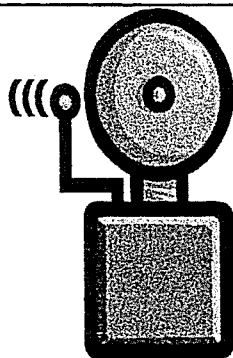




LEWISHAM DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2000

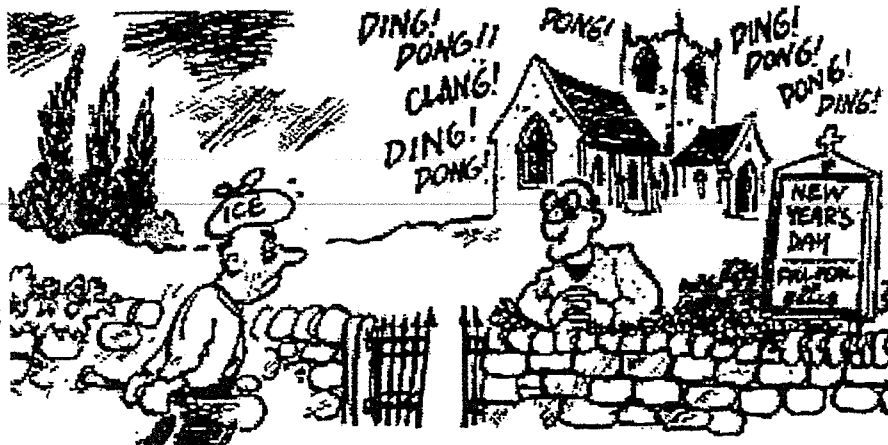
THE KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS



We Rang in 2000

Well it's all over for another millennium, whether bells will be here in the year 3000 who knows, but at least I can say that I took part in the efforts on 1st January 2000.

After a rather good evening and morning spent in the company of local ringers, ringers friends, and family, at Chateau Hardy Senior, (hitting the hay somewhere near 4-00 am) thoughts of popping over to Penge to climb a vertical ladder to open the sound control so that all the locals could share in the dawn of the new millennium did not cause me to jump for joy let alone hurry out of bed.



.....I trust you are enjoying our jolly bells on this fine first day of the new millennium.....?

enham, Eltham, Foots Cray, St Mary Cray, Greenwich, Woolwich (at 11-30 - tut tut), reports from other towers are yet to come in!

News from Crayford was that "At Crayford they ended up ringing for one and a half hours because of the number of people who turned up to listen to the bells, most of whom then wanted to go up to the ringing room and see what goes on." Good publicity for ringing - keep it up!

The work of the "Ring in 2000" committee has paid off, the district open day (next one Bromley Parish Saturday 8th January) has resulted in new ringers coming to the exercise. If

you are at all doubtful as the effectiveness of these events I suggest that you speak to the Tower Captains at St Mary Cray and Eltham - they both have Sunday morning ringing, with their own bands, something that was unlikely to have been occurring 12 to 18 months ago without regular visitors.

Next Meeting and Practice

Meeting - Saturday 15th January

St George's Bickley

Bells from 3pm

Dedication Service at 4-30 pm

Name for Tea to Jean Brown (020-8460-1286)

District Practice - 22nd January

St George's Beckenham

7pm to 9pm

After a period of reflection, assisted by at least two cups of tea and the odd paracetamol, the desire to go ringing was sufficiently improved to at least start the trek to Penge via Hayes. Subsequent arrival, ladder climbing and bell raising led to a rather pleasant surprise - some really rather reasonable ringing on what are known to be a troublesome

six.

Reports from
cate ringing at

other towers indi-
Dartford, Beck-

Free Ring of 8 Bells Inside

(Continued from page 1)

Please let me have details of whether your tower rang on the day, and if possible the names of those involved at each tower - it would be nice to record the names of those involved for posterity.

Jeremy Byers

Oh yes - the extra curricula ringing on 1st January 2000. The long length peal at St Paul's, the peal at Southwark Cathedral and the 2000 at Greenwich all came to rather sticky ends. The 2000 at Greenwich lasted for about 30 minutes before nose-diving into oblivion. A re-run for February is planned, however since there is unlikely to have been an excuse to stay up until the small hours on the night before the second attempt, we are hopeful of more success - New Years Day ringing was clearly destined not to be!

Take it from here!

OR

Time for change on the "Ring in 2000" committee

Where to from here?

Two years ago after a reasonably lively district meeting at Chislehurst, a small group of district ringers gathered together in the corner of the hall to form the "Ring in 2000" committee that you are no doubt all thoroughly sick of hearing about.

It was very much a question of people putting their "money where their mouths were" and getting stuck in.

What came out of it was a group of people that met quietly on Sunday evenings over at St Mary Cray, or later at Chateau Pointer to drink tea, eat cake and try and organise the ringing for 1st January 2000.

Apart from the usual quantity of paperwork and forms that a committee appears to generate, an assessment of the districts ringing strengths (or more accurately the weakness that there were so few ringers throughout the district) led to a series of tower open days. These were to be for the benefit of the district as a whole, with any recruits being directed towards local towers.

The result I am sure have been felt throughout the district, however but an easy example of the success are the bands at Eltham and St Mary Cray which now regularly ring for Sunday services, and the popularity of the last training day shows

that we appear to have a large number of ringers keen to improve and learn.

So is it all to stop now that we are into 2000?

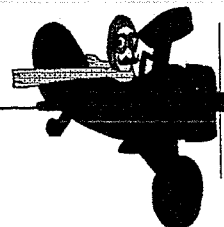
Well that's up to you!

Many of the current committee would like to step down, but there are suggestions that the "Ring in 2000" committee should evolve into a committee with members representing groups of two or three towers, acting as a channel between towers, tower captains and their ringers and that amorphous blob known as "the District".

Since "the District" is really only a collection of ringers who like going out and ringing with ringers from other towers, the idea would be that the new committee would act as a focus for ideas from individual bands, a method of communication between towers and district officers and continue the important work of recruiting ringers for the district and keeping the "exercise" in the public eye.

