



LEWISHAM DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter On Line at www.lewishamdistrict.fsnet.co.uk

THE KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS www.kcacr.org.uk

APRIL 2003

Chelsfield Enjoy Home Success

The first day of March was a lovely spring day which saw a disappointingly low turn out of four teams converge on St. Martin of Tours, Chelsfield for the District Six-Bell Striking Competition.

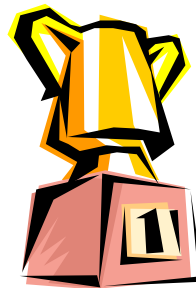
After the draw, everyone retired to the back of the church so as not to put off those ringing in the open balcony ringing room. The Chelsfield ringers kept everyone well supplied with splendid cakes and tea.

After everyone had rung their 240 changes it was time for Mark Humphreys, the judge, to have his say. He started by saying that we were lucky to have a judge today as the District Ringing Master had in fact booked him for 29th February! The bells at Chelsfield are an historic but difficult ring and so provided a good challenge for the four teams.

He then gave his comments on the bands in the order that they rang:

1. Crayford. (8min 34secs). Grandsire Doubles. This was confident ringing but with consistent faults. Some very good bits but interrupted by bad patches.
2. Chelsfield (7min 53secs). Plain Bob Doubles. This seemed to be an experienced band. Brisk with some consistent faults. Although some really excellent ringing.
3. Eltham (8min 21secs). Plain Bob Doubles. They didn't agree on a speed. Some big clashes but also some nice ringing.
4. Erith (Christ Church) (7min 46secs). Grandsire Doubles. This was a courageous bit of ringing but sometimes a bit rushed.

The result was given in the traditional



reverse order, producing an outcome of:

- 1st Chelsfield - 49 faults
- 2nd Crayford - 67 faults
- 3rd Eltham - 87 faults
- 4th Erith, Christ Church - 102 faults

Congratulations go to Chelsfield who definitely produced the best ringing on the day and now go on to represent the Lewisham District in the County 6 Bell Striking Competition in September. It is just a shame that not more towers (or combinations of towers?) could raise a band.

Rupert Cheeseman

Next District Event

District Meeting
St. Luke, Bromley Common
on
Saturday 12th April

Service 4.30 p.m.
Names for tea to to
Alastair Scott on 020 8460 6***
or dons@salandal.demon.co.uk
by Wednesday 9th April please.

Chairman's Bit

Further to my comments in the October Newsletter, I'm sure it is coincidence, rather than anybody actually taking any notice of what I write in these columns, but I have noticed a bit of an upsurge in quarters being rung in the District recently. Trying to find an eighth ringer for Grandsire Triples recently, it was both pleasing and frustrating to discover how many people were already ringing quarters elsewhere! Keep up the good work. James Tate of Chislehurst rang his first peal – Yorkshire Major, at Eltham. Congratulations to him – the first of many, I hope.

More congratulations, this time to Chelsfield for their victory in the District Six-Bell Striking Competition on 1st March. They go forward to represent us at the County Competition on 27th September, hosted by the Canterbury District. (Does that mean it's our turn next year?)

It was slightly disappointing that only four teams entered this year. Surely Crayford, Eltham and Christ Church Erith cannot be the only other towers in the District capable of raising a band? Chelsfield aren't invincible – I seem to recollect someone else winning a few years ago. Or are there other reasons why towers don't enter? We changed the date and time this year: was this a factor? If you have any views, let us (i.e. the Committee) know.

Don't forget the County AGM on Easter Bank Holiday Monday. After our exemplary efforts at hosting the event last year, this is a chance to sit back and let the Maidstone District do all the hard work! I notice that their menu is similar to ours.

David Holdridge



A Coach to the



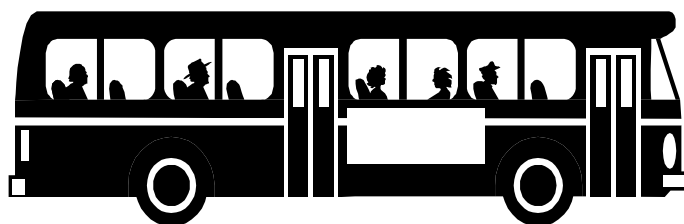
Saturday 26th July 2003, 10.30 - 5.00

The Tonbridge District of the KCACR is planning to run a coach to this major event, which will be held at the Lincolnshire Showground. It will be an amazing ringers' day out - seminars, concerts, chance to try mini-rings, opportunity to buy anything you could possibly want with any connection with ringing, meet people you've only read about,..... There will even be fairground organs, one with 16 Taylor hand bells. Plenty of choice of food or space to picnic. Entry fee: 18 and over £3, 12-17 £1, under 12s free.

For further up-to-date info see <http://www.cccbr.org.uk/info/prag/roadshow/roadshow.htm> and of course The Ringing World.

The coach will cost £15 a seat (payable with booking), leaving Tunbridge Wells or Sevenoaks at 6.30am with a possible second pickup further north. A coffee break is planned on the journey.

Book your place now with Catherine Lewis (Mallans, ** Main Road, Sundridge, Sevenoaks, TN14 6EF).



Walter Lemon and James Stevens

I have had a letter from Ian Oram asking (for Cumberland records) for information about Walter Lemon, who used to ring at Crayford and was last mentioned in the 1970 Handbook, and James Stevens, who used to ring at St. John's Erith, and was last mentioned in the 1975 Handbook. Ian would particularly like the current address for these two ringers or, if either of them has died, the date of death. Ian's address is The *****, School Hill, Warnham, Horsham, RH12 3QN.

Mary Andrews

Editorial



Why is that the last bit of the newsletter is always the hardest and most time consuming? The end is in sight but it just will not arrive. Maybe England beating Turkey in the background is not helping!

Thanks again to everyone who has made our job easier by submitting articles. As you can see there is plenty going on in the District, be it tower outings, dinners, rehanging bells or new bands learning to ring.

The last of which brings me neatly on to recruitment. Having just had to cancel a practice for the first time in a number of years, having gone instead to another tower who were not exactly overrun with people either and with a low turn out at the striking competition, is recruitment something that the District should be getting more actively involved in or should it still be up to the individual towers? Has anyone got any successful ways they've found for recruiting that they'd like to tell us about?

And so the newsletter is finished for another 3 months.... :-)

Rupert and Cathy



Wedding Fee Survey

A few years ago I seem to remember that a survey was carried out in the District for the amount each tower received in the way of wedding fees. I thought that it would be worth doing again. Thank you to all the towers that replied to my email. The results are shown in the table below.

