

Newsletter

KCAGR

April 1994

Lewisham District

WHAT'S ON IN THE DISTRICT

Quarterly Meeting - Mary Andrews

The next Quarterly Meeting will be at Chelsfield on Saturday 9th April. The service will be at 4.30 and will be followed by a business meeting, tea, and evening ringing. Names for tea to Mr Jim Rooke (0689 829800) by the previous Wednesday.

Joint Meeting With The Maidstone District - Mary Andrews

There will be a Joint Meeting at Ash and Stansted on Saturday 14th May. The programme will be as follows:

Ash —ringing 3.00
service 4.30, followed by tea

Stansted ringing 7.00 - 9.00

Names for tea to Mrs. Tessa Pallent (0732 822508) by the previous Wednesday.

Why not join the Dartford Ringers on Saturday 11th June 1994

at 7.30pm for a quiz night. A fund raising event to enable them to purchase new ropes. You are cordially invited to enter a team on behalf of your tower with 6-8 people.

Entry fee £4.00 per head. This includes a full buffet, tea & coffee. If you do wish to enter a band please contact Alex Britton on 0322-225822 ASAP, but by 4th June at the very latest.

Advanced Practices at Erith

For an experimental period, Christ Church, Erith are holding an advanced practice on the second Monday of the month from 8.15pm to 9.30 pm. Details from Andrew Young (0322) 529964

REMINDERS

Subscriptions - Mary Andrews

Subscriptions for 1994 were due on 1st January. Thank you everyone who has paid. Cheques will be paid in as soon as I receive the paying-in books back from the County Treasurer.

Newsletter Contributions - The Editor

Thank you to everyone who has paid their contribution for the newsletter. If you haven't paid, think on to those towers who are subsidising your copy at present.

From the Editor

Welcome to the April 1994 edition of the Lewisham District Newsletter. Thank you to everyone who sent in articles for this edition. If your article has not been included don't despair it will appear at a later date.

Andrew Young has written an article about Psittacosis (see page 2) after the tragic death of Ken Medhurst. Please read it and take note of what the experts have to say. It concerns all of us. Thank you Andrew for the information and guidelines.

As its Easter there is an article written by one of our ringers about his experience of an Easter as a ringer. I think it helps to remind all of us why we ring the bells week in week out.

Last date for articles for the next edition - 25 June 1994

Training - Andrew Young

By the time you read this the Holy Week talks on Bob Calling will probably already have taken place, but if not see the notice in your tower or contact me for details. This October's County Training Day is on the subject of bell maintenance. Alan Hughes from Whitechapel will be our guest expert for the day. Details are available from me.

We are proposing to run a series of training sessions for raising and lowering in Holy Week 1995, and the October 1995 training day will probably tackle the problem of bridging gaps (from Plain Bob to more complex methods and/or from 6-bell ringing to 8-bell ringing).

I am hoping to organise another Plain Bob Doubles training day in September/October. Details will be circulated via tower secretaries.

Wedding Fee Survey- Andrew Young

Thank you to those who replied to my survey on wedding fees. I received replies from 17 towers (out of 30). Most towers ring for 15 to 20 minutes before and after the weddings, although three only ring after. The following statistics emerged:

	Average	Maximum	Minimum
Total payment	£56-00	£80-00	£40-00
Amount to tower fund	£10-50	£24-00	£3-00
Payment per ringer	£7-00	£9-00	£5-00

I hope this is helpful to towers in setting wedding fees.

PSITTACOSIS - THE FACTS

The death last year of a member of our District, from psittacosis, apparently contracted from pigeon droppings, while working in a bell tower, set alarm bells ringing in many quarters. What is Psittacosis? How common is it? How serious is it? - clearly in this case it was fatal, but is this an exceptional case? What are the symptoms? How is it contracted? Most of all, what should we, as ringers be going about it?

Many of you may recall that enquiries of Bexley Borough Environmental Health Department really didn't provide the answers to these questions. I raised the matter with members of the Guild of Medical Ringers, and have received information and advice from Dr Morgan, a consultant physician at Charing Cross and Westminster Hospitals, a chest expert.

Ornithosis

Psittacosis (recently renamed *Ornithosis*) is caused by a sub-bacterial organism (it has many characteristics in common with both viruses and bacteria). It is carried by many species of birds, but primarily parrots, budgies and poultry and less commonly by pigeons. Infection is probably acquired by inhaling dried particles of infected excreta. Transmission from man to man is rare.

