

Editorial

So it's here at last. The long awaited 2012, when the eyes of the world will be on our country as we host the Olympic Games for the first time in 64 years. Then there is the little matter of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee to celebrate. Yes, it should be quite a year.

Most of us need little excuse to ring our bells and here are two heaven sent opportunities for us to not only enjoy ourselves but also to raise the profile of ringing generally. The media has already started the ball rolling for us with several recent TV programmes focusing wholly or partly on ringing, one of which featured action shots of our very own District Ringing Master! More questionable perhaps is the publicity that has come about as a result of a crackpot scheme by a certain Martin Creed - clearly someone who knows absolutely nothing about the subtlety of ringing on tower bells - who has suggested that to celebrate the opening of the Olympics we ring our bells "as loud and fast as possible" at 8 o'clock in the morning! Well done to the Central Council for refusing to support that one.

For our part we will no doubt ring to celebrate these events - a peal possibly, a quarter or just open ringing (at a sensible time of the day!). However we need to do more than that. Most towns and villages are organising special events, particularly for the Queen's Jubilee, so we need to make sure we are an integral part of those events. Your Town or Parish Council should be able to tell you who is co-ordinating the celebrations in your area so why not nominate a member of your tower to ensure that your ringing is not only included in their programme but actively publicised.

The coming months will be the greatest opportunity to promote our art since the Millennium. It is likely to be many years before we get another, so let us make sure that we grab the opportunity with both hands.

The Editor

Forthcoming Events

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| Saturday 11th February | Raising & Lowering Day at Staplehurst | 10am - 3pm |
| <i>Details to be confirmed but is likely to include theory, practice raising and lowering individually on tied bells and finally in peal on open bells.</i> | | |
| Saturday 10th March | District Practice at Boughton Monchelsea | 10am - 12noon |
| <i>Ringing from Rounds and Call Changes upwards on the 13cwt six. Everyone welcome</i> | | |
| Easter Monday 9th April | County AGM at Headcorn | 2pm |
| <i>Preceded by Service at 12noon and Lunch (pre-booking essential).</i> | | |
| Saturday 14th April | Quarterly District Meeting at West Malling | 10am - 12noon |
| <i>Ringing on the 10cwt eight, followed by business meeting All levels catered for.</i> | | |

**More information about District Events can be found on our website at
www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk**



District News

District Outing to London

This year's District Outing to London on 13th August was probably even more successful than the last one. By 10am more than 40 people from the Maidstone and Ashford Districts were crammed into the ringing chamber of St Martin in the Fields, where methods rung ranged from rounds and call changes on 12 up to Stedman Cinques and spliced Plain and Little Bob Maximus. At St Giles in the Fields we had to take it in turns to go up to the small ringing room, before we split into various groups for lunch. Afternoon ringing was on the 10 at St Clement Danes, St George the Martyr in Borough High Street (8), St John's in Waterloo Road (8) and culminating in ringing at St Margaret's, Westminster (10) where we scaled the heights of Cambridge Surprise Royal. Probably the nearest most of us will get to ringing at the Abbey! Visits to various west end pubs rounded off the day.

September Practice Meeting

Only seven people came to the District Practice at Wateringbury on Saturday 10th September, and four of those were from one tower. Maybe it was the rival attraction of England's Rugby World Cup match with Argentina live on TV that kept people away? However, it would be interesting to know whether there would have been a better attendance had the augmented Otham bells been ready in time for this practice as was originally hoped.

The upside was that the low numbers enabled two of the ringers to have intensive practice, rendering the event worthwhile overall.

Roger Groves

We are sorry to have to report that Roger Groves, husband of Barming ringer Freda passed away in the early hours of Wednesday 27th July at The Heart of Kent Hospice after a short illness. His funeral was held at Vinters Crematorium on Monday 8th August. Although not a ringer himself Roger was a staunch supporter of ringing at Barming.

Betty Tomlin

We are also sorry to hear of the passing of Betty Tomlin. She had been a ringer at Staplehurst for more than 50 years. Her funeral was held at Staplehurst on Tuesday 10th January.

County Striking Contest

This year All Saints Maidstone represented the District at the County six-bell and came a very close second place

behind winners St. Dunstons, Canterbury. The competition was hosted by the Maidstone District on the wonderful bells of Hunton. Our thanks to the Hunton ringers for the use of the bells and for providing the refreshments, and also to Graham Hayward of Nottingham who was the judge for the day.

Full results were:

1st	Canterbury (St Dunstan, Canterbury)	13
2nd	Maidstone (All Saints, Maidstone)	13½
3rd	Rochester (Meopham)	15½
4th	Lewisham (Beckenham)	17½
5th	Tonbridge (Hadlow)	33
6th	Ashford (Frittenden)	35½



The All Saints' Maidstone Band who were runners up in the County Striking Contest. L - R Graham Heath, Kath White, Paul Davis, Howard Goacher, Daniel Brady, Mike Birkbeck.

District Dinner

Due to lack of support it was necessary to cancel the planned District Dinner scheduled for 24th September. By three weeks before only 14 people had shown interest, rendering the event not viable. This was disappointing as it promised to be a somewhat special evening.

Annual District Meeting

Only 12 people - just 5% of the practising membership - bothered to turn up for arguably the most important District Meeting of the year, at Leeds on Saturday 8th October. However what lacked in quantity was made up for in quality, as we managed to ring two touches of 4-spliced Surprise Major (although alas nothing on all ten).