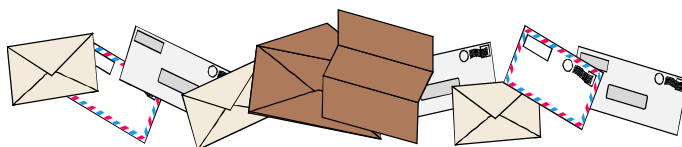
There is a large variation within the District ranging from £70 to £120. I wonder if organists, choristers and the clergy receive such differences in pay?

Tower	Total	Per Ringer	No. Bells Rung	Tower Fund
Beckenham	£120	£15	6	£30
Bexley	£95	£11	8	£7
Bromley Common	£96	£12	8	£0
Crayford	£80	£10	6	£20
Eltham (before and after)	£80	£9	8	£8
Eltham (after only)	£60	£7	8	£4
Erith (Christ Church)	£80	£10	6	£20
Foots Cray	£90	£12	5	£30
Hayes	£77	£11	6	£11
Horton Kirby	£70	£10	6	£10
St Mary Cray	£115	£15	6	£25
Sidcup	£110	£15	6	£20

Rupert Cheeseman

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We will as usual, be seeking articles, pictures, jokes, cartoons, reports and tower news for the next issue. Get them in early!

**COPY DEADLINE -
23rd June 2003**

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CHISLEHURST/ELTHAM DINNER 2003

The fourth annual dinner was held at the Chislehurst Golf Club on Friday 10th January. Good food, gracious surroundings, speeches, and finally, the rare and beautiful sound of change ringing on handbells... what more could you ask?

There was no guest speaker but, instead, the presentation of two reports on the activities of the Chislehurst and Eltham towers. Each tower has welcomed new ringers, either ready-made, or learning from scratch, and each tower has sadly said goodbye to valuable and popular ringers.

Weekly practices have continued to attract good numbers in both places but Chislehurst is sorely disadvantaged because of the re-decoration of the church. This will indeed be a good thing - when it's all done! - but the temporary inconvenience is a reminder of how even bellringing is much improved by pleasant surroundings.

On the second Monday of each month, members of the two bands join up (at Eltham) for an intense evening of Surprise Minor ringing - sometimes finishing up with Surprise Major if enough are present. This arrangement can be notched up as a great success. The practices, enhanced by the welcome presence of the great and the good, are driven by Len Morley - note that word 'driven' - who has a disarming way of forcing a cracking pace.

Attention was drawn to the excellent quarter peal of Stedman Triples rung at Chislehurst for the launch of the new book *Francis Murray of Chislehurst**, and also to the broadcast on Radio 4, by Colin Wyld, on 16th December. This latter consisted of a cheerful and succinct explanation of the elements of change ringing.....in fact, it sounded so jolly that I thought I might like to start again!

Len Dumper, claimed by both Chislehurst and Eltham as their own, was the organiser and our thanks go to him for such an enjoyable and successful occasion.

Jean Pailing

*The book tells the story of the Rector of St Nicholas' Church, Chislehurst, from 1846-1902. Francis Murray was also responsible for the founding of the Church of the Annunciation. There is much detail of Victorian life in Chislehurst, and a description of all the strange *goings-on* at national level in the Church of England at that time. Francis Murray was involved with the publication of Hymns Ancient and Modern - an event which is covered in detail. If you are interested to know more, ring Jean Pailing on 01689 856***. The book is a paperback of 160 pages and costs £10.00, including p&p.

Bells and Beer in Belgium

Belgium may not be noted for its change ringing, but the Belgians certainly like the sound of bells! I spent a few days there recently and, in parts of Brussels, one could hear a different tune (usually a snippet of a well-known classical piece) every quarter of an hour. The carillon is very popular in Belgium - new buildings have them as well as older churches.

On a visit to Bruges, I was able to see the carillon mechanism and the bells at close quarters. The Belfort, a prominent landmark in Bruges, is a tower on the market place with a magnificent carillon. The tower, which is over 80m high, was built in the Middle Ages as a watchtower and depository for important documents. From early times, it housed a number of bells - each with a distinct sound and purpose: to warn of danger; to mark an important occasion and to tell the time.

The bells themselves are reached by a climb up 366 steps. A little below the bells is the mechanism which operates the chimes. A keyboard is used to play 'live' and a concert is



The Belfort, Bruges

given some afternoons. A series of wires and levers is used to operate the striking mechanism. The automatic chimes, which ring on the quarters, are operated by a mechanism similar to that in a musical box. A large cylinder (over 1m in diameter) is covered in a number of cogs. As the cylinder rotates, these strike levers that release the striking mechanism.

It was an interesting experience to be immediately next to the bells when they rang. I noticed in particular how long it takes for the sound of the larger bells to die away completely. However, the best place to listen to the bells is sitting outside one of the cafes in the square, while drinking one of the many beers for which Belgium is famous! (I tried several on my visit and also brought a number home!)

Elizabeth Brett

Pyramids and Fuller's

Or The Crayford Tower Outing 2003

Our tower outing this year took us down to Sussex. Never did a nicer day dawn for such an excursion. It was warm and sunny without being hot. We had a good run down and met at the first tower which was St. Nicholas, Sandhurst. Like many village churches it was located a long way from the centre of the village. The bells,

a ring of six were a ground floor anti-clockwise ring, with a long draft and the longest tail ends I have ever experienced. Mine obliged me by draping itself neatly over my forearm. The bells felt very slow so we did some ponderous ringing; Plain Bob, Grandsire and Double Oxford Bob Minor.



and a nice roast lamb lunch. A long lunch combined with good ale tends to make one soporific, so we had to shake ourselves and make for the next tower.

Dallington is the home tower of the Sussex Ringing Master so we expected a good ring and were not disappointed. The bells are a six, a ground floor ring with a high draft but that go very nicely;

Alex was particularly impressed and kept saying "I like these bells". A nice piece of London Surprise Minor was rung as was a touch of Double Oxford Bob Minor.

