



LEWISHAM DISTRICT NEWS

April 2008

The Kent County Association of Change Ringers

See the Website at: www.lewishamdistrict.org.uk for the latest news and information

Chelsfield Win Striking Competition (again)

Rupert Cheeseman

A bright sunny day greeted the few teams that did make it to West Wickham to contest this year's District 6 bell Striking Competition.

Rachel Backhouse and Ross Hartley were judges and once they had found a suitable place to listen in the churchyard, the draw took place and the competition began. Each band rang a 240 of Plain Bob Doubles successfully and then some general ringing took place while the judges made up their minds.

Rachel began by saying it's always harder to judge competitions when all the bands ring very well which is what had happen here. She then gave a few comments about each band.

Band 1 – Would know where their faults had been picked up as there had been a big crunch in the middle but otherwise the ringing had been

good.

Band 2 – Very good right from the start

Band 3 – Good but a bit more deliberate than the other teams.

Position	Rang	Tower	Faults
1st	2nd	Chelsfield	21
2nd	3rd	Eltham	46
3rd	1st	Crayford	49

So Chelsfield go forward to represent the district in the County 6 bell competition at Aldington on 27th

September. There's a clip of the winning band' ringing on the district website. Thanks go to Rachel and Ross for judging and Judith and Alys for providing the tea, coffee, biscuits and bells.

Chelsfield

240 Plain Bob Doubles

1 – Philippa Rooke

2 – Clare Pruden

3 – John Barnes

4 – Nick Wilkins (C)

5 – Bob Pruden

6 – Karen Barter



St. John the Baptist, West Wickham

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Forthcoming District Events:

Quarterly District Meeting:

Saturday 12th April
 Dartford, Holy Trinity
 3.30pm Bells, 4.30pm service then tea, meeting and evening ringing.
 Names to tea to:
names4tea@lewishamdistrict.org.uk

District Training Day:

Saturday 26th April
 Various district towers.
 Contact David Brown on:
training@lewishamdistrict.org.uk

District Practice:

Saturday 10th May
 Eynsford, St Martin of Tours
 7-8:30pm. Joint practice with Maidstone District

District Practice:

Saturday 7th June
 Hayes, St Mary the Virgin
 7-9pm

County 8 bell Striking Contest:

Saturday 28th June
 Westerham, St Mary (Tonbridge District)
 2.45pm draw. Method: Single Oxford Bob Triples.

Newsletter Subscriptions Due

It's time to renew your newsletter subscriptions. The cost is £5 for a year's worth of issues, and payment can be made via cash or cheque made payable to "Lewisham District Newsletter". Please send all payment to the editor at:

Dominic Meredith
20 Alexandra Road
Sydenham
London
SE26 5NL

Or alternatively you can come along to a Beckenham practice night or a district meeting and pay in person.

Mistaken Identity?

Two separate carloads of ringers arrived at Christchurch Erith on Easter Monday thinking they were at St John's. Both had relied on sat nav. One navigator admitted to be using vicarage postcodes: St John's vicarage is in Christchurch parish hence the mistake!

Lewisham District Trivia:

How many times has the District Striking Competition been won by Chelsfield?
(answer on page 6)

District Officer **E-mail Directory:**

Website:

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Around the District

Ash-by-Wrotham

Well, the snow drops and celandines are up and the rain is coming down the tower leak, it's now got as far as the silent chamber. Yes I've told them. They've looked. Action? Repair? The 2 fell out of the tower in the 1850's. I hope history does not have to repeat itself. We've two learners who have made real progress and three others taking early steps. I've passed round the 'Craft of Bellingringing' DVD and it's generating much comment. My thanks to Holy Trinity and Rachel for their tolerance and help with plain hunt, especially with my slow learning. I've been asked to address one of the parish sub-committees about "the Bells" – their inverted commas. I suspect even basic knowledge will take more time than I'll be allowed. I can only try. If any band is interested in getting a Web site going, we've found a free and relatively painless way of doing it. Visit <http://pages.google.com/>, it provides a simple web page editor and free hosting. Our web page is <http://ash.bells.googlepages.com/>, it's even got a calendar so no excuses for missing practice!

