

# MINUTES OF THE AGM HELD AT PERRY HILL

## Easter Monday 24 March 2008

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*(Subject to adoption by the AGM to be held in the Maidstone District in 2009)*

The meeting was hosted by the Lewisham District. The service was held in the Parish Church of St George, Christ Church and St Paul, Perry Hill, London and attended by over 60 members and friends. The curate, Father Robert Stanier, took the service, and preached the sermon. Jacqueline Barlow led the responses and Karol Leeves led the prayers. Mr David Manger, Chairman of the Association, and Mrs Margaret Funnell, General Secretary of the Association, read the lessons. Seven towers were open before the service and the Trafford Mini-ring had been set up in the lobby of the church, due to the snow blizzard, rather than outside in the car park so ringing could take place before the service and after the meeting and seven towers were open after the meeting.

An excellent lunch was served to over 50 people in the hall at the rear of the church before the meeting that commenced at 2.40 p.m.

**1. Welcome:** The Chairman welcomed 72 members and visitors. The Chairman invited Karol Leeves to open the meeting with a prayer.

**2. Apologies for absence.** Apologies were received from *Ian Oram (Honorary Life Member), Diana and Timothy Wraight (Rainham), Ian and Phil Young (Sandwich), Arthur Vidgeon and Brian Trill (Hoo St Werburgh), Derek Wilkinson (Northfleet), Richard and Karen Edwards (Tenterden), Rev. Stanley Evans (Vice President) and Marie Evans, Hugo Tracey (Tunbridge Wells), Richard Bourne (Frittenden), Brenda Davies (Lydd), Roy and Richard Barclay (Staplehurst), Mike Godfrey (Folkestone), Terry Barton, Pat Barton, Fred Scoones, Steve Haynes and Sue Symons (Tunstall), Graham Heath and Mike Birkbeck (All Saints, Maidstone), Nigel Spencer (Hythe), Esther Corriera (Dartford), Doris Colgate (Sevenoaks), Malwyn Williams (Otham) and Hedley Basford and Mike Little (Birchington).*

### **3. Minutes of the AGM held at Thanington on Easter Monday, 9 April 2007**

The minutes were taken as read having been printed in the Handbook. The Chairman signed them as a true record.

**4. Matters arising from the minutes.** There were no matters arising.

### **5. General Secretary's report.**

The General Secretary moved the adoption of her report, which is printed in the Handbook. Motion carried. The Secretary thanked everyone who had assisted her in the past seven weeks and especially Frank Lewis for printing the agenda. The Chairman thanked Mrs Funnell for all her hard work over the year.

**6. Treasurer's report.** The Treasurer, Cathryn Hills thanked the Districts for getting their reports in on time and Frank Lewis for checking them. She moved the adoption of her report that was printed in the Handbook. The motion was carried by the meeting. The Chairman thanked Mrs Hills for her hard work.

### **7. Peal Secretary's report**

Dr Barnes moved the adoption of his report as in the Handbook save that all peals should be approved before being rung. The report was accepted by the meeting and the Chairman thanked him for his work over the year.

### **8. Quarter Peal Secretary's report**

Mr Leeves moved the adoption of his report which was printed in the Handbook. He said that since going to press there had been a further 9 quarters rung. The report was accepted by the meeting and the Chairman thanked Mr Leeves for the report and added the statistics shown on the web site were excellent.

### **9. Librarian's report**

Mrs Basford thanked everyone for all the material and books she had received over the year. Any information and articles are welcome. The Chairman thanked her for her work over the year.

## 10. Child Protection Officer's report

Mr Spencer was unable to attend the meeting but his report was in the Handbook.

## 11. Handbook Editor's report

The Handbook spoke for itself. Mr Huxley drew everyone's attention to page 4 and requested that everyone follow the instructions given in relation to the format and timing for the reports. He advised that he had added a possible service format for meetings which may assist District secretaries. He thanked Mr Lewis for proofreading the report. The Chairman thanked him for an excellent Handbook.

## 12. Officers' reports

**Bell Restoration** The report is printed in the Handbook. Mr Butcher added that Farningham bells were now back in situ. Herne was still waiting for a decision as to whether they can proceed. The Chairman enquired as to the progress with Ivychurch. Mr Butcher said that the 6 bell is now available but if Ivychurch did not proceed the bell, given by the Davies family, will be placed somewhere else. He proposed the adoption of his report which was carried by the meeting. The Chairman thanked Mr Butcher and his whole committee for their work.