From there we went on to Brightling, located deep in the heart of Rudyard Kipling country. This was an interesting church which had been much improved, or perhaps titivated is a more appropriate term, by an eccentric local magnate by the name of Jack Fuller (d. 1834). In the churchyard is a rather sinister looking mausoleum in the shape of a pyramid. It looks incongruous and has a rather disquieting effect; something that was not lessened, by the sight of an old sheep's skull lying on the ground at the entrance of it. Fuller was granted permission to build his pyramid on the sole condition he moved the local hostelry, then directly opposite the church, to a more respectable distance. Fuller acquiesced and this was where we ended up afterwards.



S.M.V., Salehurst

From there we left and threaded our way through the Sussex lanes to Salehurst. This tower was my personal favourite. The village clung to a hillside, with a view in the early spring sunshine that was reminiscent of a Stanley Spencer painting. Forget his grotesque figures but think of the vividness of an early spring, before anything has had a chance to get going. The colours are clear and well defined, and there is a certain clarity one does not get at any other time of the year.

The tower, a ring of eight, were found in a lovely old ringing room, with sepia photographs of long dead ringers; farm folk by the look of them, with their collarless shirts, belt and braces and hands like shovels. The bells sounded as a country ring should sound. The tenor (16-2-16) had a wonderful hum and we managed some nice ringing; Stedman Triples, Plain Bob Triples, Grandsire and some Yorkshire Surprise Major.

Our next stop was Battle. Battle is a lovely little town and well worth a visit. The bells, another ring of eight are located in a rather splendid 12th Century tower. The tenor (21-3-8) did take some pulling but we managed some Stedman Triples, Yorkshire and some Call Changes. We impressed the local captain who had let us in and afterwards when I enquired about the battle site, took us up on to the tower roof, to look down over the Abbey ruins and the battle site itself. From there we went to The Chequers Inn for lunch. A room had been provided for us and I can testify to a good pint of beer

Brightlings' bells, an eight are clearly not rung than often. The ringing room doubles up as a lumber store and we had to shift bits and pieces before we could ring. The bells sounded better outside than they did inside, where they were loud with a distinctly headachy quality. However, Bristol Surprise Major was rung very respectably, as was a touch of Plain Bob Major.



The day went well and we were made very welcome at all the local towers. I should like to thank everyone who let us in, Alex Britton for organising it and finally to the Bromley ringers, who made up the numbers and meant we could ring a little more adventurously. I think it is fair to say a good day was had by all.

Andrew Sinclair

NEWS FROM THE TOWERS

ASH-BY-WROTHAM

Practice Thursday 20:00

BECKENHAM

Practice Thursday 19:50

BEXLEY

Practice Thursday 20:00

BICKLEY

Practice Wednesday 20:00

BIGGIN HILL

Practice Wednesday 20:00

BROMLEY

Practice Tuesday 20:00

BROMLEY COMMON

Practice Thursday 19:45

CHELSEFIELD

Practice Monday 20:00

CHISLEHURST

(Annunciation)

Practice 1st Wednesday 19:30

CHISLEHURST (St Nicholas)

Practice Wednesday 20:00 (1st Wednesday at Annunciation)

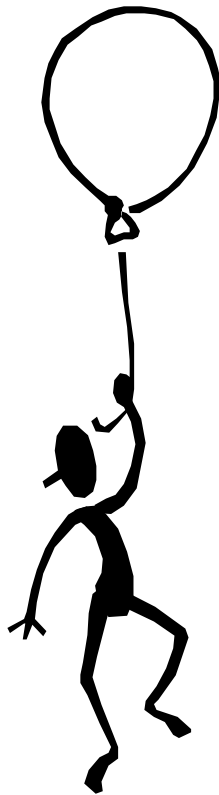
CRAYFORD

Practice Tuesday 19:30

Rather a lot seems to have happened at Crayford during the last quarter.

Our aim of ringing a quarter every month has continued with Plain Bob Triples in January in which Andrew Sinclair rang the 5th for his first in the method. This was followed in February with Cambridge Minor, which was my first of Surprise. Both of these quarters were rung for evening service. In March, three of us went to Foots Cray to ring a quarter of Grandsire Doubles for my birthday, that of Andrew's nephew and for the enthronement of the new Archbishop of Canterbury. Two attempts since then of Stedman Doubles have fallen by the wayside but April is not over yet so we still have a few weeks to maintain our record.

We were pleased to be placed second in the District Six Bell Striking Competition. We never seriously expected to beat



Chelsfield on their own bells and were happy to be the runners-up.

On a gloriously sunny Saturday in March we had our annual Tower outing, this time to Sussex. The day was both enjoyable and successful and a full account can be found on page 5.

At our recent AGM, Nancy Robins and David Osenton decided to stand down as Tower Captain and Ringing Master respectively. Rupert was elected as the new Ringing Master/Tower Captain with Andrew Sinclair elected as Secretary. We would like to thank both David and Nancy for all the work they have done at Crayford.

On a final note, we are hoping to change or practice times to begin and end 15 minutes later than at present. However, we may need to use the diplomacy of the UN peacekeeping force (*or if that fails the subtlety of the Americans? -Ed*) to convince one of our neighbours who dislikes the bells and uses a stopwatch to time us! Any progress in this direction will be posted via the e-group so for any visitors, keep your eyes peeled.

Debra Say

CUDHAM

Practice Monday (except 1st) 19:45 Joint Practice with Downe

DARTFORD

Practice Wednesday 20:00

DEPTFORD

Occasional ringing, by arrangement.

Please contact Graham Long on 020 8244 4*** (H) or 077 2982 0*** (M) .