Gabrielle Stook

Biggin Hill

We were very excited to welcome the Revd Jeanette McLaren as our new vicar in February. Jeanette has come from a small bell-less church in Brixton and was delighted to have a "big" bell to ring during the collation service. (I'd drilled a hole in

the floor with my trusty Bosch to rig a chiming rope so she and the wardens wouldn't have to brave our cramped stairs.) An enthusiastic twelve bong indicates a long time with us! Even better--the following Wednesday she came up to see what it was all about. Having mastered the chiming technique for her collation she was ready to have a "proper" ring. The usual slightly wild and amazed response to a few tail-end pulls ensued: "Wow! I didn't know it was so complicated!"

I don't think she's likely to become a ringing vicar (her enthusiasm is for narrowboats) but she does have a growing appreciation for what goes on in the tower and enjoys Wednesday night's cacophony.

Nancy Gay

Bromley Common

From Monday 10th March anyone visiting Petts Wood Library will see that the large display window has been taken over by St Luke's Bromley Common Bellingringers in a bid to promote bellringing and hopefully to recruit new members. Along with other towers, we have explored various ideas to recruit new members to our band over the years. This seemed an opportunity not to be missed. Hopefully, some will be inspired to find out more about bellringing as a result of seeing our display. The display will certainly raise awareness of the art of bellringing using a different medium. The display lasts three weeks.

Chris Lawrence

Crayford

Since writing our last "news" report for October's newsletter things have continued to tick along. Our new ringers have continued to progress and they have now started ringing for Sunday service.

We entered the call change competition at Chelsfield in November and came a respectable fourth behind the two home teams and Eltham. This despite Nick not being able to count up to 120 and meaning we finished our test piece slightly early! We also took part in the Striking Competition at West Wickham and came a close third even despite a couple of method mistakes during the test piece.

We rang three half muffled quarters at the end of last year. The first one was in memory of David Hollis and my grandmother and the second one on Remembrance Sunday. The third one was in memory of Dorothy Bowyer who had been a long serving member of the band before she'd had to give up ringing a few years ago. We have also rung a couple of very nice home band quarters of Grandsire Doubles including a first inside for Trevor and some Plain Bob Major which was a first for Brenda and for Cathy as conductor.

In February we revived the Crayford (and friends) outing after a 3 year break and on a sunny but cold day headed off to the Romney Marsh area of Kent to ring at Brabourne, Lyminge, Saltwood, Ruckinge and Appledore. This was the first outing for Karen and Mary and they surprised themselves by actually enjoying it! The sign writers at Saltwood certainly scored points for originality (see photos) (*Photos not included after they proved impossible to read post-formatting. Suffice to say they were very amusing - Ed.*) and everyone managed to avoid hanging themselves on the long draft at the otherwise lovely five at Ruckinge. The day ended, as it should do, in the pub at Appledore.

Rupert Cheeseman



Ringling at Lyminge

Downe

Donald has served as our Tower Captain here at St. Mary's in Downe for around 30 years. Although he is now retiring from this

position he will continue to ring with us and will no doubt be there ringing to Celebrate on the happy occasions of Festivals and weddings. He brought to the position his expertise from the world of engineering. Not only has he looked after the Bells and Clock with immaculate care, overseeing several improvements to the

Bells and mending the 'stays' and replacing Bell ropes - he has also devoted many, and I mean many, hours of Bell ringing practice time on Monday evenings to teaching new comers to handle Bells and then to progress through Call Changes and on to various levels of 'Method Ringing'. I understand that over the years, he has taught quite a few people in the Village to ring, Val Yeates still arrives gleefully for the Christmas Celebrations each year. Richard Shaw, Alan Fort and I started at the end of the last Century and our aim at that time was to ring in the new Millennium and what a thrill that was! Since then we have rung in several new years during which time he has been willing to take on and give his time to more newcomers, Paul Martin who has sadly since left the Village (as has Alan Fort) and Sam who now finds that homework takes too much of his time! However we now we have three new recruits who are progressing well under his tuition. We all thank him for his time and patience.

We welcome Simon Sleath who will take over as our new Tower Captain.

Bridget Robbie

Eltham

After our success in retaining the call change striking competition trophy last November, we decided to brave the 6 bell method competition. In the end, due to diary constraints, it was a joint team of Eltham and Chislehurst, ringing plain bob doubles. And we were happy to come a respectable 2nd.

Even better news is the continued improvement in our 3 learners. They continue to persevere, in some cases despite broken limbs, so well done to Helen, Rebecca and Tiffany, and who knows maybe next year we can enter TWO teams into the striking competition!