If you have any ideas as to how this could happen, whether you would be interested in devoting some time to it or would like to find out more about it please contact Philippa Rooke, who will be only too happy to discuss it with you further. (Well I hope so - I was promised as article for this newsletter but I know she's been busy helping the painters finish the decorating at the Royal Opera House so that it would open on time!!!!)

Oh what a patient husband I have



Or

A tale of the Cudham/Downe ringing outing

I am a new ringer and started to ring at Cudham and Downe in January this year following the open day at St Mary Cray, so I was delighted to be included in the annual outing arranged by Jon Fry on Saturday 25th September. Well, the day started with torrential rain, which was a good guide as to how it was to continue. The first stop was for 9.30 at St Martin, Brasted. The church was in the process of being decorated for Harvest Festival, as were others on the day, and smelled wonderfully of hops. Upstairs we trooped and the first astonishment, having admired the individually numbered mats for the ropes, was that it was an anticlockwise ring! Just about everyone needed boxes to ring, so this time

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(Continued from page 2)

Jon's young son didn't feel he was the odd one out when he was given a chance to ring one of the bells. After some rounds and changes, the more experienced people rang some Grandsire plain course and Bob Minor plain course - forgive me if I don't get all these descriptions quite right. Then it was off to the next pot of call- port being an apt word as while we had been ringing it rained so hard that Alison's car was parked in about six inches of water!

Next stop St Mary, Sundridge, where we have our own connection as Rita who looks after Sundridge also rings at Cudham. This was what you could call the IKEA style ringing room as it had a Japanese paper lampshade on the central light. It had a very creaky floor and the bells/bearings etc made some alarming noises (to a beginner anyway) inside the ringing room but I am reliably informed that they had a very rich and mellow sound outside the tower. There was also a sanctus bell, and the ropes and part of the machinery for some chimes. Someone said that the third was cast in 1666, so there was great discussion as to why that date was familiar. In the end Alison(No.2) said it was the Great Fire of London, which was pretty good going as she had been practising for the Millennium the night before by partying until the early hours in aid of Charity and was feeling a little fragile. More rounds and call changes for us less experienced folk, Reverse Canterbury for the more able, and then off to St Peter at Hever.

All the churches we visited were in wonderful settings, and this was no exception. Another upstairs ringing room, but with a scary gap half way up the stairs which you have to straddle to get from the stairs to the ringing room itself. I didn't realise it was there first of all and blithely carried on upwards and would have ended up in the bell chamber if no-one had stopped me. Everyone thought the bells were very smooth to handle. While we were ringing, a visitor to the church asked if he could come up. Jon asked if he was a ringer and it turned out that he was and that he used to live near Hever 30 years before and rang there, and now rings in Derbyshire. He was visiting his old haunts to show his wife and also his grandfather's name was on one of the peal boards in the tower as he was the churchwarden in 1900.

The visitor joined in and rang some Grandsire doubles and plain bob doubles. After that it was time for lunch which we took at the Henry 8th pub opposite. Alison (No2) started to look a more normal colour after lunch and also the sun came out. I took the opportunity to have a look round the churchyard, and we all posed for the obligatory group photo before proceeding on to St Mary the Virgin, Chiddingstone.

It turned out that it was a good idea to visit Chiddingstone after we had fortified ourselves with lunch as they were heavy bells, the tenor being around 18 cwt I think. We had been looked after very kindly by the tower keeper as all but the tenor had already been rung up. However they were set at backstroke so still needed some efforts to set them at hand-stroke. Jon volunteered to or more likely was talked into, ringing up the tenor (*So I should think*).

We were joined by people who couldn't make the morning session; Jon's wife, Bridget and Rosina, who brought lovely weather with them. We did rounds and call changes on 8, plain hunt on 7 and plain bob minor with two cover bells, then it was off to St Jon the Baptist, Penshurst.

Well, the sun didn't last long, as just as we were going into the Church it started to pour with rain again. This time it

was a ground floor ring, with very long ropes and heavy bells. Even the experienced people looked a wee bit daunted. However, we managed rounds on 6 and 8 and plain hunt on 8. Part way through it got so dark we couldn't really see well, so Jon dived into a cupboard and decoded what seemed a complex set of papers to work out which switch put the light on in the ringing area.

I can't report on the last visit, St Mary, Leigh as I didn't go to that one, and this is also the explanation for the "patient husband" title. When the date for the outing was announced, we were going to Devon for the weekend, so my very patient non ringing husband agreed that we would pack our things and go straight from Penhurst so I could join the outing, and he sat in the car and read a book all day while I was ringing! The whole day was very enjoyable and many thanks are due to Jon Fry for organising it and all the tower captains and tower keepers who let us ring their bells.

Megan Smith

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“.....OK Vicar - you've proved the organ's millennium compliant - now put it back together!!!!.....”

Newsletter Accounts

I am sorry to bore you all with a set of accounts in this edition - we will all no doubt receive our credit card statements this month groaning with Christmas purchases - so another set of figures is unlikely to be appreciated.

Anyway the figures below reflect the score as regards the Newsletter since I have been editor. The purpose of the exercise to let you all see what I've been up to with your cheques of

	1999		1998		
	£	£	£	£	
Income					
Subscriptions Received	197.00		168.00		£ 4. It also proves that I need your continued support for another year or so to make the figures break even.
Donations Received	0.00		5.00		
Interest Received	<u>0.66</u>		<u>1.08</u>		
Total Income Received		197.66		174.08	
Expenses					
Copying & Stationery Costs	102.68		110.90		In the mean-time, if anyone has any questions, or would like to check through the records please give me a ring.
Postage	<u>38.00</u>		<u>29.95</u>		
		140.68		140.85	
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		<u>56.98</u>		<u>33.23</u>	
Current Assets					
Stock of Stamps & Envelopes	33.00		0.00		Finally thank you for prompt payment of subs - it all helps. New subscribers always welcome
Balance at Bank	<u>115.12</u>		<u>47.66</u>		
		148.12		47.66	
Current Liabilities					
Subscriptions received in advance	4.00		4.00		Jeremy Byers
Copying costs payable	0.00		27.76		
Postage costs payable	0.00		10.00		PS For any techno boffins the accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention and on an accruals rather than a cash basis.
Amounts due to J.R. Byers - expenses yet to be reimbursed	125.42		44.18		
		129.42		85.94	
Net Assets/(Liabilities)		<u>18.70</u>		<u>-38.28</u>	
Represented by					
Accumulated Surplus/(Deficit) bfw		-38.28		-71.51	
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		56.98		33.23	
		<u>18.70</u>		<u>-38.28</u>	

(Continued from page 3)

The Final Tower - St Mary's Leigh.

