councils. The church has a clock that strikes every hours, 90 minutes of ringing practice each Thursday and Sunday services once a month.

Common sense strikes at last!

And finally, nearer to home, there was a very nice article in the Newshopper on the 24th March headed “ Silent bells as ringers stay away” after the Christ Church Erith open day. Response so far has elicited four phone calls - hopefully two ringers will be joining the fold. The photo of our distinguished Chairman demonstrating was most impressive!!!!

KCACR

Training Subcommittee

Events for 1999

Dates for your diary:

Sat 3rd April : 9.00 am to lunchtime Forum on District Events

Sat 29th May : 6-8 pm 12-bell practice at Quex Park

Sat 30th July : 5-7 pm 12-bell practice at Canterbury Cathedral

Sat 30th October : Raising and Lowering in Peal Workshop

See the green poster for more details (& see Chairman's Corner for an explanation of the green poster!)

Copy deadline - 1st June 1999

send all articles to

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Quarters and Peals

QUARTER PEALS

RW PAGE

1998

| | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|---------|
| [1] 18/10 BEXLEY | 1280 Cambridge Surprise Major | 98/1187 |
| [2] 08/11 EYNSFORD | 1260 Grandsire and P.B. Doubles | 98/1189 |
| [3] 08/11 FOOTS CRAY | 1260 Plain Bob Doubles | 99/75 |
| [4] 15/11 ERITH CH CH | 1260 Plain Bob Doubles | 98/1245 |
| [5] 29/11 ELTHAM | 1260 Plain Bob Triples | 99/76 |
| [6] 29/11 EYNSFORD | 1260 Plain Bob Doubles | 98/1246 |
| [7] 13/12 CHELSFIELD | 1260 Plain Bob Doubles | 99/48 |
| [8] 20/12 BEXLEY | 1276 Cambridge Surprise Minor | 99/171 |
| [9] 20/12 CHELSFIELD | 1260 Plain Bob Doubles | |
| [10] 26/12 BROMLEY | 1280 Rutland Surprise Major | 99/103 |

1999

| | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| [11] 24/01 CHELSFIELD | 1260 Plain Bob Doubles |
| [12] 14/02 CHELSFIELD | 1260 Plain Bob Minor |
| [13] 28/02 CHELSFIELD | 1260 Plain Bob Doubles |

Congratulations :

| | | | |
|---------------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Janice Jacobs | 1st quarter [6] | Robert Lawes | 1st quarter [7] |
| Tom Scarth | 1st off cover [4] | Christopher Backhouse | 1st in method [4] |
| Sally Davis | Circled tower [12] | Melanie Wilkins | 1st inside to Minor [12] |

PEALS

RW PAGE

1998

| | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|---------|
| [1] 17/10 BEXLEY | 5056 Cambridge Surprise Major | 98/1183 |
| [2] 28/11 BROMLEY | 5024 London Surprise Major | 99/13 |

1999

| | | |
|----------------------|----------------|--------|
| [3] 03/01 CHELSFIELD | 5040 Minor 6m. | 99/167 |
|----------------------|----------------|--------|

From Ringing World up to edition No. 4583, February 26, 1999.

Jim Rooke

KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS

LEWISHAM DISTRICT

Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting held at SS Peter & Paul, Bromley,
on Saturday, 9th January 1999.

The Chairman, Miss P. J. Rooke, opened the meeting by welcoming everyone. She then asked members to stand in memory of Mr. Tony Lewis who had died earlier in the week. Mr. Lewis had been an active member of the Association and of the Lewisham District in the sixties and seventies, had served as District Ringing Master and District Representative on several occasions, and had been particularly associated with Bromley, Chislehurst and Sidcup towers. The funeral arrangements were announced.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Mr. & Mrs. C. F. Jeal from Bexley, Mr. D. P. Hilling and Mrs. D. Paterson from Eynsford, Mr. & Mrs. L. G. A. Morley from Eltham.

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 MINUTES

Page 1: Item 4 - Correspondence

Mr. Bing said that it had not been possible to go ahead with the arrangements for the proposed outing because visits to the brewery at Bury St. Edmunds could not be arranged on a Saturday.

Page 3: Item 9 - Programme for 1999

Miss Rooke said that Mr. Hilling would like the date of the Call Change Competition moved to 20th November because Eynsford bells would be half-muffled on the 13th for Remembrance Sunday. The change of date for the Competition was agreed.