We have also had some new semi regular visitors join us on a Tuesday night which keeps the practice varied. On top of which, the latest method being learnt is Kelso! Social activities remain an important part of our local ringing scene, again in conjunction with other towers. Mid January saw the return (after a brief lapse) of the annual dinner – this time with live entertainment and dancing (optional!). Photos not available, to protect the innocent, but a good time was clearly had based on the enthusiasm on the dance floor. So thanks to the very organised ladies behind that who put a lot of work in.

Meanwhile the walks continue through rain, shine and sadly often mud, and the annual trip to the Isle of Wight will have occurred by the time of press.

Katherine Trill

Lewisham District Trivia

Answer:

Chelsfield have won the District Striking Competition a staggering 15 times!

(information from the Lewisham District Website)

Archdeaconry of Lewisham Service at Southwark Cathedral

Graham Long

Every year the Lewisham Archdeaconry holds a service at Southwark when Churchwardens and PCC members are sworn in.

This year the service takes place on Tuesday 6th May at 8pm

In the past, the ringers at Woolwich and Greenwich have rung prior to this service.

It would be nice if the Lewisham District were able to put a band together to ring for this – previously we used to ring for about an hour or so before.

If anyone is interested please could they contact me by Tuesday 22nd April so that we can make arrangements?

Graham Long 07729 820009
graham.long@priory.bromley.sch.uk

(Continued from page 7)

Draw on January 12th 2008 district meeting at Beckenham

1 st	11	June Dance (Dartford)
2 nd	22	Deryck Jones (Dartford)
3 rd	36	Margaret Heald (St John's Erith)
4 th	38	Pauline Morley (Eltham)

Draw held on March 15th 2008 district practice at Bexley

1 st	65	David Kingston (Bromley)
2 nd	59	Jan Odell (Footscray)
3 rd	21	Deryck Jones (Dartford)
4 th	26	Jim Rooke (Chelsfield)

120 Club

Rachel Backhouse

Lewisham District 120 club report 2007-8

Once again a big thank you to all those of you who supported the 120 club this time. Shares are now available for 2008-9 (first draw at the April meeting at Dartford) so please continue to support our main fundraising activity for the county bell restoration fund. For £10 a share you not only support this worthy cause but also stand quite good chance of winning a prize.

For 2007-8 I sold 95 shares spread across 78 people from 22 towers. Of these 28 individuals were winners representing 13 towers. This year's luckiest tower was Dartford. As this was our 3rd season I am pleased to report that most of those who have supported me from the outset have now had at least one win (probability never was my strong point but that's about what you might expect).

Income 2007-8

95 shares at £10	£950-00
Interest	£0-83
	£950-83

Expenditure

Prize money	£450-00
Expenses	£13-50
Bexley council registration fee	20-00
	£483-50

Income less expenditure donated to BRF
£467-33

(Continued on page 6)

The Joys of Banking

When the 120 club started 3 years ago I had

to sort out an account for the money. I chose the Woolwich largely because there was a branch very close to home, open on Saturdays and the payments were recorded in a book thus meaning at any time anyone could see exactly what I was doing with your money.

And then the Woolwich was taken over by Barclays. Not much changed initially and then they did away with books and counter cheques (making last year's payment to the BRF was a struggle) and finally everything was rebranded to Barclays. Now we had a new account and in the months following sometimes I could withdraw money with no problems and sometimes I couldn't depending on whether the staff in the branch knew me or not.

It transpired that following the changeover there were no longer any records of any of our (3) signatures and so in the New Year a formal complaint was entered on our behalf. Letter followed letter to say that I would hear by date... and then a flurry of activity on one day when I had three phone calls in a morning to say we needed a community account and that the paperwork would follow. Now we three signatories had to go through the pantomime of proving who we were all over again something that the branches involved didn't seem to be very clued up about.

At last I had a letter giving me the new account details followed by a cheque book and paying in book. However one final problem... It didn't seem to have occurred to anyone at Barclays that the money in the account we couldn't access needed to be transferred to the new account!

Please please can no one take over Barclays as I couldn't face going through all that again!

Chelsfield's Coronation Peal

John Barnes

Attached to the east wall of our ringing room at St Martin's is a smart blue peal board which records the peal of 5,040 changes of Grandsire Doubles that was rung by our young band of ringers to celebrate the Queen's Coronation in 1953. Bearing in mind that, like everything else in the country, bell ringing was in the process of recovering from the effects of the Second World War, a peal rung by a church's own band of ringers was indeed an achievement. Over the past few months I have tried to discover what bell ringing was like at St Martin's at that time.