Our final port of call was this light six - a ring with an 8½ cwt tenor which allowed us to finish the day with some well struck methods as well as call changes. The bells were easy to ring, and with a modest draft posed no particular control problems for anyone - a nice tower to end the day with after our exertions at the heavy rings at Chiddingstone & Pen-shurst.

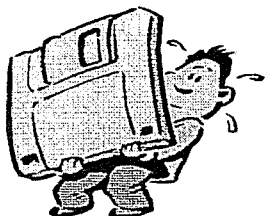
Being a relatively inexperienced band, we managed to get through Plain Bob Minor, Reverse Canterbury, and - Alison's favourite - Grandsire Doubles. I don't know why it is that Grandsire strikes such fear into some ringers, as it is in theory even easier than Plain Bob Doubles.

Putting that aside, this was the first outing for the two towers for many years, and our towers for the day being a relatively short distance away, encouraged some to come for half a day so their other commitments could still be met. Notwithstanding the relative inexperience in ringing terms for many of the band, we had a thoroughly enjoyable day, which went without a hitch, and even the weather brightened up for the afternoon.

Everyone benefited from the range of bells they had to ring, and with a bit of luck we may venture further next year.

For those who feel that tower outings are only for the ultra-keen anorak types (!) then I would say that nothing could be further from the truth. With a bit of astute planning, an outing can be just as enjoyable for non-ringers, beginners, those trying method for the first time and the "old hands" alike. If your tower has not had an outing in recent years, then I do recommend one as a good way to add to the general team spirit in the ringing chamber - and a chance to explore a part of the country you may be unfamiliar with. The opportunity to try out other tower's bells should not be missed - it may make you appreciate your own bells even more!!

Jon Fry



Time to Hit the Web

Well my computer still works - hopefully so does yours.

Having survived the "Millennium Bug" the next step has to be thoughts of a district web site and an e-mail message system for all the towers in the district.

No doubt many of you will be sitting there thinking that the

Newsletter is once slightly too late in arriving, otherwise they would have made a space in their diaries for all the forthcoming district events.

Unfortunately the cost of producing, particularly the mailing and associated stationery costs make it almost impossible to produce anything more regular than a quarterly newsletter.

As a source of forthcoming events it's useful indicator, but for letting people know last minute changes to arrangements and the such like it is useless unless those changes coincide with publication day.

So the solutions are;

- more single sheet flyers
- telephone/fax
- e-mail
- web-pages

Single sheet flyers are costly to produce and mail, the telephone is a better solution, but do you fancy phoning 20 or so tower captains (15 who will no doubt be out or engaged).

The answer would therefore appear to be e-mail and the internet.

Email is a truly wonderful invention, multiple messages to many recipients can be sent in a matter of minutes, it is cheap and provided no-one has moved there address without telling you, the messages generally get through.

Similarly an Internet web page has the advantage of being easily accessible, cheap (generally free) and can be updated regularly. Dickon Love has published his research into the "Bells of Kent" on the Internet - as a result, rather than publishing a book with masses of errata pages any errors or amendments can be made at minimal cost. The whole work can also be updated as changes in towers are made.

So where to go from here?

The easiest way forward must be to create a list towers that have a band member with an e-mail address.

So far I have the following towers with or without e-mail contacts:

Ash by Wrotham	None as yet
Beckenham	jameshardy@callnetuk.com
Bexley	None as yet
Bickley	None as yet
Biggin Hill	ne_gay@yahoo.co.uk
Bromley Parish	DHKingstn@aol.com

Bromley Common	None as yet
Chelsfield	pjrooke@hotmail.com
Chislehurst Annunciation	None as yet
Chislehurst St Nicholas	None as yet
Crayford	rupert@dartford26.freeserve.co.uk
Cudham	MSmith1550@aol.com
Dartford	None as yet
Deptford	None as yet
Downe	fryjon@hotmail.com
Eltham	None as yet
Erith St John's	None as yet
Erith Christ Church	None as yet
Eynsford	DPHilling@aol.com
Farningham	DPHilling@aol.com
Foots Cray	mmacey@nascr.net
Greenwich	None as yet
Hayes	None as yet
Horton Kirby	None as yet
Lewisham	None as yet
Penge	jameshardy@callnetuk.com
St Mary Cray	npointer@ford.com
Shoreham	None as yet
Sidcup	None as yet
West Wickham	alys.helm@talk21.com
Woolwich	None as yet

I suggest that if you see your tower is not represented on this list and that if you have e-mail and are prepared to act as an e-mail correspondent then you e-mail your details.

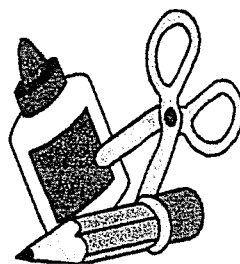
My e-mail address, if you've forgotten it is
jeremy.byers@virgin.net

If we can get an goo network of e-mail addresses together then perhaps the next move would be to get then published in the KCACR handbook.

If your e-mail address is included in the above list and you would like it removed, then please let me know and I'll remove it from my list.

As for the web site, well who knows that may happen once the e-mail system gets working.

Jeremy Byers



It's "Araldite" on the night

Or

Watch out for the second at Lewisham

A recent visitor to St Mary's, Lewisham had the misfortune to break the stay of the second bell. All the Lewisham bells have Hastings type stays, which have a large notch cut out of the top end to house a toggle, which itself impacts on blocks of wood just beyond the balance point at each stroke, allowing the bell to be set. The toggle moves from side to side through a slot in a metal cap, which is attached to the top end of the stay by four screws. The notch is nearly always the site of breakage.