**Publicity** Mr Dale said that the new display boards, a banner type, will be available by July at the latest in readiness for the Dartford Festival. Three artefacts had been given to the Association by Sheila Dobbie. The model bell made by Walter Dobbie was at present housed at Canterbury Cathedral; the Dobbie ringing machine at present at Dover but possibly may be permanently loaned to Loughborough Foundry; and the Jubi Peal is now at Ulcombe. He proposed the adoption of his report which was agreed by the meeting. The Chairman thanked him for his work over the year.

**Training** No report had been received.

**Webmaster** Mr Lewis advised there had been over 65,000 hits, approximately 47 per day. He requires any information on events together with photographs. He thanked all those who have contributed over the past year. The Chairman thanked Mr Lewis and said the web site goes from strength to strength.

**13. Election of officers.** The following officers were elected, all having agreed to stand:

	<b>Nominee</b>	<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Seconded</b>
<b>Chairman:</b>	David Manger	Thos. M. Barlow	Frank Lewis
<b>Secretary:</b>	Margaret Funnell	Susan Bassett	Florence Hamp
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Patricia Phipps	Pamela Manger	Karen Lebon
<b>Peal Secretary:</b>	Dr Phillip Barnes	Philip Larter	John Keeler
<b>Librarian:</b>	Hazel Basford	Jo Horton	Florence Hamp
<b>Handbook Editor:</b>	Craig Huxley	Philip Elderton	Frank Lewis
<b>Quarter Peal Sec.</b>	Anthony Leeves	Frank Lewis	Catherine Lewis
<b>Training Officer:</b>			
<b>Bell Rest Officer:</b>	Brian Butcher	Mark Chittenden-Pile	Christine Butcher
<b>Publicity Officer:</b>	Peter Dale	Thos M Barlow	Cathryn Hills
<b>Web Master</b>	Frank Lewis	Mike Worthington	Jane Nielson
<b>Extra 3</b>	Eric Roughley	Frank Lewis	Catherine Lewis
	Philip Elderton	Craig Huxley	Susan Record

The Chairman advised that he will be standing down next year. The Chairman thanked Cathryn Hills for all her work over the last 12 years and a general show of hands from all members was given in way of appreciation. Mrs Hills said thank you for her father, Mr Andrews who had given assistance over the last 12 years.

Mr Huxley thanked Peter Dale and the Cinque Ports Ringing Centre at Dover for all the hard work in training for the eastern end of the Association. Mr Dale asked if the Association might like to acquire a say in the running of the centre. The Chairman said we need to find a Training Officer for the Association and asked the Districts to discuss this at their next meetings and report back to the April General Committee Meeting. Mrs Basford enquired as to whether a ringing centre could be set up in

the western part of the Association. Mr Roughley advised that many of the Districts ran their own training events and asked if there was a need for a further centre.

**14. Election of auditor** Mrs Hills advised that the current auditor will not audit computerised accounts. The Chairman suggested that the appointment be taken to the General Committee Meeting for discussion and the meeting agreed. The Secretary is to write to Mr Garrod thanking him for his services.

**15. Certificates for 50 years' membership.** There were 3 members who had reached their 50 years' membership in 2007, Ian Oram (Honorary Life Member), Patricia Barton (Tunstall) and Ann Jenner (Hadlow). Unfortunately none of the recipients was able to be present and their certificates will be presented at District events.

**16. Forthcoming events.** Notice was given of the following:

- 26 April            General Committee Meeting at Leeds
- 28 June            8 Bell Striking Competition at Westerham
- 19/20 July        Dartford Festival with Charmborough ring
- 23 Aug.            General Committee Meeting at Leeds
- 13 Sept.           Essex Trophy at Brighton (details to be confirmed)
- 27 Sept.           6 Bell Competition at Aldington
- 22 Nov.            General Committee Meeting at Leeds
- 29 Nov            10 Bell Challenge at Beckenham (Venue to be confirmed)
- 13 April            Annual General Meeting at Aylesford, Maidstone District

**17. Any other business.**

Judith Rogers gave details of the Ringing Roadshow being held at Stoneleigh, Warwickshire on 5/6 September. She had tickets for sale which are £6 in advance and £8 on the gate. She requested that we ensure a Poster is put up in all towers and that leaflets be available. They are expecting over 4000 ringers from all over the world to attend. Tonbridge District is having a coach at a cost of £20 per person including entry fee. If anyone is interested then please send names to Bobbie Fairclough by end of April.