DOWNE

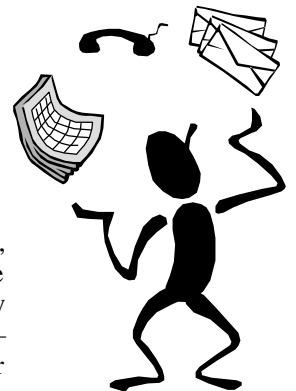
Practice 1st Monday 20:00 Joint

Practice with Cudham

ELTHAM

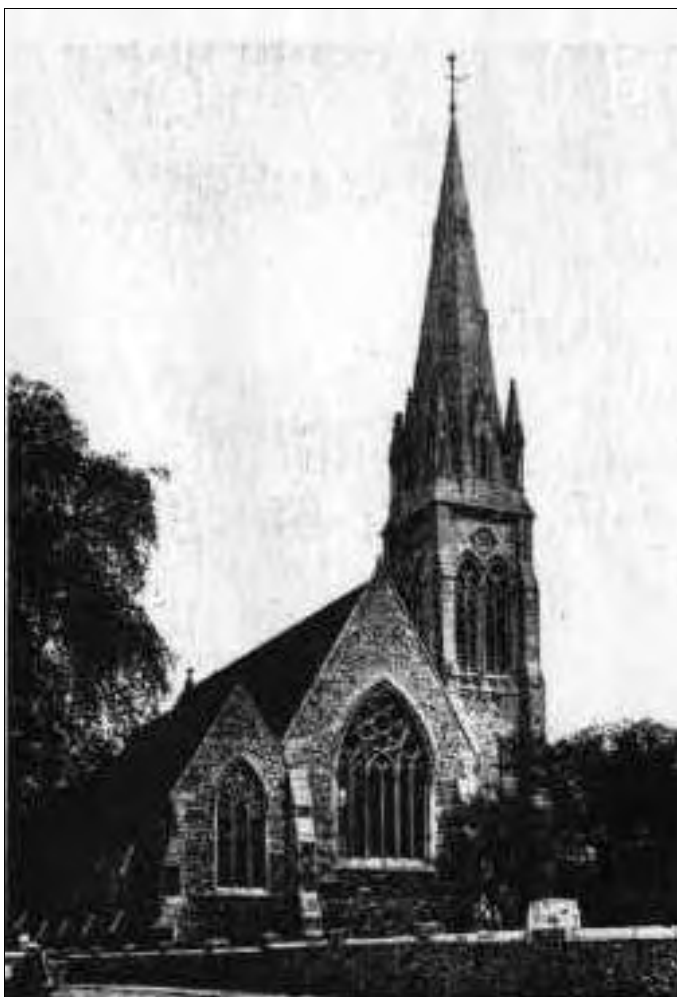
Practice Tuesday 20:00

The year started on a high note, with our fourth annual dinner at the Chislehurst Golf Club, held jointly with St Nicholas Chislehurst – although there were a good number of friends and fellow-ringers from other District towers present, including Dartford, Beckenham and Crayford.



Those of you who scrutinise the lists of quarter-peals in the newsletter may wonder why the quarter of Bob Minor that we rang on January 19th was 1283 changes long – not a standard length by any stretch of the imagination. The reason is that this was supposed to be a date touch, but it sadly came to grief in the first 720 (the easy bit!). However, there was time left to ring the more difficult extent-and-a-half, which conveniently came in at an acceptable length for an ordinary quarter. We are planning to try again on Easter Sunday. We also rang a quarter in March, of Cambridge Minor, which surprisingly turned out to be Len Morley's first in the method.

As noted elsewhere, a peal of Yorkshire Major was rung on the bells, which was James Tate's first. The vicar seems happy for peals to be rung here, and there is another one scheduled for April.



St John's, Deptford

The church was originally built with money given by Baroness Burdett Coutts and consecrated in July 1855.

It is now the main church of the parish of St. John's with Holy Trinity, which new parish was formed in 1984.

Surprise Minor practices have continued to be held on the second Monday. The March one turned out slightly differently: since exactly eight people turned up, someone suggested attempting a quarter. After some discussion over such matters as method, conductor and composition, a very respectable quarter of Cambridge Major was rung – another first in method for Len, 9 days after the Minor version!

Finally, I think it is true to say that we slightly surprised ourselves by managing for the second year running not only to enter a team for the District Six-Bell Striking Competition, but to be awarded third place – this despite general agreement that we did not ring as well as last year. We may have been helped by the fact that only four teams entered...

David Holdridge

ERITH (Christ Church)

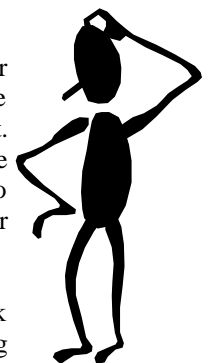
Practice Monday 20:00

Those of you who have rung at Christchurch will know that our bells are not the easiest to ring! But no longer – we have started work to make the bells ring much more easily. We decided to phase the work so that ringing could continue and also to make financing the job easier. Last spring, Whitechapel Foundry were approached for estimates and permission was sought from the Diocese to carry out the work.

The first phase – work on the Treble and the Second – started after Christmas and is now finished. The Treble has a brand-new headstock and bearings, while the Second has new bearings. Both bells now ring beautifully.

The second phase – replacing the bearings on 3,4,5 and 6 – is now in progress. We are taking the bells out of commission in pairs – 3 and 5, followed by 4 and 6. At the time of writing, the headstocks from 3 and 5 have been returned from the foundry with the new bearings, so these bells will be ringing again shortly. The 4 and 6 will then have the same treatment. Finally, when funds permit, we will deal with the 7th and the Tenor.

Much of the funding has been raised by our own efforts and we have also applied to the County Association BRF for a grant. Refurbished bells deserve new ropes and the Christchurch PCC has generously offered to meet the cost of a new set of ropes – our thanks to them.



Ringling has continued throughout the work with some necessary adjustments – ringling call-changes on 1,2,4,6,7,8 can be interesting – concentration is needed to remember which bell you are!

On the ringling front, a notable achievement was the ringling of a Quarter Peal of Grandsire Triples on 22nd December.

This was the first Triples Quarter to be rung by an all-home band since about 1991. Three members of the band were ringing their first Quarter on eight.

Elizabeth Brett

ERITH (St John the Baptist)

Practice Wednesday 20:00

EYNSFORD

Practice Friday 20:00

FARNINGHAM

Practice Wednesday 20:00 by arrangement

FOOTS CRAY

Practice Wednesday 20:00

No news really, always struggling and could always use help - visitors welcome but phone first to check we are practicing. We managed Bob Doubles with a home band a couple of weeks ago - just once!

Margaret Macey

GREENWICH

Practice 2nd, 3rd and 4th Wednesday 20:00

HAYES

Practice Tuesday 20:00

HORTON KIRBY

Practice Thursday

At Horton Kirby we have rung quarter peals on two Tuesdays- 1260 Bob Minor on 11th March and 300 Gransire,960 Bob Doubles on 18th March. The Doubles included Sue Allport and Mick MacDonnell - remember the "Terrors of the first Quarter" article - who have now rung for 42 mins and no hint of terror; they might even admit to enjoying it!