In this case the entire upper end of the stay was broken away at the depth of the notch, the two parts of the stay on either side of the notch being held together by the metal cap screwed to the top of the stay. The leading side of the stay showed a jagged transverse break, while the trailing side was larger, and had a very oblique break, with a tongue of wood on the fragment reaching some 6 inches along the shaft of the stay. On dismantling the top end, I found that each fragment fitted neatly into place with no distortion, and it seemed that repair with adhesive might be possible, saving the expense of a new purpose made stay.

Using "ARALDITE" in liberal amounts the larger fragment was first accurately positioned, and retained, whilst the adhesive set, by two wood screws through the tongue into the shaft of the stay. The smaller fragment was next positioned with more adhesive, and retained in place by the metal cap being refitted, and screwed to both fragments. Then the toggle was refitted, to ensure it had free movement.

After 24 hours the repair appeared to be solid, and the stay was refitted to the headstock. After a further 24 hours the bell was raised and set, without any problems being evident, since the dimensions of the repaired stay were unchanged. The measurements for Hastings stays are very critical, and I normally have to make some adjustments when fitting a replacement stay.

Hastings stays have a bad reputation, but I do not think that this is entirely justified. Having looked after the bells at Lewisham for nearly 40 years, I can say that this is only the seventh occasion of a broken stay there during this time. Four of these were with experienced ringers, one who completely missed the sally, and another after, the sixth was bumped off to get started easily. I think it should always be

stressed to learners that the principal pull is at handstroke, and that at backstroke the weight of the rope alone is often enough to drive the bell round up to the balance at handstroke. This is the case with the Lewisham treble which I always use for teaching.

DAVID HOLLIS

Thoughts from the organisers

Running a training day is hard work – leaving Bromley Common, after a days ring- ing followed by the annual district meet-

ing, I felt shattered. Good thing that Sunday was a fairly quiet day. As day morning early – not

usual Sun- ringing arrived too that I find ringing a trial just the getting out of bed for 9-00 am (I can quite safely say that I am not a morning person). Anyway after a few jibes about my tardiness, half an hours ringing for service, and those ungodly not staying for service moved onto our Sunday morning watering hole for a cup of tea. As minds gradually came alive, (generally after the second cup of tea) conversation turned to the previous day's training day. It was generally agreed that there were lots of positive points, however as usual some areas could do with improving.

Positive Points

- Most students who I had come into contact with during the day seemed to have got something out of the day
- The theory session for rounds and call changes had been well received.
- No major organisational problems such as lockouts, only a shortage of helpers at Bromley Parish, timing problems with estimating travelling time for the Eltham group and an excess of helpers at St Mary Cray (we could have split this group into two and run two sessions).
- The link with training and the district meeting appeared to work well.

Areas for improvement

- As the organiser I am painfully aware that I had not started planning early enough.. This would have helped in getting towers booked, helpers organised and eased the communication process.
- Smaller groups of students – clearly restricting num-

bers so groups can be of a smaller more sensible size.

If you have any thoughts about the day please let me know and I will try and incorporate them into the plans for the next one. Plans are already afoot for the next one – you have been warned!!

Jeremy Byers

Training Day Reports

Thoughts from students

For sale

A set of 8 bells, tenor approx. 1.75gms, all numbered and non odd-struck, perfect for practising rounds and call changes. Some wear at corners.

The Lewisham District training day got off to a cheery start when Jeremy Byers outlined some thoughts on rounds and call changes. By drawing a mind map of what is important when ringing bells, and getting us to understand the difference between, for example, the third bell and thirds place, we were drawn in to the mysteries of call changes.

Then we were given a set of 8 (paper) bells to 'ring' and encouraged to give it a go. My set is up for sale, hence the headline!

After that we split up into groups and spent the rest of the morning either at Eltham or Beckenham with a bevy of noble helpers. After lunch the groups moved to Beckenham and Bromley before gathering at Bromley Common for more ringing practise, a service, refreshment, and the Annual District Meeting.

In all a really terrific day. Everyone I spoke to said that they had learnt something useful and that their technique had improved.

It must be awfully difficult to organise a day like this one. Getting sufficient helpers must be a headache for a start, and having so many learners has got to be a challenge. If a criticism is to be made, it could be that there were too many of us learners. But if one only rings for a few minutes each week, the day we spent together gave us the equivalent of 5 or so

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weeks practise in one go.

Our thanks go to the organisers, the helpers for all their help and to the churches for the use of their bells. A special thanks to Jeremy Byers who shouldered the responsibility for creating such an excellent day, with the hope that by now he will have stopped taking aspirins, and have resumed his normal intake of post-ringing beer!

Steve Kennett

The Lewisham District Training Day 9th October 1999 - a personal view

Browsing the KCACR web site a couple of months ago I came across a reference to a district training day, to be held on the same day as the District Annual Meeting. As I am a new ringer - I started to ring in January at Cudham - I thought it might be a good idea to go along. I printed out the relevant notice and took it along to practice night. I will have to admit that no-one else seemed to know anything about it, probably because it hadn't appeared in a newsletter. I wasn't yet a member of KCACR and so couldn't check out the newsletter for myself. Various phone calls didn't bring forth any more information about how to get included on the day until a form appeared at St Luke's Bromley, where I also ring to get extra practice. Myself and friends Jackie and Rob put our names down for "rounds and call changes" and Rob posted the form off to Jeremy. I discovered another friend who is learning at Sidcup had also put her name down.

It came to one week before the event - still a mystery about where we were going or what we were doing. Mary from Sidcup and I had decided to share a car to reduce parking problems. I knew that the Annual Meeting had been moved to St Luke's, as there was a wedding on at St George's the original venue. I discovered later that poor Jeremy was burning the midnight oil trying to get details out to the towers. Anyway, on the Monday before the training day, a schedule of events appeared. It was an all day thing, as I had suspected, starting at 9 o'clock at the Church Hall at Beckenham. Those of you who may have read my article about the Cudham outing will know that I have a very patient non ringing husband. The training day was to be another test of his patience as it was his birthday. I felt very guilty about deserting him again, but as we had arranged to go out for a meal in the evening I promised to leave at 6 p.m. regardless of what was going on.