It appears that after the war there was a band of ringers which rang four or five times a year for major festivals. They included John ('Jack') Devine and his brother Tim, Henry Cable, and Dan Whitehead. About 1948 they taught young Victor Webster, from Craven Road, to handle a bell, John Devine giving the actual instruction. About 1950, having cared for the spiritual needs of the parish during the war years, the Rev Herbert Mackay, left and was followed in 1951 by the Rev (later Canon) Norman Woodhall. Coincidentally, a young man who had just completed his two years' National Service in the army, was sent by his firm, I and R Morley, manufacturers of gloves and hosiery, to live at 'Morley's Cottages' in Bucks Cross Road whilst he worked in London. He was John Carpenter, a change ringer who had learned to ring at Washington, Sussex, his home tower. Keen that Chelsfield's bells should ring

out every Sunday, the new Rector invited John to teach a fresh band of ringers. By good chance, there was at this time a clergyman, the Rev Cecil John Ellingham, living with his wife Edna at the corner of Worlds End Lane and Oxenden Wood Road. John Ellingham, or CJE as some knew him, was senior classics master and School Chaplain at City of London School in London and he had just formed a Guild of young people at St Martin's, where he acted as honorary curate. Thus, it was mainly from this group of youngsters that John Carpenter took his recruits.

With so many 'green' learners at one time and with himself as the only skilled change ringer, John Carpenter set about his task. Two members of the former band, Vic Webster and Dan Whitehead, continued to ring but neither had mastered the mysteries of change ringing. At least three slightly older members of the congregation also learned at this time, Sydney Manger, Alec Smith and Charles Rowe.

One of the then teenagers, John Parker, describes the situation. "At the start John (Carpenter) was the only ringer and it took some time before (we) could be left to ring on our own without someone standing by.....our first ringing of rounds (ringing the bells in the descending scale) was a triumph, even though it probably didn't sound like it." One of the joys of bell ringing is that the ringers from different churches in an area visit each other's churches for practice and that is exactly what happened with our ringers. John

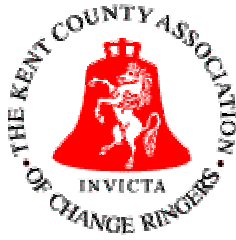
Parker continues, “I remember finding change ringing quite a mystery and frustrating and (I was) making no apparent progress at all until a few of us cycled over to West Wickham for a practice night. I was put on the treble (the lightest bell) for a touch of Bob Doubles and somebody, to whom I owe a lifetime of gratitude, stood behind me and pointed out what to look for and what I had to do. In a few moments I suddenly gained “ropesight” and never really looked back.”

That cycle ride was to have huge results. About a year later six members of the band rang a Quarter Peal on Coronation Day, Tuesday June 2nd 1953 and, the following Saturday, June 6th, they rang Chelsfield’s Coronation Peal. They were Ann Pannell, treble, Bridget Cox 2, John Pannell 3, John Parker 4, John Carpenter, the conductor, 5 and, ringing the tenor behind, Victor Webster. In those days the ringing was done from the ground floor but, even so, the peal was rung slowly, taking three hours and 12 minutes. John Parker, sixteen at the time, writes, that it “seemed to go on for an awful long time and, in ringing terms, was rather boring, being just a series of 120 (changes, repeated). However, we were enormously pleased to have finished it and had blistered hands for several days afterwards.” Ann Pannell, now Ann Stevenson, remembers it as “quite an ordeal”. The Rev John Ellingham was an occasional ringer, usually ringing the treble, and he was an enormous encouragement to our young band. We believe that he paid to have the peal board made and erected. Today it is one of our church’s treasures.

I set about locating those six ringers and I have succeeded in speaking to all of them. Ann Pannell and John Carpenter were married in 1954 and shortly afterwards

they moved with John’s work to Castleside, near Consett, County Durham, where Morley’s factory was situated. Ann now lives at Staplehurst and John is at Borough Green. Bridget Cox and Robert Fagg married in 1958 (Robert and his brother David both learned to ring) and they live on the Isle of Wight. John Pannell is in Canberra, Australia and I regret that I was unaware of this when I was in Sydney a few months ago; not only that, but John Parker was actually in Canberra about seven years ago. John Parker and Jenny George were married in 1958 and now live and ring at Shaftesbury, Dorset. As with many Guild couples, the wedding ceremonies were performed by CJE. Victor and Margaret Webster live near Truro, Cornwall. Vic and his father were builders and until his marriage in 1975 Vic was both a chorister and a ringer – he became a change ringer and rang several quarter peals at St Martin’s.