Lesley Barclay

LEWISHAM

Practice 5th Wednesday

PENGE

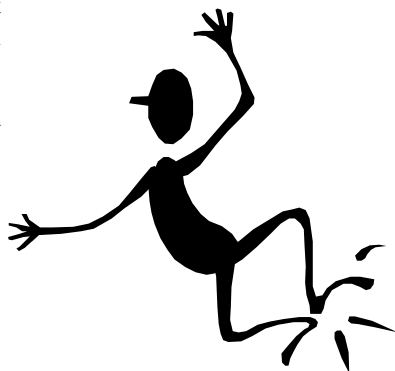
Ringling by arrangement

ST MARY CRAY

Practice Wednesday 19:45

SHOREHAM

Practice Monday 20:00



Following training sessions on the simulator at Otford belfrey, Shoreham bellringers have returned to our beautiful village church, hoping to go from strength to strength. Assisted by trainers and more experienced ringers, new recruits are learning a whole new meaning to being "too close" and "too wide".

Visitors are welcome and I enclose a photograph, taken by Ian Harper, one of our more experienced members of Shoreham Belfrey.

Yvonne Avery

(It is nice to see a band return to Shoreham after too many years silence. We certainly enjoyed our evening when we were there for a practice night and not just because of their hospitality in The George afterwards! -Ed)



St. Peter and Paul , Shoreham

SIDCUP

Practice Wednesday 20:00

WEST WICKHAM

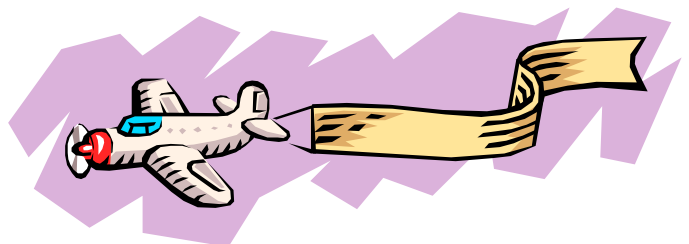
Practice Wednesday 20:00

At our tower AGM in January Alys stepped down as tower captain after 12 years and I have now filled the post, a big thank you to Alys for all her hard work.

Judith Fry

WOOLWICH

Practice 1st Wednesday 20:00



A Leisurely Weekend on the Isle of Wight

Whilst on a Ringing Outing somewhere in Suffolk, I expressed the view about how pleasant it would be to have a weekend on the Isle of Wight with a little ringing and sufficient time to relax and enjoy other activities and of course, good company.



Having made such a bold statement I had little choice but to come up with the goods. As a consequence, 18 ringers and spouses from Eltham and Chislehurst met at Portsmouth on Friday 14th March, the plan being to ring at just two towers prior to checking into our hotel in good time to enjoy the pool, jacuzzi and sauna. The first tower was at Arreton with its six superb bells where we rang a range of Call Changes, Doubles and Minor and attempted Beverley.

Leaving Arreton we rambled through the lanes to Brading, the only eight bell tower on our itinerary. Access was gained by first finding the key in the broom cupboard located just off the main pedestrian footpath, then a climb up a steep external ladder off the footpath in front of the main entrance door, though a trap door into the ringing chamber. These bells were a bit more challenging. We thought we might have had problems from the noise of the compressor on the highway outside, however the noise of the bells soon drowned out the compressor and the conductor. Call changes were a major achievement and needed two conductors and a lot of hand signals. Nevertheless we did manage to ring some respectable Grandsire and Stedman Triples.



All Saints, Godshill

We checked into our hotel by about 5pm and took over the pool and associated facilities. Fully refreshed, we all managed to get down for dinner and enjoyed a four course meal.

On Saturday we drove to Alum Bay where we walked to the Needles and along Tennyson's Down to Tennyson's Monument, stopping briefly for a photo-shoot, and on to Freshwater Bay. By this time we were starting to run short of time if we were to ring at our first tower of the day. Whilst the drivers retrieved the cars, the remaining members of the party visited a local hotel seeking

food and refreshment. They were advised there was a wait of 30 minutes and taking the management at their word accepted this, after all there was still no sign of the drivers and the cars.

The drivers duly arrived and we all waited and waited and waited. We tried to contact the person scheduled to meet us at Brighstone, but they were out (well it was a nice sunny day). Eventually we decided to rearrange the passengers to enable a car to go to the first tower to negotiate an extension of time. At Brighstone we enjoyed a slightly shorter ring, again mixed Doubles, Minor, Call Changes and another attempt at Beverley, these bells were delightful.

We sped through the lanes to Godshill for the best ring of the day; these bells were exceptionally good. The rest of the day was free for individual choice, some went sight-seeing, others shopping but at about 5.30pm we all arrived at the pool to enjoy a swim, jacuzzi and a sauna, only to find that some other guests were also using the facility. We continued to enjoy ourselves and one by one all the other guests left - was it something we said? We will never know! A pleasant evening followed with good food, wine with most of the party enjoying the odd dance (*What's an odd dance? -Ed*).

Nothing was planned for Sunday, although a number of us rang for service at Shanklin, quite the worse bells we had rang all weekend (*I'd describe them as challenging! -Ed*). We were assured that they were considerably better than they used to be. They sounded good but the back two had a nasty habit of dropping just when you thought you had mastered them. After ringing we made our way to Carrisbrook Castle, only to find that those who hadn't rang for the service were already there. After a pleasant time wandering around the castle we made our way to the ferry and then home.

The aim of the weekend was to relax, enjoy ourselves and do a little ringing. Was it successful? You must ask the other members of the party as I couldn't possibly comment. As for me, I enjoyed it.

Len Morley

St. Mary's, Bexley Old and New

FIFTY YEARS' AGO

The following are an extracts from the minutes of the District Quarterly Meeting held at Shoreham on 25th July 1953:

“The summer meeting was held at Shoreham on Saturday July 25th and attracted an attendance of 50 ringers and friends representing 14 towers.

“After tea, a somewhat dilatory affair, the business meeting was held in the churchyard, by contrast a brisk, incisive session under the efficient supervision of Mr. E. A. Barnett.

“Mr. E. Barnett fittingly referred to the recent passing of Mr. H. Holden of Bexley, and in paying sincere tribute to his memory, instanced the many benefactions the district had received at his hand, with special reference to his achievement in securing the augmentation of St. Mary's bells to a ring of 8 in 1938. Mr. I. Emery moved that the traditional silent tribute be paid to Mr. Holden's memory, and this was done with reverence and solemnity.

“The District Secretary (Mr. A. G. Hill) announced that the Association had been represented at the funeral service and that a floral tribute had been sent on behalf of the District. Members thereupon defrayed the cost of this token of esteem and gratitude, so that it should indeed be a District tribute.”