Mary picked me up at the unearthly hour (for a Saturday) of 8:30 am and off we went to Beckenham. Here we faced our first challenge - the first church we went to wasn't St George's and we had to ask directions. After a circular tour of Beckenham we found St George's and parked in the public car park opposite, feeling very proud that we had allowed plenty of time. The next challenge was how long to pay for in the parking machine, would we be in group A which stayed at St George's until lunchtime or would we be in Group B which

went off to Eltham? We paid till 1 o'clock and then started off towards the Church to look for the Church Hall. We met some other ringers in the car park - how do you recognise ringers? - I don't know but somehow we knew these other folks were also there for the training day. We walked all round the church and couldn't find the Hall so went in and asked. There were people setting up a flower festival and recital and they directed us to the Hall. At last - we opened the door with trepidation - what would we find there?

Inside there were several rows of chairs with assorted learners and helpers already sitting down, a flip chart and obvious signs of tea being made in the kitchen. That seemed like a welcoming idea and we sat down. We collected some sheets on rope handling and rounds and call changes and then the day started in earnest. Introductions from Jeremy and a colleague followed, and some general guidance about the theory of call changes. This was a fairly interactive session with audience participating fully in shouting out things which they have trouble with or things which are important to remember when ringing call changes. One of the ringers mentioned about bells which are odd struck. We also discovered that there are two ways of calling changes - up or down, ie 3 to 1 or 2 after 3. Most towers in the district use the first style but there were learners at the session who were used to the second style (Eltham I think).

One of my other hobbies is line dancing, but I didn't expect to be combining it with ringing! Six volunteers (including myself) were cajoled into standing at the front in a line. We were then given large letters to hold A to F. One of the bells was then nicknamed "oddstruck" as he had his paper upside down. These were to represent the different bells, to try and unscramble the difference between bell number and bell position. The positions 1 to 6 were laid on the floor in front of us. Our conductor then called changes eg C to A and we human bells shuffled about to represent what was happening. It was quite funny to take part and we laughed a lot. I hope the people watching were able to work out the difference between bell number (letter) and position more easily as a result of the line dancing!

The next trick involved a pack of "cards". All the learners were given a set of six little paper squares numbered to represent six bells. As many learners know, you spend a fair amount of time squashed in various odd corners of ringing rooms waiting for "your turn" to actually ring with the other experienced ringers, and these paper "bells" were to give us something useful to do. (Or it could just be to stop us talking!). The idea is that you can spread the bells out in order on your lap or the floor (rounds), and when changes are called you move the bells appropriately. This way you get to see what is happening and are able to listen to the real bells at the same time without the additional complication of being on the end of a bell rope yourself. I found when I tried it later on at Eltham, I was able to predict where the changes were

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◀Continued from page 8)

going to end in "queens" which I certainly would not have been able to do while actually ringing. The other thing you can do with the paper bells during call changes is to imane you are say, number 3 and get the person sitting next to you to ask periodically "what bell are you?" (It is surprisingly easy to forget), then "who are you following?" and "who are they following?". This gets you used to trying to remember the three numbers without having to ring at the same time.

I haven't yet said much about practical ringing yet. Of course the main aim of the day was to give us some concentrated practice. After the theory session we divided into two groups, one stayed at Beckenham and my group went to Eltham, sharing cars to minimise parking and also because most of us didn't know how to get there. The church was conveniently situated opposite McDonalds which useful for lunch later as the car I was in included two teenagers. After a short climb up a lovely wooden spiral staircase it was straight into business. Names of learners were put on a white board (some confusion about the number of Mary H's) and the experienced ringers worked their way down the list including 2 learners for each session of rounds and call changes. There were enough helpers to have people standing by the learners helping with whatever aspect was needed, as well as to keep up steady ringing pace when we learners got out of synch so we could get back into the flow again.

All the learners had two or three long sessions each. The helpers must have been quite tired with ringing constantly for all those sessions, and not showing any signs of losing patience. There were small rewards of chocolate bars for anyone who did well or in fact learned something from the sessions. In the end I think the helpers reckoned everyone deserved one as we had all learned something. In some cases it was the confidence which comes with ringing at a tower which is not your usual one for the first time, and not making a mess of it, or at least not making more of a mess than you do at your own tower! In others it was getting the striking better. In my case it was discovering my three bad habits of bell handling which explained why I found backstrokes tended to go wrong during call changes. After a hurried lunch, (why is it I always pick the slowest queue at McDonalds?) it was back in the cars and return to Beckenham for more ringing. This time it was trying to put into effect the lessons learned in the morning, and I think we all gained something from the day. Again plenty of experienced ringers to help, with oodles of patience and very supportive and encouraging. Then it was off to Bromley Common for the annual meeting.



.....I'm sorry but the church copier appears to have caught the millennium bug

My group arrived rather early and found St Luke's locked up so we hung around until Alistair came to unlock. Some people took advantage of the appropriately named "Five Bells" nearby. When we went into the church and up the narrow staircase to the ringing room Alistair had already arranged for all the bells to be rung up so there were large safety notices everywhere. By the time everyone had arrived, there wasn't an inch of spare space. More ringing followed, for both learners and experienced ringers. I had another go at

call changes, and rang the best I had done for ages. The experienced ones rang methods - I'm afraid I can't remember which ones, but they sounded lovely, and a band was chosen to ring for the service. The rest of us then went back down to the church. Jeremy number 2's brother came and played the organ for the service which was well attended, and then we had tea before the annual meeting. While we were having tea, the new ringers filled in forms to become members of KCA CR. I didn't stay for much of the meeting as I had to leave at 6pm, but in terms of numbers pre-

sent it was certainly successful, with over 60 people there, 21 of which were the new ringers.

From a personal point of view, I learned a lot from the day and found it fun as well. Many thanks to all the volunteers who rang for/with us and those behind the scenes who did everything else. When's the next one?

Megan Smith

Any Other Business

Points of Interest from the A.D.M.

If you missed the annual district meeting here are the edited highlights if you don't feel inclined to read all the minutes.