St Martin’s has, over the last sixty years, produced a number of ringers who have served bell ringing with distinction – and it all stems from the hard work done by John Carpenter all those years ago. John Parker writes, “I am always thankful to John Carpenter for introducing me to bell ringing and to what has been a lifelong pleasure.” It was therefore so wonderful that John Carpenter was able to join us at our annual Ringers’ Sunday Evensong on October 7th together with his wife Jean and that he rang rounds with us. During the address we showed our appreciation of what he had done with a round of applause. We hope that they will visit us again and that John will ring with us again. June 2008 will be the 55th anniversary of the Coronation Peal and I hope that we can re-unite the peal band at St Martin’s and invite other former members of the band to share the occasion.



THE KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF CHANGE RINGERS

LEWISHAM DISTRICT

Minutes of the Quarterly District Meeting held at Beckenham on 12th January 2008

1. Minute Silence

A minute silence was observed in memory of Mrs Dorothy Bowyer, of Crayford.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Len and Pauline Morley (Eltham), Carol Eastaugh (Christchurch Erith), Deryck Jones (Dartford), Jeremy Byers (Beckenham) and Graham Long (Woolwich)

3. Election of new members

The following new members were elected:

New Member	Tower	Proposed By	Seconded By
Paul Reid	Cudham	Megan Smith	Jon Fry
Vanessa Reid	Cudham	Megan Smith	Jon Fry
Laurence Bond	Cudham	Jon Fry	Megan Smith
Sharon Bond	Cudham	Jon Fry	Megan Smith

4. 120 Club Results

	Number	Name	Tower
1st	11	June Dance	Dartford
2nd	22	Deryck Jones	Dartford
3rd	36	Margaret Heald	St John's Erith
4th	38	Pauline Morley	Eltham

5. KCACR Committee Meeting Report

Brenda Barton passed on Frank Lewis's thanks for the responses to the Ringing Trends Survey. The district now has only four towers outstanding.

The date for this year's County 8 Bell Striking Competition is 28th June. The method is Single Oxford Bob Triples and the touch details can be

found on the KCACR website.

The date for the County 6 Bell Striking Competition is 27th September. It will be held at Aldington in the Ashford District.

The KCACR AGM will be held on 24th March (Easter Monday) at St. George, Perry Hill. 12.00 service.

Tower returns are due in on 21st Jan.

The Ringing Roadshow is on 5th/6th September.

The Dartford Festival is on 19th/20th July

6. AOB

Rachel Backhouse reminded the meeting that KCACR and 120 club subscriptions were due

Nancy Gay drew attention to the achievements of some ex-district members in being part of the first local band to ring a quarter at St. Paul's Cathedral, Birmingham, Alabama.

Jim Rooke requested that everyone use the correct e-mail address when replying to messages on the Lewisham District e-mail groups. Just pressing "reply" results in the message being sent to the entire group, producing unwanted spam.

Rupert Cheeseman circulated copies of the District Ringing Master's annual report. He also urged people to attend Horton Kirby's barn dance on 8th March.

The Chairman announced the results and presented certificates for the recent call change competition, which five bands entered.

3rd Chelsfield (Nick)

2nd Chelsfield (Philippa)

1st Eltham

KCACR AGM. Rupert Cheeseman reported that the hall had been booked at St. George's, Perry Hill and appealed for volunteers to help on the day.

Brenda asked for any help that can be given towards the Dartford festival

7. Vote of Thanks

The Chairman proposed a vote of thanks to Father Malcolm Hancock for conducting the service, to Mark Jones for playing the organ and to the Beckenham band for organising the tea.

8. Election of District Secretary

As an addendum to the meeting, it was announced that Dominic Meredith would be willing to stand as District Secretary for the remainder of the year. He was duly elected.

Post	Nominee	Proposed By	Seconded By
District Secretary	Dominic Meredith	Brenda Barton	Christine Webb

Agenda for the Next District Meeting

The Kent County Association of Change Ringers
Lewisham District

**Quarterly District Meeting at Dartford, Saturday 12th April
2008**

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of the Quarterly District Meeting at Beckenham on 12th January
3. Election of New Members
4. 120 Club Draw
5. Any Other Business
6. Vote of Thanks

Next District Practice

Saturday 10th May

Eynesford, St Martin of Tours

7-8.30pm

Joint Practice with Maidstone District

All welcome