Mr Roughley enquired as to whether the outgoing treasurer felt that subscriptions should be increased for next year. Mrs Hills said she felt they could remain the same and Mr Roughley seconded this.

Mr Butcher advised that the Handbook was incorrect in that his son's name should be under marriages and not anniversaries.

Mr Dale enquired as to the new Chairman's Chain of Office. The Chairman advised that this has been ordered and will be available shortly, hopefully in time for the next General Committee Meeting. He showed a picture of the new Chain and said that the General Committee had decided not to have bars for the names of the Chairman as these appear in the Handbook.

**18. Votes of thanks** The Chairman thanked Father John Ackland for the use of the church, Father Robert Stanier for taking the service and Graham Long for playing the organ and for organising the day. He thanked Trevor Pike and Margaret Exley for the catering arrangements, and Rupert Cheeseman and the Lewisham District for the general organisation of the day. Thanks were also extended to Chris Trafford for the use of the mini-ring. He finally thanked all incumbents of the Lewisham District for the use of their bells during the day.

Meeting closed at 3.40 pm.

## GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 2008

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The AGM was hosted by Lewisham District and held at the parish church of St George, Christ Church and St Paul, Perry Hill on 24 March 2008. The service was conducted by the curate, Father Robert Stanier. A splendid lunch was provided for over 50 people followed by the meeting. Minutes of the meeting are printed in this Handbook.

The three members who were due to be presented with their 50 year certificates, namely Ian Oram, Honorary Life Member, Patricia Barton, Tunstall and Ann Jenner, Hadlow, were unable to be present and the certificates will be presented at a District event.

The County 8 Bell Competition, was held at Westerham on a bright sunny afternoon in June. Five of the Districts were represented, Rochester not being able to participate. Unfortunately no outside judges could be found so the Chairman and Secretary agreed to judge. The method was a touch of Single Oxford Bob Triples. Whilst the judges were deliberating on the results the teams participated in a splendid tea. The result was then declared Tonbridge District being the winner. The trophy was duly presented by the Chairman.

The Inter District 6 Bell Competition was held at Aldington on a bright sunny day in September. All six Districts were represented. The judges were Jonathan and Anne Franklin from Sussex who commented that the ringing was of an excellent standard. They finally gave their decision and the winning team declared as St Martin of Tours, Chelsfield from Lewisham District.

Unfortunately we were unable to enter a team in the Essex Trophy but have been asked to host the competition for 2009.

In November the 10 Bell Challenge took place at Greenwich and Canterbury were declared the winners.

Finally I wish to thank all the Association and District officers who have assisted me during the year.

Margaret Funnell

## PEAL SECRETARY'S REPORT 2008

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For the second year running there has been a small but significant increase in the numbers of peals rung for the Association with a total of 125 peals in 2008, an increase of 11 compared with 2007. These included 2 peals on handbells. Three members are to be congratulated on ringing their first peal. I have included a list of other personal anniversaries and congratulate David Gibbons on ringing his 1000<sup>th</sup> peal in August. An interesting event occurred on December 29<sup>th</sup> when John Keeler rang Neil Aspland's classic composition of 8 Spliced S Major for the 100<sup>th</sup> time, on the exact 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his first attempt at the peal. He, and the other four of us who were in the original attempt by now know it quite well! Another personal milestone was the 100<sup>th</sup> peal for Mary Marshall, widow of Mark Marshall who was one our leading peal ringers of the 1960's and 1970's. The same peal was also the 100<sup>th</sup> for their grandson Martin. Finally, I am delighted to note that the husband and wife teams of Karen and Rod Lebon, and Catherine and Frank Lewis each rang their 100<sup>th</sup> peals together.

The two Maidstone towers shared the honours for the most Association peals rung with 19 peals each, and the Ashford District had the broadest spread of activity with peals at 17 different towers. The first peal since augmentation was rung at Chevening in June. In total the Association rang peals in 52 Kentish towers (exactly the same as 2007) plus 12 towers outside the county.

In 2008 the Association rang the first peals of Chafy Crescent Surprise Major, Beult and Eleventh Hour Delight Royal. Methods rung for the Association for the first time were St Stephen's Delight Major, Almar, Dereham, Lutterworth, Swindon Borough, Uranium, Xenocrates and Zeus Surprise Major, Golden Alliance Royal, East Riding Delight Royal and Bushmead, Chiswick Shandy and Isleworth Surprise Royal.