Correspondence

Several items were raised, the Ladies Guild announced the publication of their history and an open day of ringing to go with its launch.

Maidstone district gave us advanced warning of a firework

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party next year (to coincide with ADM day) and warmly invited all Lewisham district members to attend. More details to follow.

A county social of dinner on the Kent & East Sussex Steam Line (running from Tenterden to Bodiam Castle, when the extension is built) is being planned for 30th June 2000. Cost £ 30, deposits being taken now of £ 10 per head on a first come first served basis - max 46 people. Details from David Manger (see handbook for contact details).

Rule Change

You could hear the mental groans as this one came up, but fortunately the KCACR chairman Frank Lewis was on hand to take us through it. The proposal is to include the Bell Restoration, Publicity and Training Convenor's onto the County committee and reduce the number of "without portfolio" members elected from 6 to 3 to compensate. The idea behind this is to ensure that these positions now become subject to being elected by the membership of the association. Generally seemed to be a good idea and since we weren't expected to vote on it, merely give an indication of whether we were in favour or against the meeting recorded its view that it was generally in favour.

The only problem Frank has now is to reduce the County committee from 35 to a manageable size - oh well another mission impossible.

Oh yes - Frank is very approachable and should wish to communicate with our leader, he can be got at via the KCACR web site, which he currently supervises so well.

Reports

Mary Andrews circulated a written report, Jim Hardy and Jessica Vale both gave short verbal reports - details no doubt in the minutes.

Officers

As a result of the election of officers at the meeting, your committee are

Philippa Rooke (Chairman)
James Hardy (Master)
Jeremy Byers (Deputy Master)
Len Morley (District Rep)
Sara Hardy (District Rep)

The timetable of events is included in the minutes

Any Other Business

Philippa announced that she would like to see the Millennium Committee turn into a district liaison committee, acting as a communication between district officers and towers. More to come later.

David Crowhurst from Horton Kirby gave us a chat about happenings at their tower - for those ignorant of current happenings they are expecting bells to arrive in mid November and are currently training up a band.

Proposed social event for Valentines Weekend of Quiz night and fish and chip supper - more news of this to come.

Well that's about it - oh yes a final big welcome to all the new members voted in - good to see that there were so many that Mary ran out of forms. I hope you enjoy membership and please come to district events.

Editor's Column

I am as always seeking articles and would like as much copy as possible for the next issue - get writing!!!!

COPY DEADLINE -

I don't care, just send me some articles to print

to

Jeremy Byers
2 Carlton Court
23 Beckenham Road
Beckenham
Kent
BR3 4PP

☎ 0181-289-5675

✉ jeremy.byers@virgin.net

MILLENNIUM THOUGHTS

Never be afraid to try something new - amateurs built the ark and professionals built the Titanic.

Stupidity got you into this mess - why can't it get us out of it.

Joseph to the Innkeeper - "what do you mean there's no room at the inn - I booked using a platinum American Express card!"

Thank You

I would like to this opportunity on behalf of my mother and myself to thank all the ringers who have given us there support and offered us their best wishes in the last few weeks. It is good to know that there are so many friends who you can turn to.

KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS

LEWISHAM DISTRICT

Minutes of the Annual District Meeting held at Bromley Common on Saturday, 9th October 1999

The meeting which was attended by the County Chairman, Mr. F. Lewis, and approximately sixty members, was opened by the Chairman, Miss P. J. Rooke, who welcomed everyone to Bromley Common.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr. & Mrs. C. F. Jeal from Bexley, Miss A. Wilkins from Chelsfield, Mr. R. A. Long from St. Nicholas Chislehurst, Mrs. E. Correia from Dartford, Mrs. C. Eastaugh from Christ Church Erith, Mr. & Mrs. G. S. Mills from Eynsford and Miss R. Farmer from Foots Cray.

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

Welcome Pack

Mr. Lewis said that he had some sample welcome packs from other Associations and that details would be circulated as soon as possible.

4. CORRESPONDENCE

Proposed Changes to Rule 7

The Chairman read the proposed new Rule 7 in full. This was to be presented to the Annual General Meeting of the Association at Lydd on Easter Monday, 24th April 2000. If accepted, the new rule (changes in bold) would read:

- Government of the Association shall be vested in a General Committee who, beside any other meetings, shall always meet in November or December, when the day and place of the Annual General Meeting shall be fixed. The General Committee shall consist of the elected Vice-Presidents, Chairman, General Secretary, Treasurer, Peal Secretary, Librarian, Handbook Editor, Membership Secretary, **Bell Restoration Convenor, Publicity Convenor, Training Convenor**, District Secretaries, Central Council Representatives and two Representatives elected by each District. Other members, not exceeding **three** in number, may be elected at the Annual Meeting. The General Committee shall have the power to co-opt further members. Eight members shall form a quorum at any meeting of the General Committee.*

Mr. Lewis explained that the reason for the suggested change was that for a long time several of the senior members of the Association had not been elected. No vote was taken but members were generally in favour of the amendments to the rule..

Ladies Guild Open Ringing Day and Book Launch

A letter had been received from Mrs. Stevenson giving information about the launch of her book about the history of the Ladies Guild and of the Open Ringing Day in Leicester on 23rd October. Details were left on the table for inspection after the meeting.

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Carlton T.V.

The Chairman read a letter had been received from Ms Tiffany Jones, who had been attracted by the 'Ring in 2000' campaign, regarding the ITV's Year of Promise programmes. This campaign by the whole of the ITV network was designed to get people to make a simple promise for the millennium to do something positive that would enhance the lives of others. It was about action, not money. Anyone interested in taking part was asked to collect the details from the Secretary after the meeting.

The Wealden Belle

Details had been received from Mr. David Manger about a social event on Friday, 30th June, when it was planned to charter the Wealden Belle on the Kent and East Sussex Stream Railway. It was hoped to have a jazz band on the train and the cost of dinner and the rail fare would be £30. Capacity was limited to 46 and a £10 deposit was required to secure a seat.