The clinical illness varies in its intensity, but is worse in older people and those with chronic heart or lung diseases, particularly smokers. There is an incubation period of one to two weeks, and the symptoms are flu-like in nature: high fever, headache, muscle pains, chills and cough. This may progress to pneumonia or a generalised septic condition. The illness usually subsides in the second week but in some cases it can be prolonged with relapses.

The condition responds well to treatment with certain antibiotics, but these are not necessarily the first choice of agents to treat other bacterial pneumonia.

Psittacosis is not generally fatal. Indeed it is possible that many of us have had the condition without realising it. However it can cause pneumonia which is an extremely dangerous condition, even in young and otherwise fit individuals

So What Is The Bottom Line ?

Psittacosis is rare, even among bird fanciers and not usually too serious. Nevertheless as we saw last year it does occur and it can be very serious. The risk of infection can be minimised, but not totally eliminated, by wearing a face mask. This is a good idea any way, as ~~chest~~ inhalation is irritant, and can evoke an allergic reaction. *dust*

Even if you have taken these precautions, be aware of the possibility of infection. If you develop symptoms such as those described above, do inform your G.P that you have been in contact with birds and bird droppings.

So remember

PREVENTION

Keep your tower bird proof and clean

PROTECTION

Wear a face mask when working in the tower.

AWARENESS

Be aware that the disease exists, and what the symptoms are

Be Safe, but not paranoid. Psittacosis is a serious condition, but a rare condition

A Bellringer's Easter Day - John Barnes

Easter is always magnificent! The relative gloom of Lent is replaced by radiance expressed in Bible readings, prayers, flowers, music and not least by bells. At Chelsfield we ring at 6.30 and 7.45 am to greet the morning, the ringers forming an appreciable part of the 7.00 congregation.

This year was no exception and the Rector commented on our well struck ringing, "That's how it should be done!". A memorable moment for me, however, was the ringers' response to his "Christ is Risen", a crisp determined "He is risen indeed, Alleluia".

As one of the St Martin in the Fields ringers I also have a London commitment and at Festivals we try to ring at as many Central London churches as possible. Thus I hurried home from Chelsfield, had a hot cross bun and a glass of water for breakfast and caught a train to London. By 9.30 I was ringing at St Saviour's Pimlico. It was strange to think that but twelve months ago there were no ringing bells here. Six of the eight bells came from the redundant church of St Mary, Peterborough, whilst the two treble bells were new from the Whitechapel Foundry. A ringing centre has been established in the church and is equipped to teach ringing, there being a dumb bell, a ringing simulator and a teaching room in the tower.

My chauffeur around London was Laith Reynolds, an ore mining magnate, and a ringer with the vision and ability to purchase redundant and unwanted rings of bells from the UK and install them in North America and Australia. In fact, Laith has homes in London, Vancouver and Perth, Australia.

By 10.15 we were at the delightful church of St Vedast, Foster Lane, with its six heavy slow turning Whitechapel bells. We left promptly at 11.00 as the service was beginning and reached St Martin in the Fields in time to ring a course of Stedman Cinques for 11.30 service. The twelve bells were new in 1989 and cost £130,000, the money being raised by us ringers. The old bells are awaiting installation in Perth, Australia. Afterwards we hurried to St James', Clerkenwell, whose eight distinctively tuned bells from the former Croydon foundry of Gillett and Johnston are considered by many to be the finest ring of eight in London. We arrived as the congregation was leaving, it being impossible to fit in ringing before the service.

I reached home at 1.10 p.m. for lunch after which Anne and I spent the afternoon at Emmetts Garden, Ide Hill. Whilst the daffodils, rhododendrons and camellias are very beautiful, the extensive bluebell bank must rate as one of the sights of Kent. We ate tea in the converted stables and then it was back to Chelsfield to ring for Evensong. I was greeted by 34 golden and yellow balloons. Yes, the Rector had been at it again, and in his sermon as he played with the strings, the balloons danced excitedly up and down, thus expressing the joy of the resurrection. Thus ended my Easter Day in which I had rung for seven services in five different churches. The term resurrection reminds me that some of the old, worn, unwanted fittings from our bells are to see a new lease of life in Norfolk church towers. Although unsuitable for full circle ringing, they will still serve for swing chiming and the Norfolk bell hanging team will be pleased to receive all that we can spare. We shall, of course, retain some of our old fittings at Chelsfield but the rest will be proclaiming the Easter message for years to come in rural Norfolk.

Well if you have not been to a ringing school and have wondered what it's all about Diana Pratt has written a brief article of her experience at Sparsholt last year. Below Dianes article are details of this years Central Council ringing school and how you go about applying.