Phillip R J Barnes

## BELL RESTORATION SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT 2008

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I start this report by remembering Peter Romney, former convenor of this committee and a good friend and colleague to all in the "heavy gang". Peter had become increasingly frustrated in recent times at not being able to do much in the way of physical help with projects. I'm sure Peter would approve of me reporting that his last job was in Borstal, not the institution but the village that gives it its name.

On a brighter note, there has once again been considerable activity during the year. We have done quite a bit of trade with the Keltex Trust. The economic problems do not seem to have affected bell restoration at the moment and all the bell engineering operations have orders for around 18 months work.

The following includes work completed, work in progress and some proposed projects:

- **Aldington** - Routine maintenance and some work to be done to the pulleys locally.
- **Ash by Wrotham** - The bells are to be rehung in the existing strengthened frame.
- **Bethersden** - A rope guide is to be installed.
- **Birchington** - Request to check /replace ground pulleys.
- **Blackheath, All Saints** - Site visit to discuss options.
- **Brenchley** - Inspected with report and suggestions made.
- **Brookland** - Some sound insulation to be installed.
- **Broomfield** - Routine maintenance completed/planned.
- **Canterbury former St Alphege** - Some work done to these and a visiting band have rung them from the upstairs position. Interest in ringing these bells needs to be shown and then Kings will let things go further.
- **Charing** - Enquiry re repairs to the school bell.
- **Chartham** - The tenor has had a new headstock fitted and has been 1/8<sup>th</sup> turned. Some replacement of pulleys to be completed.
- **Chelsfield** - Existing treble sold and three new trebles added by Taylors.
- **Eastling** - This ring of six are derelict but there is considerable interest in doing something here as the current priest in charge was involved in restoring the bells in her previous parish
- **Eastry** - The bells have now been dedicated. The old third is to be hung as a chiming bell.
- **Egerton** - Request to inspect the installation.
- **Great Chart** - Clappers to be inspected.
- **Harbledown, St Michael** - Routine check of the three bells.
- **Hothfield** - ringing gallery to be installed to allow installation of a toilet.
- **Ide Hill** - Single bell checked/inspected.
- **Kingsnorth** - A maintenance session here found a tenor gudgeon rubbing on a bearing housing and a considerable amount of tightening of bolts has improved things.
- **Margate** - The fourth has had new gudgeons fitted to the headstock.
- **Meopham** - Tie rods and bracing have been installed in an effort to reduce movement in the frame and foundation
- **Minster in Thanet** - Looked at with a view to improving the rope circle.
- **New Romney** - There is considerable work being done on the tower and while this is going on, some sound insulation is to be installed between the bells and ringing chamber.
- **Newington next Hythe** - Routine tighten up and lubrication. New ropes to be fitted.
- **Newnham** - Some patching up to allow the bells to be rung for the induction of Richard Birch on 16 November 2008. The bells have been removed and are to be augmented to six. One bell has been donated by the Keltex Trust and one new bell is to be cast by Taylors. Installation planned for April 2009.
- **Northfleet** - This one has been on the books some time. The work will now proceed around June when we will dismantle the bells, the headstocks will be fitted with new gudgeons and bearings and we will rehang them.
- **Otham** - A scheme has been agreed with Taylors who currently hold two of the extra bells. There are some local problems delaying this project.
- **Petham** - Some replacement pulleys to be fitted and possibly straighten some rope drops in the process.
- **Quex Park** - Some pulleys are to be replaced.

- **Rochester Cathedral** - Request to inspect failing insulation pads
- **Rough Common** - Routine check of the single bell.
- **Sandhurst** - The fifth has been dismantled, the old fifth is to be welded and depending on results will be put back into the ring or installed as a service bell.
- **Seal Chart** - School bell refurbished with some new fittings
- **Stanford** - Replacement of rotten rope with chain on the single bell.
- **Stone by Dartford** - A quote/scheme from Whitechapel has been accepted to install the ex Homerton ring of six. Funds are in place and work will start shortly.
- **Sutton by Dover** - Single bell checked out for a strange noise in the church. The bell is 1991 Taylors. The bell it replaced stands in the church and was probably cast in the early 13th century. Apparently its tone is not good and Taylors were asked to retune and rehang it in 1983. When Taylors received the bell at Loughborough they decided that tuning was not really a possibility, and in any case the DAC said "no" on account of its age.
- **Tunbridge Wells** - Inspected with report and suggestions made.
- **Walmer** - Problems with the 4th wheel which has been replaced.
- **Westwell** - A scheme to install a light ring of six under the existing with some work on the old tenor to allow it to be chimed as a "bourdon", has been agreed.