THIS YEAR - A RE-CASTING



The freshly cast fourth at whitechapel



Mary supervising the

To mark the Golden Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II and following permission from the PCC, two generous donations (one from an ex-Bexley ringer) and the granting of a Faculty, our 4th bell, weighing 4-0-9 and cast by Thomas Mears II in 1827, was returned to the Whitechapel Bell Foundry on Saturday, 4th January for re-casting and the provision of a steel headstock. An invitation from Mr. Hughes to watch the re-casting, resulted in our Vicar, Charles Potter, Margaret Bellinger, Barbara Graham and Percy Hicks spending a very interesting few hours at Whitechapel on 24th January.

The bell was returned to us on 21st February and replaced by members of the Association's Bell Restoration Team the following day, just in time for us to ring for our first wedding of the year. The new bell weighs 4-0-11, has a diameter of half an inch less than the previous one, and is tuned 'old style' (flat 7th hum).

The Bexley band are most grateful to Peter Romney and the BRF Team and to James Hardy, who very kindly provided transport to and from the Foundry. Any ringer who wishes to try out our new bell will be most welcome on a practice night (Thursday) between 8 and 9 p.m. Do phone before coming to ensure that we are meeting. Our next project is to return the



The Re-Cast Fourth

other seven bells to the Foundry so that they, too, can be fitted with steel headstocks, for which we have received a quote of £8556 plus VAT. Fund raising again!

Mary Andrews

More pictures can be found at www.dartford26.freeserve.co.uk

New loo?

ST MARTINS, CHELSFIELD, FUND-RAISING FOR CHURCH EXTENSION

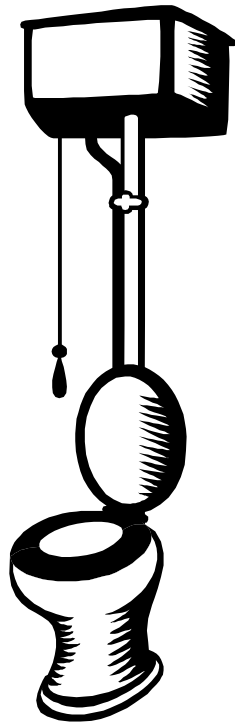
I wanted to say a big thank you to all those who attended the Lewisham District Striking Competition on Saturday 1st March and contributed to our extension fund collection. As a result we raised nearly £20.00 and your generosity was greatly appreciated.

As I mentioned at the competition we are desperately trying to raise over £250,000 to build an extension to the church. As the church is of Norman origins, any additions/alterations have to be in keeping with that. Therefore, the materials used will include flint, lead, oak etc and these items are not cheap. However, I am sure some of you who attended the ringing competition would agree that such basic facilities as a toilet and kitchen, would greatly enhance our beautiful church.

Recently we had a talk on 'St Mary Cray' by a local chap called Jim Howitt. He has genuinely made a name for himself as he is a great source of information on a variety of local historical topics and is due, later in the year, to give a talk on the area from Green St Green to Bexley. He shows slides and it is an incredibly interesting evening. Unfortunately our quiz night on 12th April is already sold out and Brian Matthew (of Radio 2 Sounds of the Sixties fame) entertained us for an evening which raised about £1,000. Not bad, eh.

Having been asked to join the fund-raising committee we are in the throes of organising all sorts of other events and I thought I would take the liberty of mentioning one or two of them here. I do hope there are some that interest you. Indeed, should you have any ideas for fund-raising I'd be delighted to hear from you.

We are running a 100 club which, I'm sure, you will be familiar. It involves buying a number between 1 and 100, donating £5 per month (£60 a year) and hopefully your number is picked during the monthly draw. (I have some spare forms if any-one would like one). There will be 12 draws over a year. Much greater odds than winning the national lottery and by far a more worthwhile cause.

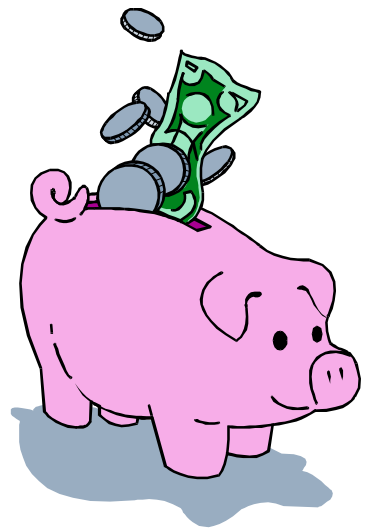


26th and 27th April - Open gardens
4th and 5th May - Craft fair at the church with activities for youngsters, tea tent, plant sale together with a very varied display of items and will be well worth a visit
10th May - Auction of promises - Chelsfield Village Hall
29th June - Model railway exhibition
5th and 6th July Open gardens
26th July - Railway day at Holly Cottage
25th October - 'Christmas on the Home Front' - A talk by Mike Brown, Chelsfield Village Hall

Other suggestions have been a murder mystery evening, gardeners question time, antiques road-show, car rally, quiz and pet calendar for 2004 (my suggestion of a calendar similar to that of the WI that made national news several years ago wasn't taken seriously!)

As you may have heard that we are offering to ring sponsored quarter peals - and possibly a peal in the summer. So far we've raised about £100.00 so that's good news, too. Any requests will happily be considered.

Finally, just to say that we, as a church, were approached by a small church in Somerset last year for a donation. We sent one as requested and at our ringers AGM it appears that their appeal raised £10,000 so it truly is a matter of every penny counting and making the difference. Sometimes it's easy to get overwhelmed by the big picture rather than taking a step at a time.



Should none of the above interest you perhaps you/ your church would consider sending a donation for the extension. If so please make your cheque payable to Chelsfield PCC and send to me: A Wilkins, Oakover, The Avenue, Orpington, Kent, BR6 9AS tel: 01689 875000. No contribution is too small. Thank you for taking the time to read this. As I said at the recent striking competition, maybe next time we host a District event we'll have the mod-cons which congregations and visitors alike would very much appreciate and make life a lot easier.

Angela Wilkins

PEALS RUNG IN THE DISTRICT

Date	Place	Changes	Method	RW	page no.
16 November 2002	Bromley Common	5056	Cambridge Surprise Major		03/130
28 December 2002	Foots Cray	5040	Doubles 7m.		03/56
01 February 2003	Bromley Common	5024	Preston Surprise Major		03/202
01 February 2003	Chislehurst Ann.	5056	Spliced Surprise Major 8m.		03/202
01 February 2003	Woolwich	5152	Glasgow Surprise Major		03/202

The peal at Foots Cray was rung for the KCACR and the remainder for the Cumberlands.