The Editor

What's A Ringing Course All About ? - Diane Pratt

It was last August Bank holiday weekend when I attended my first ringing course. The course was being held at Sparsholt Agricultural College Nr Winchester.

I was a little apprehensive about what was expected of me. I wasn't sure how I would cope with all the ringing and theory sessions. Also, had I joined the right group? Had I over estimated my ringing capabilities?

Well I joined the Grandsire Doubles group. (I had only rang Grandsire a few times inside before the course). We had a number of teachers and five learners in my group. During the weekend we had theory sessions with our group leader. It was then out to a tower to put into practice what we had just learnt. We rang at six different towers over the weekend.

The highlight of the weekend for me was the chance on the Saturday evening to ring at Winchester Cathedral which has a ring of 14 bells. Everyone on the course came together for that evening. This was a great experience.

Well what did I gain from the weekend? Confidence about my ringing and the theory of how to ring Grandsire Doubles. Now all I have to do is put what I learnt into practice, that's the hard bit!

To sum up, if you have the time to go on a ringing course I would strongly recommend it. Apart from learning a great deal it gives you the chance of meeting lots of different ringers and make new friends. A very enjoyable weekend.

RINGING COURSE 1994

Arrangements are being made jointly with the Ely Diocesan Guild for the 1994 Central Council ringing course, which will be held 29th - 31st July at Wisbech. There will be courses on tower management and maintenance, together with method ringing modules from Bob Doubles to Cambridge Royal. It is anticipated that the cost will be £110.00; brochures and application forms will be available from Carol Franklin, 58 Park View Sharnford, Hinckley, Leics, LE10 3PT, from the end of February for those who send an A5 stamped, addressed envelope with their enquiry.

PEAL REPORT - JIM ROOKE

PEALS 1994

[1] 29/01 BIGGIN HILL

5040 This Year Surprise Minor

QUARTER PEALS 1994

[1]	14/02	DARTFORD	1260 Grandsire Triples
[2]	13/05	DARTFORD	1280 Double Norwich Court Bob Major
[3]	01/08	BECKENHAM	1280 Spliced Surprise Major CYNBP
[4]	18/09	DARTFORD	1260 Grandsire Triples
[5]	26/09	BECKENHAM	1330 St Simon Triples
[6]	10/10	BECKENHAM	1260 Doubles 3m.
[7]	30/10	BICKLEY	1260 Doubles 3m.
[8]	31/10	BECKENHAM	1260 Stedman Doubles
[9]	31/10	EYNSFORD	1260 Plain Bob Triples
[10]	14/11	BECKENHAM	1259 Grandsire Caters
[11]	14/11	EYNSFORD	1344 Plain Bob Triples
[12]	28/11	ASH BY WROTHAM	1260 St Simon and St Martin Doubles
[13]	28/11	BICKLEY	1260 Plain Bob Minor
[14]	28/11	BIGGIN HILL	1320 Cambridge Surprise Minor
[15]	28/11	DOWNE	1260 Grandsire Doubles
[16]	28/11	FARNINGHAM	1260 St Clements Minor
[17]	28/11	HAYES	1260 Eynesbury & St Osmund Doubles
[18]	28/11	PENGE	1260 Plain Bob Doubles
[19]	28/11	SIDCUP	1260 Single Oxford Minor
[20]	28/11	ST MARY CRAY	1260 Single Canterbury Minor
[21]	28/11	WEST WICKHAM	1260 St Nicholas & Winchendon Place Doubles
[22]	28/12	BROMLEY	1260 Grandsire Triples
[23]	02/01	CHELSEFIELD	1260 Doubles 2m. Plain Bob and St. Martins
[24]	04/01	CHELSEFIELD	1260 St Clements College Bob Minor

Congratulations to :

- [3] Most Spliced Surprise Major - Ruth Hardy, Margaret Macey and Nigel Pointer, and as Conductor James Hardy
- [5] 1st on 8 - Samantha Hovey
1st Triples in method - Sarah Farnham, Vanessa Powell and J R S Sawle
- [6] 1st off cover - J R Byers
1st multi-method - Hovey
- [8] 1st in principle - T M Guntrip
- [10] 1st on 10 - Kerry Jo Robinson and N Johnson
1st Caters in method - Samantha Hovey
- [12] 400th quarter - Sara Phelps
100th together - Sara Phelps and David Macey
- [18] 1st on 6 as Conductor - Alan Saunders
75th Doubles - James Hardy
25th together - Nigel Pointer and David Kingston

Information taken from The Ringing World up to and including No.4324 for March 11, 1994.