The "heavy gang" consists of: "Redleader" Brian Butcher (also Diocesan bell adviser to Canterbury and Rochester), Russell Beardsmore, Tony Cresswell, Alan Driver, Keith Finch, Fiona Gowdy, Ivan Hart, Malcolm Hitchcock, Frank Lewis, Peter Sims (health and safety), Harry Smith and Malcolm Smith (risk assessments). Apologies to anyone I've missed. There are normally a number of locals on any job.

Brian G Butcher

## QUARTER PEAL SECRETARY'S REPORT 2008

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916 quarter peals were recorded within the Association area in 2008, an increase of 105 on the 2007 total and only 23 short of 2004's record total. The upward trend was not reflected in all Districts with Ashford and Rochester having slight decreases. The most significant changes were in the Maidstone District with an increase of 36% (and that's on top of a 36% increase recorded in 2007), and the Tonbridge District with an increase of 47%. Canterbury District again rang the most quarter peals, Maidstone District had the highest average number per tower, and Tonbridge District had the highest percentage of ringable towers with a quarter peal.

Congratulations to the 34 ringers who rang their first quarter peal (39 in 2007) and to the 4 firsts as conductor (8 in 2007). Congratulations also to Donald Niblett who rang his 1,500th quarter peal.

After 6 years on the top spot, Ashford gave way to Maidstone, All Saints as the leading tower with 44 rung there, closely followed by Aylesford with 42. Darren Elphick again leads the list of conductors with 69, well ahead of Mike Birkbeck's 38. There were 132 conductors in 2008 (the same number as in 2007). Handbell quarter peals more than doubled to 48, mainly due to increased activity at 45 Bramley Avenue which with 35 was the leading "tower" in the Canterbury District. Mini rings feature again with 4 quarter peals on the Charnborough Ring and 3 on the Trafford Ring.

A band completed the months of Surprise Major methods, all conducted by Damien Smith, while, in the Canterbury District, Adrian Hackford's band completed the 11 regular true Triples methods.

Anthony Leeves

## PUBLIC RELATIONS REPORT

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I operated two email lists, a countywide list of members to keep them informed about ringing matters, and a list of media contacts to attract press and radio interest in ringing events in the county. Items that generated mails on either or both lists have included:

- ringing on Thursday 5 March in the Lewisham District for EAST, a festival celebrating the diverse cultural history of London's East End.
- the Charmborough Ring's appearance in Deptford on the London Marathon route.
- publication of a book "England's Child: The Carillon and the Casting of Big Bells" (details at <http://www.jilljohnston.com/>)
- BBC2's "Working Lunch" on Thursday 10 April featuring The Whitechapel Bell Foundry.
- the Trafford Ring's support of an ordination service at Detling on Sunday 22 June.
- promoting ringing at the Dartford Festival with the Charmborough and Trafford mini-rings during the weekend 19-20 July.
- a quarter at Dover for the unveiling of the new Merchant Navy memorial.
- "Go South Go" on 17 September, when bells rang in Bromley Borough.
- the Charmborough Ring in Bexleyheath on Sunday 28 September, encouraging Londoners to participate as part of "Open Rehearsal" weekend.

Three artefacts of Walter Dobbie were passed to the Association. His 1977 Jubi Peal was erected and used for some time at Ulcombe, although it now needs a new home; a ringing machine that Walter built to the Cummins design is now at the Loughborough museum; his model bell is in the care of the Canterbury Cathedral ringers.

The group looking into ringing for the Olympics has been meeting regularly in SE London.

The project to replace the Association's publicity display was completed. The old rigid boards' last appearances were in June, at village fêtes in Hollingbourne and Otham respectively. They are now in store pending a decision as to their future. Our new roller banners had their début at the Dartford Festival, and have since been seen on nine more occasions, including the Ringing Roadshow. Several bookings for them have been made for 2009.

A few towers took part in Heritage Open Days, a national event organised jointly by English Heritage and The Civic Trust. My own tower saw large numbers of visitors and I would like to see this event, on 10 to 13 September 2009, promoted even more vigorously in the coming year.

Peter Dale

## LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

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It has been a quiet year in the Library with no substantial depositions, just the regular arrival of District Newsletters, for which I am very grateful.

Hazel Basford