5. REPORTS

Ringling Master

The Ringling Master reported that some members had made good progress. There had not been as much enthusiasm as there might be for special events. More general suggestions of what ringers needed would be welcome. Mr. Hardy took the opportunity of thanking Mr. Byers most warmly for all his help with the organisation of events. In his turn, Mr. Byers thanked his wife for her help.

Secretary

The Secretary's report had been circulated.

Press Officer

Miss Vale reported on the bookstall - sales of one-per-learner remained high, 26 copies (28 in the year 1997-98). Other books were down from 26 to 13 in the same period. In reply to a query about children's sweatshirts, she said that she had some for sale at £12.50 each. She had worked with Mr. David Manger to get the Association's display stands to various tower open days. Any tower wanting them in the coming year was invited to contact her. Miss Vale also offered to help towers with publicity for special ringing events.

Millennium Committee

On behalf of the Millennium Committee, Mr. Morley said that it was encouraging to see so many new people attending the day's events: this helped to make all the training effort that been put in during the year worthwhile. The main task was to see that there were sufficient people to ring on 1st January 2000. Only half the forms had been returned by the end of August. Towers that had not returned their forms were asked to make every effort to do so by 7th November. Without this information, it was very difficult for the Committee to provide help for towers where there would be insufficient ringers. The next recruitment drive would be at Bromley on 9th January. If any other tower wanted help during the year 2000, they were asked to contact the Committee.

Chairman

The Chairman said that the next two months were going to be extremely busy for her at work but by the end of January she expected to have some free time. She felt that she had not achieved as much as she would have liked during her first year as Chairman. She felt that the District Committee should meet early in the year, as had been the practice in the past, and planned to discuss this at the January meeting and to set up a system of representatives.

The reports were accepted on the proposition of Mr. J. Byers, seconded by Mr. D. Pointer.

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6. MILLENNIUM RINGING

This matter had been covered in the Millennium Committee report.

7. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. Lewis, who took the Chair for the election of the Chairman, congratulated the District on the day's arrangements.

The Chairman, Miss P. J. Rooke, was re-elected on the proposition of Mrs. M. Macey, seconded by Miss M. R. Andrews.

The following officers were elected nem con:

Ringing Master	Mr. J. J. Hardy	Proposed Miss P. J. Rooke Seconded Mr J.R. Byers
Assistant Ringing Master	Mr. J. R. Byers	Proposed Mrs. R. Pointer Seconded Mrs. C. Cheeseman
District Representatives	Mrs. S. Hardy) Mr. L. Morley)	Proposed Mr. J. R. Byers Seconded Miss J. Vale
Press Representative	Miss J. Vale	Proposed Mrs. M. Macey Seconded Mrs. C. Cheeseman
Secretary	Miss M. R. Andrews	Proposed Mrs. R. Pointer Seconded Miss F. Cannon

Mr. W. D. Lanyon, who had not sought re-election as a District Representative, was thanked for his work and for acting as Covenant Secretary. He was prepared to continue to act in the latter capacity.

8. ELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS

The following new members were elected:

BECKENHAM		
Mr. Steve Kennet	P. Mr. J. J. Hardy	S. Mr. J. R. Byers
BROMLEY		
Ms Debbie Hoddinott	P. Mr. J. J. Hardy	S. Mr. R. Cheeseman
BROMLEY COMMON		
Ms Jacqueline Duke)	P. Mr. D. A. Scott	
Mr. Robert Duke)	S. Mrs. Y. Wright	
CHISLEHURST: ST. NICHOLAS		
Mr. James Tate (jnr.)	P. Mr. J. J. Hardy	S. Mr. R. Meredith
CUDHAM		
Mrs. Megan Smith	P. Mr. J. Fry	S. Mr. J. R. Byers
DARTFORD		
Mrs. Brenda J. Barton	P. Mr. D. W. Jones	S. Mr. M. E. Luffman

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ELTHAM

Miss Lucy Beman (jnr.))
Mrs. Pauline Beman)
Mrs. Barbara Gerrard) P. Mr. L. G. A. Morley
Mr. John Gerrard) S. Mr. L. A. Dumper
Ms Hilary Smith)

HORTON KIRBY

Mr. David J. Crowhurst) P. Miss P. J. Rooke
Mrs. Ann C. English) S. Miss M. R. Andrews
Mr. Dennis English)

FOOTS CRAY

Mrs. Jayne Edinboro) P. Mrs. M. E. Macey
Mrs. Marilyn P. Hayward) S. Mr. S. J. Morris

SIDCUP

Mr. Doug Gill) P. Mrs. Y. Wright) S. Mr. D. A. Scott
Ms Mary Hayward) P. Mr. J. R. Byers) S. Miss P. J. Rooke
Mr. Matthew Vagg) P. Mrs. Y. Wright)
Ms Pauline Vagg) S. Mr. D. A. Scott)

Members were particularly pleased to welcome the members from Horton Kirby, who were being trained at Farningham until their bells were installed. Horton Kirby thus became the thirtieth tower in the Lewisham District.

Horton Kirby

Mr. David Crowhurst from Horton Kirby informed the meeting that St. Mary's at Horton Kirby was a Norman church with a Victorian tower, erected in 1820, with three bells. Four years ago it had been decided plan for a peal of six and the previous July the ring of three had been taken out. The steel work for the new frame was to be installed on the following Monday and on 21st October the new bells would be cast at Whitechapel. They were to be returned to the church on 15th November.

Shoreham

Mr. Lewis said that a band for the new six at Chevening were being trained at Shoreham on Tuesday evenings. Volunteers to help would be welcome.

9. PROGRAMME FOR 2000

The following programme was agreed for the year 2000 and the Secretary was given authority to make alternative arrangements should these become necessary.