QUARTERS RUNG IN THE DISTRICT

Date	Place	Changes	Method	RW	page no.
10 October 2002	Chislehurst St N	1260	Stedman Triples		03/203
29 October 2002	Ash-by-Wrotham	1260	Doubles 11m/v.		03/18
29 October 2002	Cudham	1260	Doubles 2m.		03/86
29 October 2002	Horton Kirby	1260	Plain Bob Minor		03/18
03 November 2002	Horton Kirby	1260	Cambridge Surprise Minor		
24 November 2002	Eynsford	1260	Stedman Triples		03/13
01 December 2002	Greenwich	1260	Grandsire Triples		02/1288
15 December 2002	Crayford	1260	Grandsire Doubles		03/86
22 December 2002	Erith Ch Ch	1260	Grandsire Triples		03/86
22 December 2002	Greenwich	1259	Grandsire Caters		03/62
23 December 2002	Chelsfield	1320	Cambridge Surprise Minor		03/85
26 December 2002	Bromley	1280	Rutland Surprise Major		03/85
30 December 2002	Eltham	1280	Superlative Surprise Major		03/160
12 January 2003	Crayford	1260	Plain Bob Triples		03/157
19 January 2003	Eltham	1283	Plain Bob Minor		03/134
25 January 2003	Chelsfield	1260	Plain Bob Minor		
01 February 2003	Eynsford	1260	Grandsire Triples		03/179
02 February 2003	Lewisham	1260	Grandsire Triples		03/182
08 February 2003	Beckenham	1314	Bristol Surprise Major		03/203
09 February 2003	Chelsfield	1320	Cambridge Surprise Minor		
09 February 2003	Crayford	1320	Cambridge Surprise Minor		03/253
02 March 2003	Eltham	1296	Cambridge Surprise Major		03/278
02 March 2003	Foots Cray	1339	Grandsire Doubles		03/278
11 March 2003	Horton Kirby	1260	Plain Bob Minor		
18 March 2003	Horton Kirby	1260	Doubles 2m.		

Congratulations to:

Julian Hemper who rang the 4th to Doubles at Horton Kirby for his 1st inside.

Gary Robinson rang the 3rd to Plain Bob at Chelsfield for his 1st of Minor.

Elizabeth Brett and John Simpson rang the Treble and Tenor respectively to Grandsire Triples at Christ Church, Erith for their 1st on 8 and Neil Lucia rang the 4th in the same quarter for his 1st inside and on 8.

Andrew Sinclair rang the 5th to Plain Bob Triples at Crayford for his 1st in the method.

Daphne Paterson rang the 3rd at Eynsford for her 1st of Stedman Triples.

Len Morley rang the 4th to Cambridge Minor at Eltham for his 1st of Surprise and then, just over a week later, the 5th for his 1st of Surprise Major also at Eltham.

Debra Say the 3rd to Cambridge Minor at Crayford for her 1st Surprise in which quarter Mark Jones circled the tower.

James Tate rang the 3rd to Bristol Major at Beckenham for his 1st in the method.

From The Ringing World up to edition No. 4795 March 21, 2003.

Jim Rooke



KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS



LEWISHAM DISTRICT

Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting held at St. Mary's, Biggin Hill, on Saturday, 11th January 2003

The Chairman, Mr. David Holdridge, opened the meeting by welcoming members.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr. Dickon Love from Bromley, Mr. James Rooke from Chelsfield, Mr. James Hardy, Mrs. Sara Hardy, Mr. Dominic Meredith and Miss Rhiannon Meredith from Beckenham and Mr. Len Dumper and Mrs. Pauline Morley from Eltham.



2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting, which had been circulated, were approved and signed on the proposition of Mrs. Cathy Cheeseman, seconded by Mr. Nicholas Wilkins.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Call Change Competition at Downe. Mr. Jon Fry confirmed that the Call Change Competition could be held at Downe (15th November).

Membership Secretary's Report. The Chairman confirmed that the Membership Secretary had put his report in the Newsletter as requested.

Joint Meeting with the Maidstone and Rochester Districts. The Chairman enquired whether there had been any progress about this meeting and was told that the matter was still in hand.

2002: Call Change Competition and Carol Service. The Chairman thanked the organizers of these events and congratulated the Bromley band on winning the Call Change Competition.

4. CORRESPONDENCE

The Chairman read an E-mail from Mr. Peter Dale. In it:

- a. Mr. Dale drew attention to the need for nominations for officers for election at the AGM on Easter Monday. He, himself, would not be able to stand for re-election but said that no other officers had indicated that they were unwilling to stand again.
- b. Concerning the rule change regarding the proposed reduction in the size of the Committee, the version sent to the Districts and read out at Annual District Meeting was different from that agreed by members of the working party, essentially in that reference to the Central Council Representatives had been omitted. Nevertheless, this version would be the one to be considered at the AGM. If it was the intention of the working group to include Central Council Representatives,

then an amendment to that effect could be proposed at the AGM.

No questions were raised about this E-mail.

5. ELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS

The following new members were elected:

CUDHAM	Mr. Chris Fry (jnr.)	P. Mr. Jon Fry	S. Mrs. Judith Fry
DARTFORD	Mr. Andrew Boyd-Bell	P. Mrs. Brenda Barton	S. Mr. Andrew Sinclair
SIDCUP	Mr. Anthony Crawford } Mrs. Claire Crawford }	P. Mrs. Margaret Macey	S. Mr. Jon Fry

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Certificates

Mrs. Carol Eastaugh asked about membership certificates. Mrs. Debra Say said that she had a supply of certificates and would be happy to draw one up for members who required them. It was suggested that certificates should be prepared for all new members.



Newsletter

Mrs. Cathy Cheeseman pointed that it had been necessary to increase the Newsletter subscription to £5.00. A free copy would still be available to all towers in the District.

District Practices

Mr. Jeremy Byers said that Mr. James Hardy was unable to attend the meeting since he had a slipped disc. He went on to give details of the next District Practice, which would be at Beckenham, and said that a list of future practices would be circulated.



Handbell Ringers of Great Britain

Mr. Richard Bing said that the Handbell Ringers of Great Britain would be performing at the Redhill Theatre on Saturday, 10th May. This event would be advertised in The Ringing World.