At the Business Meeting two newcomers were elected to the District Committee, James Davis of Marden and Barry Evans of Mereworth. The only other change was the election of Adam Brady as one of the Ringing Masters. He replaces his brother Daniel who remains as District Chairman. The Meeting agreed the provisional programme for 2012, the first half of which can be seen on the District Calendar. There were no new members elected at the meeting. Minutes of the meeting are available under *Documents* on the District website.

Call Change Striking Competition

Not so much a competition as a match - only two of the 30+ bands in the District entered a team in the Call Change Striking Competition at Hunton on Saturday 12th November. Judge Tom Barlow, always one to look at things from a positive point of view, decided that he would award gold stars for good ringing rather than faults for errors. The result was that last year's winners Staplehurst retained the winners' shield again this year by the narrowest of margins by achieving seven gold stars to The Suttons' six. However The Suttons won the shield for the band having the most ringers who had not rung in a competition previously.

Our thanks to the Hunton ringers for hosting the event. It's just a shame that it wasn't better supported. Perhaps Striking Contests have passed their sell-by date?

District Carol Service

This year's District Carol Service was held on the relatively, recently, rediscovered three at Ditton. The pre-service ringing was rather tentative with people coping well with the very tricky bells. Rounds, call changes and even Shipping Forecast Singles were rung under the guidance of new District Ringing Master Adam Brady. The service went without a hitch with all the old favourite carols being sung with considerable gusto by the congregation. After last year's success a quartet made up of Tina Bastow, Debbie and Daniel Brady and Richard Young sung two pieces, O Little One Sweet and We Wish You a Merry Christmas. The service was followed by mince pies and mulled wine which were prepared by Andrew Brady. Our thanks to all those who helped out during the service by doing readings, to Ross Terranova for taking the service and to Alan Warner for arranging the use of the bells.

Looking forward.....

Christmas is now but a distant memory and for many of us those cold dark days of January and February can be a little depressing. So why not cheer yourself up by coming to some of the District events lined up for the coming months?

First up is a **Raising and Lowering Practice Day** which will take place at Staplehurst on Saturday 11th February from 10am to 3pm. The programme is flexible but the general plan is to have individual raising and lowering on tied bells in the morning, a break for lunch, and then raising and lowering in peal on open bells during the afternoon. Please note that this event replaces the District Practice originally planned for East Malling where the bells are unavailable that day.

The first open District Practice of the year will now be on the 13cwt six at **Boughton Monchelsea** on Saturday 10th March. Ringing will be from 10am to 12noon and there will be something for everyone, from Call Changes upwards.

The **County AGM** on Easter Monday 9th April will this year be held at Headcorn. Just 3 miles from our District boundary it doesn't get much closer than this, so let's have a good turnout from Maidstone District members! The AGM itself begins at 2pm and is preceded by a Service at 12noon and Lunch for those who pre-book. There will also be towers open on routes to and from Headcorn.

Finally, the next **Quarterly District Meeting** will be at West Malling on Saturday 14th April. There will be ringing on the 10cwt eight from 10am to 12noon, followed by a short Business Meeting. As usual there will be ringing to cater for all levels and everyone will be welcome.

Below left is the youngest member of the Staplehurst band receiving the Call Change winners' shield whilst to the right one of the Suttons' band is presented with the other trophy.



Keep up to date with what's happening in the Maidstone District at
www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk

Now available on your smartphone

Here's how:

1. Download a QR code reader from your apps store.
2. Look through your phone's camera viewfinder at the image on the left
3. The website should open automatically. If it doesn't, just tap "open" on the app menu.



It's as simple as that!

Personal Milestones

Congratulations to the following for achieving notable landmarks in their ringing career:

1st Quarter peal:	Albert Gordon Judy Woods Geoff Searle James Davis Jack Phur
1st Quarter as Conductor	Alan Phipps
300th Quarter:	Jacqueline Barlow
450th Peal:	Michael Birkbeck
1st Peal as Conductor:	Richard Barclay
1500th Peal as conductor	John Keeler
1600th Quarter:	Graham Heath
100th Quarter as cond:	Daniel Brady

Please note that this information is taken from *campanophile.co.uk* and *kcacr.org.uk*. However the only way to be certain that your achievement is included is to e-mail details to thebelfry@kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk. Major milestones only please.



Maidstone District 120 Club

www.kcacr-maidstone-district.org.uk/120club

Winning numbers July - December 2011

July 2011			August 2011			September 2011		
1st Prize	(£20)	36	1st Prize	(£20)	128	1st Prize	(£20)	98
2nd Prize	(£15)	115	2nd Prize	(£15)	31	2nd Prize	(£15)	77
3rd Prize	(£10)	98	3rd Prize	(£10)	97	3rd Prize	(£10)	126
4th Prize	(£5)	78	4th Prize	(£5)	85	4th Prize	(£5)	1
<i>Drawn at Quarterly Meeting at Ulcombe on 9th July</i>			<i>Drawn at Staplehurst Practice on 16th August</i>			<i>Drawn at District Practice at Wateringbury 10th September</i>		
October 2011			November 2011			December 2011		
1st Prize	(£20)	27	1st Prize	(£20)	65	1st Prize	(£40)	93
2nd Prize	(£15)	35	2nd Prize	(£15)	26	2nd Prize	(£30)	119
3rd Prize	(£10)	90	3rd Prize	(£10)	3	3rd Prize	(£20)	106
4th Prize	(£5)	28	4th Prize	(£5)	28	4th Prize	(£5)	14
<i>Drawn at ADM at Leeds on 8th October</i>			<i>Drawn at Call Change Contest at Hunton 12th Nov</i>			<i>Drawn at Carol Service at Ditton on 10th December</i>		