15th January) Quarterly Meeting at Bickley
12th February) Quiz Night with Fish and Chip Supper at Beckenham
1st April) Striking Competition at Shoreham
8th April) Quarterly Meeting at St. Nicholas, Chislehurst
8th July) Quarterly Meeting at Horton Kirby

Continued from page 14)

14th October	Annual District Meeting at Dartford
18th November	Call Change Competition at Eltham
9th December	Carol Service at Sidcup

With regard to the Annual District Meeting on 14th October, an invitation had been received from the Maidstone District Secretary who had received a "a most generous invitation from one of its ringers to host a major fireworks display and barbecue as a celebration event in 2000". The Maidstone District were planning to incorporate this into their A.D.M. day and, in extending the invitation to our members, suggested that the Lewisham District should try to arrange its Annual Meeting at the rural end of the District. Full details of the programme for this evening were available from the Secretary.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Newsletters

Mr. Byers asked members to let him have articles for the Christmas issue of the Newsletter.

Quiz Night at Beckenham

Mrs. Pointer and Mrs. Hardy invited members to a Quiz Night, with Fish and Chip Supper, at Beckenham on 12th February.

Dartford

Mr. Jones asked for support for a fourth Wednesday in the month practice at Dartford in order to help the local ringers. Volunteers, who could park at the Vicarage, were asked to meet by the church café door at 8 p.m.

Help with Learners

Mr. Steve Kennet expressed his appreciation for the hard work ringers had put in to help all those who had been learning to ring.

Votes of Thanks

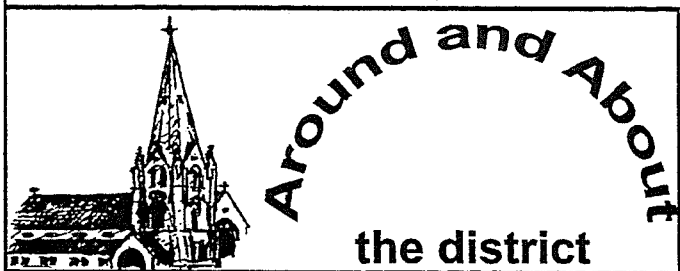
On behalf of the meeting, Mr. Jones expressed a warm vote of thanks to the Bromley Common for, at short notice, making the local arrangements and providing tea, to Fr. David Herbert of St. George's Bickley for conducting the service and to Mr. Martin Clitheroe for playing the organ.

On a slightly lighter note - some thoughts from Tommy Cooper

"Apparently, 1 in 5 people in the world are Chinese. And there are 5 people in my family, so it must be one of them. It's either my mum or my dad. Or my older brother Colin Or my younger brother Ho-Cha-Chu. But I think it's Colin."

"So I was in my car, and I was driving along, and my boss rang up, and he said 'You've been promoted.'
And I swerved.
And then he rang up a second time and said "You've been promoted again.'
And I swerved again.
He rang up a third time and said 'You're managing director'
And I went into a tree.

And a policeman came up and said 'What happened to you?' - I said 'I careered off the road.'



**Around and About
the district**

Write these dates in your diary **NOW**

- 15th January Quarterly Meeting at Bickley
- 22nd January District Practice 7 to 9pm
Beckenham - General Ringing
- 12th February Quiz Night with Fish and Chip Supper
at Beckenham (Details Sara Hardy)
- 19th February District Practice 7 to 9pm
West Wickham - Surprise Minor
- 18th March District Practice
Venue to be announced
- 1st April Striking Competition at Shoreham
- 8th April Quarterly Meeting at St. Nicholas,
Chislehurst
- 23rd April Easter Sunday
- 8th July Quarterly Meeting at Horton Kirby
- 14th October Annual District Meeting at Dartford
- 18th November Call Change Competition at Eltham
- 9th December Carol Service at Sidcup

Call Change Competition - the results of the competition held at Bexley on 13th November were as follows;

Bexley	19 1/2 faults
Beckenham	21 1/2 faults
Crayford	26 faults
Erith - Ch Ch	41 1/2 faults
Chelsfield	51 faults

A good competition at Bexley this year, unfortunately due to a mix up the judge arrived half way through the first band's test piece after James Hardy had taken over the judging role. A close battle for first place, and useful experience for all teams - see you next year for a rematch.

**PRESS RELEASE FROM CHELSFIELD
YOUTHS IN NEW YEARS DAY DING DONG**

Young bellringers from St. Martin of Tours, Chelsfield were on duty on New Year's day ringing in the New Millennium on the six bells of the Parish Church.

The young ringers were James Wilkins (age 11), Jason Rickwood (11), Melanie Wilkins (13), Miranda Tyrie (13), Gemma Rickwood (14), Caroline Poll (14) and John Cherry (15). The youngsters were joined by a number of senior ringers and so successful has been ringer recruitment at Chelsfield in recent years that there were bellringers to spare! This enabled some of the Chelsfield ringers to assist

with the ringing celebrations on the a bells at Shoreham and also support the bellringers at the new ring of bells at Horton Kirby where they are still learning the ropes!

The New Millennium has not only seen an increase in interest in the art of bellringing but also considerable corresponding activity in the casting of new bells. Apart from Horton Kirby there has been a new ring of bells installed at nearby

CHILD PROTECTION & BELL RINGING

Always have two adults present when children are being taught.

Invite parents of any trainees to come and watch a training session before allowing their child to start to learn. Require a parent to attend the first training session and ensure that the parent fully understands what is involved in learning to ring.

Make sure a parent is responsible for delivering the child to and collecting the child from the tower.

Ask parents to sign a 'permission to learn to ring' form.

Keep an attendance register.

Be aware of the insurance position for children.

Never allow children up amongst the bells apart from an initial demonstration visit if it is safe to have one.

For tower outings get parents to sign a detailed permission form. Organisers should be aware of Health and Safety and other issues: for example, it is inadvisable for a child to travel alone in a car with an adult.

**YOU ALL KNOW THAT THESE THINGS
MAKE SENSE - PLEASE PUT THEM INTO
PRACTICE AS THEY ARE TO ENSURE
ADULTS SAFETY AS WELL AS THAT OF
ANY CHILDREN YOU MAY TEACH**

On the lighter side of life

Mis-print in a church news sheet : "Sin to the Load, shout for joy all the earth"

Dear Father Christmas - I want to put in a new order quick , as I have just found all those things which I asked for under the spare room bed.

Jeremy Paxman needed to contact James Jones, the then Bishop of Hull. He called directory enquiries and asked for "The number for the Bishop of Hull please"
The operator replied "Is that a pub?"