Mr. Hardy mentioned that the planned practice at Southwark would be arranged later in the year. It would also be possible to hold a 12-bell practice at Shoreditch.

4. CORRESPONDENCE

Miss Andrews said that the tower information for the Handbook was available if anyone wished to check their tower details. She also reminded members to let her have information on births, anniversaries and deaths for the Handbook.

5. ELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS

The following new members were elected.

BEXLEY

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Mrs. B. C. Graham | P. Miss M. R. Andrews | S. Miss J. Vale |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|

BICKLEY

| | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Miss E. C. Cruickshank | P. Miss J. D. Brown | S. Mrs. V. A. Cruickshank |
|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|

WEST WICKHAM

| | | |
|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Mr. D. Gebbitt* | P. Mrs. J. Fry | S. Mr. J. Fry |
|-----------------|----------------|---------------|

* re-election

6. MILLENNIUM COMMITTEE REPORT

On behalf of Mr. Morley, Mr. Byers reported that the Open Day on 7th November at St. Mary Cray had been a great success. Demonstrations had been given on the tower bells, the Jubi Peal had been available, as had two videos and the Association's display boards. He stressed that this had been a recruiting day for the whole District and not solely for St. Mary Cray tower. Appreciation was expressed to everyone who had taken part. Thirty people had expressed interest and it was intended to check that they had been integrated into local towers. The next Open Day was to be held at Eltham on the following Saturday.

With reference to ringing on Millennium Day, Mr. Byers asked towers to let him know if they had any ringers who were not needed at their own tower and would be willing to ring at another tower in the District.

7. HORTON KIRBY

The Chairman reported and she and Mr. David Hilling had visited Horton Kirby on the previous Wednesday and met a Mr. Crowhurst and a number of people who were interested in learning to ring. Miss Rooke had given an illustrated talk on ringing, showed the video and answered questions. There were three bells in the tower, one of which was cracked. It was hoped that there would be four hung for ringing by October and that, when funds would be available, this number would be increased to six. Arrangements to train a band would be made in due course.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Handbook

Mr. Dickon Love introduced himself as the new Handbook Editor and made a plea for more advertising material. Only by increasing advertising would it be possible to keep the cost down and continue to issue members with a free copy.

Press Representative

Miss Vale said that the Manual on Bell Control had been reduced in price. She had one copy in stock. Mrs. Basford, the Association's Librarian, had a sizeable stock of the ringing video and wondered whether members would be prepared to purchase a copy and donate it to their local library. Miss Vale pointed out that libraries normally shared their stock between several branches, so it was possible that one copy could have a fairly wide distribution. The Chairman thanked Miss Vale for her contribution to The Ringing World about the Call Change Competition.

Training Session

Mr. Hardy said that only two people had expressed interest in the training session planned for 30th January at Beckenham. More trainees and helpers were wanted.

Dartford

Miss Hall mentioned that following a recent mishap at Dartford, the bells there were out of action for the present.

Mr. John Barnes - Chelsfield

The Chairman mentioned that Mr. Barnes had had a car accident before Christmas and would not be ringing for some weeks.

Competition Certificates

The Chairman apologised that certificates for the winning teams in the Call Change Competition were not available. She hoped to have these in time for the next meeting.

Newsletter

The Chairman thanked Mr. Byers for the excellent work he was doing on the District Newsletter. Mr. Byers said that, in order to keep down the cost to members, he was hoping to get some advertisements. If anyone work for a large organisation, e.g. a Building Society, they were asked to let him know.

Carol Service

The Chairman thanked the St. John's Erith band for hosting the Carol Service.

County Eight-bell Competition

The County Eight-bell Competition was due to be held in the District on 26th June and Mr. Hardy had kindly taken on the responsibility of finding a suitable tower.

Covenants

Mr. Lanyon reminded members of the advantages of covenanting subscriptions. He and the Secretary had a supply of the necessary forms.

Votes of Thanks

Mr. Byers proposed votes of thanks the Vicar of Bromley, Canon Peter Locke for the use of the bells and for conducting the service, to the Curate, the Rev. Michael Gentry, to the Organist, Mr. Peter Spencer, and to the Bromley ringers for preparing and serving an excellent tea.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting and members went to Bromley Common for evening ringing.