Ringing Courses

Mrs. Macey said that she had details of the courses which had been advertised in the Christmas edition of The Ringing World (not the Hereford Course). Anyone interested was asked to see her after the meeting.

Subscriptions and Handbook Information

Mr. Mark Jones reminded members that subscriptions were due. Details for the 2003 Handbook should be

sent to him during the following week.

Chelsfield Church Extension

Mr. Nicholas Wilkins said that the Chelsfield ringers were fund raising for their church extension by ringing sponsored quarter peals. He invited members to help them with this project.

Newsletter Deadline

Mr. Rupert Cheeseman said that 23rd March was the deadline for the next issue of the District Newsletter.

Vote of Thanks

The meeting closed with a vote of thanks, proposed by David Brown, to the Vicar of Biggin Hill, the Rev. Chris Kitchener, for taking the service and for the use of the bells and to the Biggin Hill ringers for an excellent tea.

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Trek to New Zealand

Sonya Murray wrote to me last autumn and her letter reads as follows:

Dear Mr Dale

I am writing to ask The Kent County Association of Change Ringers to support me in my challenge to trek New Zealand in November 2003 on behalf of The Children's Society.

I have been a bellringer since I was 11 years old. I have been a member of Kent County Association for 12 years and have enjoyed being a member of All Saints, Birchington. Although I am living in Croydon I still ring in Birchington when I return home to visit my parents and I also ring in Croydon at St Mary's, Beddington.

I therefore would like to ask you whether you would be interested in sponsoring me to trek in New Zealand to raise money for The Children's Society to help Britain's most vulnerable children.

I enclose my leaflet which details my trip and summary of my challenge.

I would be extremely grateful if you could support me in this challenge. If you would like to sponsor me, cheques should be payable to The Children's Society (Trading) Ltd. Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely

Sonya Murray
.....

The General Committee considered Sonya's request at the November meeting but it was accepted that the Association could not offer direct help. The BRF is a tied fund and the General Fund is fully committed. It was agreed though that members should be made aware of this plea for sponsorship, particularly those in the Canterbury District who would know Sonya. I very much regret that I missed the deadline for winter newsletters.

Sonya's challenge involves five days of trekking through varying terrain, with nights spent under canvas. I shall be happy to supply photocopies of her leaflets to any ringer, or band, who would like to sponsor this effort.

I shall be prepared to accept donations and forward them to Sonya as coming from the Association's membership, but please note that cheques should be payable to the Children's Society (Trading) Ltd, and not the KCACR. Should anyone prefer to send a contribution directly to Sonya, however, then please ask me for her address.

Peter Dale
General Secretary



County Events

I have been asked to bring the following events to your attention:

County Surprise Royal Practices at All Saints, Maidstone

10 am - 12 noon on Saturdays 22 February, 26 April, 28 June and 27 September

Simulator Session in Holy Week

Tuesday 15 April 7.30 - 9.30 pm at Staplehurst

Simulators were recently described as "the biggest advance in teaching ringing since Blue Lines were invented". This is your chance to learn about them and get some hands-on experience.

Places will be limited so early booking is advisable. Please indicate whether you are a complete newcomer to simulators or have some experience.

CC Management, Teaching and Maintenance Weekend

Friday 24 October 7.30 - 9.30 pm, Saturday 25 October 9 am - 9 pm and Sunday 26 October 2 - 6 pm, around Leeds (Kent)

This is a whole weekend course, which is devised by the Central Council Education Committee. It is suitable for all ringers who have mastered the basics and wish, now, or in the future, to make a contribution to the running of their tower.

The course will consist of sessions on Tower Management, and two modules chosen by students from:

1. Teaching bell handling 4 Teaching method ringing (with an experienced band)
2. Teaching call changes 5 Teaching method ringing (with a learner band)
3. Teaching raising and lowering in peal 6 Bell maintenance

For these modules teaching will be in small groups, under the guidance of two tutors. In all cases teaching will consist of a combination of theory sessions and appropriate practical work in the tower. For the practical work, groups will often be joined by "helpers" (to man ropes and probably offer advice) and "guineapigs" (who will be at an appropriate stage to practise the teaching on!).

It may be possible for people who have not been ringing long, but need to know about running a tower, to be students in one of their chosen modules, but to volunteer as guineapigs in the other.

Fee payable on booking: £7.50 KCACR members, £12 non-members. There are limited places - so it would be wise to request an application form and book as soon as possible. (Application forms will be sent to all who've already provisionally booked.)

Please consider any or all and take the appropriate action

Margaret Macey

KCACR AGM

EASTER MONDAY 2003 – MAIDSTONE DISTRICT

The County AGM this year will be on Easter Monday 21st April and will be based at Staplehurst. A variety of towers within the Maidstone District will be open on three routes leading towards Staplehurst in the morning and back to neighbouring Districts in the early evening. A day of ringing, a service at All Saints, Staplehurst at noon, lunch at 1 p.m. at Staplehurst Village Centre followed by the AGM at 2.30 p.m. is being organised for Kent Ringers.

Lunch tickets will be £6 each for a 3-course meal of soup, salads, cold meats or fish and Jacket Potato with dessert or cheese & biscuits. Due to the limited space at Staplehurst Village Centre, a maximum of 90 lunch tickets will be available on a first-come-first-served basis. Alternatively a list of local pubs and restaurants



serving food is available on request. Those wishing to book lunch tickets should apply with cheque payable to K.C.A.C.R. and s.a.e. to: Sue Bassett, 23 Hanmer Way, Staplehurst, Tonbridge, Kent. TN12 0NR. Closing date for Lunch Ticket applications is 31st March 2003.



A licensed bar will be available, with beer from local ringers Debbie & Phil Goachers' Brewery together with wine and soft drinks. It is also likely that the County Bookshop will be open during the afternoon. All KCACR members are welcome to attend the AGM at 2.30 p.m.

at Staplehurst Village Centre, which will be followed by tea, coffee and biscuits. Staplehurst bells will be available after the meeting if required and other towers will be open on three routes leading out of the District, to round off this special day.

During the meeting, a pre-booked crèche can be arranged if required. Please contact Sue Bassett with details of your child's age, so that suitable activities can be organised in advance.

Tower List, Location Map showing car parks and other useful details will be posted on the Maidstone District Website at: www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk or can be obtained from Sue Bassett at the address above (please enclose s.a.e.).