Y2K bug for bells

(Continued from page 1)

after a while, at which point they make the bell very hard to chime and seem to result, in extreme cases, in a form of variable oddstruckness. A patch is available however in the form of a P.T.F.E. dry-film lubricant (formula H2O+T+APINTOFMILK) which can be applied to the stainless steel pin every six months or so. Most recent models are fitted with ultra-reliable ball-bearings, which should give a long service without the need for back-up.

Older 16-bit bells may pose a few more problems, especially when using with newer SCSI and IDE headstocks. In these instances a hardwood interface is normally required after the original connections have been removed by a professional. Some of these models may have been upgraded to incorporate the aforementioned clapper-bush and many have the later type bearings.

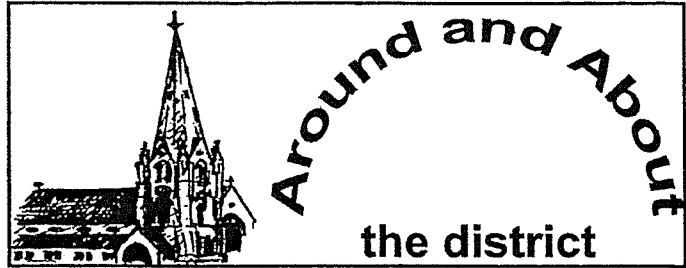
The oldest 8-bit bells provide the greatest problems. Many were build with non-standard motherboards and may be considered inferior to modern equivalents. Others may be found to have bad clusters on the sound-bow, but may be de-fraged by quarter or eighth turning. Most will have to be fitted with a cannon-retaining headstock interface in order to achieve a transfer rate of 28-36 changes per minute. Some examples from this era still retain cast-in floppy staples which should be converted by a professional as soon as possible to avoid irreparable damage and subsequent crashes. If not performed, a completely new motherboard may be required, at which point it may be more economical to replace the entire system rather than upgrading. This process is known in the trade as a recast. Many older models have the earlier type plain bearings which require regular attention to avoid corruption and virus contamination leading to mechanical failure and subsequently to premature ejection. Replacement of these types is difficult and upgrading the entire headstock and associated hardware may be the only solution.

It should also be noted that anti-virus solutions such as Norton anti-virus should not be used on death-watch beetle and woodworm infestations in wooden bell-frames. A suitable insecticide works much better. Cast-iron frames usually prove indigestible for these bugs.

It only remains to check the software in the peripheral units (ringers). Many have older software but most are upgradeable with a little care.

Happy ringing!!
Prof. G.Pulley

(I didn't realise it was so complicated - Ed)



District 6 Bell Competition

Fierce competition for the district prize this year saw seven teams competing at Eynsford on Saturday 20th March. The afternoon's antics were judged by Michael Moreton from Croydon who was succinct in giving the results.

| | | |
|---------|---------------------|------------|
| 1st | Chelsfield | 72 Faults |
| 2nd | Beckenham | 75 Faults |
| 3rd(Jt) | Bexley | 136 Faults |
| | Christ Church Erith | 136 Faults |
| 5th | Eynsford | 146 Faults |
| 6th | Crayford | 192 Faults |
| 7th | West Wickham | 199 Faults |

Congratulations to Chelsfield who now go on to defend their County Trophy. Also congratulations to all the other teams who entered and made it such a worthwhile competition.

The Children's Society - May Day Peal

April 30th to 3rd May 1999

The Children's Society is once again asking ringers to ring a peal between April 30th and 3rd May 1999 for the Children's Society.

If anyone is interested in obtaining more information, please contact either the Editor or Sarah Trusler at the Children's Society on 0171-841-4519 for more information.

National 12 Bell News - Southwark Cathedral Eliminator

The results in from the National Twelve Bell eliminator are

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| St Paul's Cathedral | 79 |
| High Wycombe | 77 |
| St Martin in the Fields | 72 |
| Southwark | 71 |
| Melbourne | 70 |
| Towcester | 67 |
| Oxford | 62 |
| Exeter | 56 |
| Leeds | 48 |



The first three bands qualify for the final along with the other bands from the other eliminator, Cumberland's, Guildford, and Birmingham, who will join the hosts York and last year's winners the College Youths.

Well done to the Southwark band, many of whom ring in the district - a close run thing this year!!!!