

Look To!



The Eastern District Newsletter *October 2023*

Words from your editor

Welcome to the newsletter. I've been away from ringing for a while due to recovering from an operation but it's clear there's been plenty of action while I've been away.

I love my role editing this newsletter but this time next year I'll be off to university and will have to step down. If you think you would be a good fit for the role, please get in touch. All you need is passion and the ability to use a word processor.

Incidentally, it was mentioned that the banner at the bottom of the newsletter depicted Southern District towers, since I use a template adapted from Southern News. Thanks to Luca Greenslade for his excellent new banner featuring Eastern District towers.

Samuel Canning

Look To! Editor

YOUR DISTRICT NEEDS YOU!

Two of the District's committee members will be stepping down in February. Will you step up to the plate?

- No prior experience required.
- Ringers of any age or stage of progress can help.
- Just two or three informal meetings per year.
- Help decide which events will come to the district next.

- A strong committee means a strong district.

If you think you can help, please let Marion know at sec_east@scacr.org



ASSOCIATION CLOTHING



It is now possible to order Association clothing and other items direct from a supplier rather than going through a third party. There is an extensive range of clothing available (many different styles/colours/sizes) and also other items, such as headwear, ties, bags. To make your selection please visit wearyourlogo.co.uk where you can order on-line or having visited the site you can contact the company to order by emailing sales@wearyourlogo.co.uk or by phone 01903 766228. When ordering on-line please insert SCACR in the notes section when you 'check out' to identify your choice of logo. You do not need to set up an account to place an order but if you choose to do so, the logo will then be saved to your account for future orders.

There are delivery costs involved so it might be a good idea to get an order together with other members of your tower/Association or you can collect from the company at 91a South Street, Lancing BN15 8AP (see opening hours on their website). VAT is added to orders.

So get ordering to spoil yourself and advertise your passion for ringing at the same time.

Any queries please contact Sue Gotham via clothing@scacr.org

Upcoming events – Check the website at <https://www.scacr.org/news-events/calendar> for the latest info

Sat 25th Nov – Surrey outing:

- Nutfield 10:30
- Bletchingley 12:00 – excellent pub lunches here if desired!
- Reigate 3:00
- Possible fourth tower

Please contact me to register your interest. I need people to tell me if they want to come, to ensure the event can go ahead!

Sat 27th Jan – District meeting details tbc

Sat 24th Feb – Annual District Meeting @ Bexhill

First Tuesday of the month – Eastbourne combined practice @ Christ Church in Nov, St Mary's in Dec, St Saviour's in Jan.

Second Wednesday of the month – Doubles practice @ Westham

Fourth Tuesday of the month (not Dec) - Triples practice @ Christ Church Eastbourne

News in Brief

A band at Chiddingly named a new variation to mark the commencement of the Chiddingly festival on September 21st.

On October 21st, the first peal of St Margaret Bob Caters was rung at Bexhill in memory of Margaret Pink.

Welcome to the following ringers who have become members:

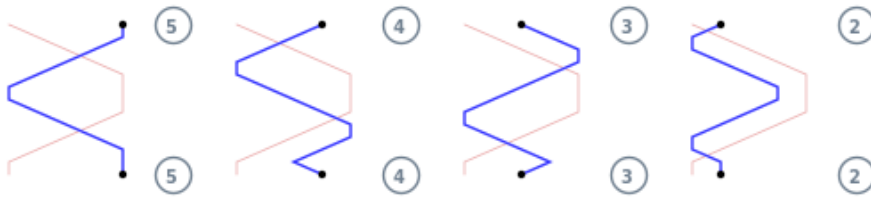
- Angela Pluess - St Mary's, Eastbourne
- Martyn Malling - All Saints, Iden
- Paul Philip - All Saints, Iden
- Julie Gurr - All Saints, Iden

Thingummy Bob and Bayle's Method

These two exercises help to build up to Bob Doubles. In Thingummy Bob:

- The treble and fifth Plain Hunt, but do four blows in fifths.
- The second alternately makes fourths under the treble and seconds over it.

- The third and fourth both Plain Hunt, but dodge in 3-4 up and down respectively.



You can ring Bob Doubles up to a certain point and then change to Thingummy to allow any bell to repeat any piece of work. This is known as Bayle's Method.

SOUNDBOW



Single copies are £1.20 or make life easier and take out a subscription for just **£8 per year**.

This will guarantee four editions of Soundbow delivered straight to your door as soon as they are printed. No more waiting for someone to come along with some for sale - they may never come and then you have missed out!

Soundbow reports on Association events, contains ringing themed articles and gives an insight into what is happening right across the county. Hopefully something of interest for everyone to enjoy!

To take out a subscription contact Kathy Howard at soundbow99@gmail.com, or phone 01903 813653. There is also an application form on the SCACR website for you to download.

Westham's Away Day

For the first time since before Covid the ringers from Westham returned to having our annual tower outing. Just like the ART course earlier in the week, the weather was sweltering and upon returning home we discovered it had been the hottest day of the year, with temperatures at Herstmonceux peaking at 31°C.

As this was the first time some of our ringers had rung at towers outside our own for some time, and the first time I had been involved in organising an outing, I was glad of the help of our tower correspondent (and District Secretary) Marion, who helped pick suitable towers and gave some advice with the timings.

We started at Dallington, where the church sits imposingly on a bank over the main village street, where we rang for 45 minutes. We were glad of the cool atmosphere in this tower, where you must step down into the ringing chamber, rather than going up!

Beginning to overheat, we made our way down to Ashburnham, where again the ringing chamber is lower than the nave of the church. Getting these bells was tricky, as sadly there is no band here and the contact details were out of date. I'm glad we did manage to get them though, as they are a lovely, easy-going ring of 6, which were augmented from a 4 in the mid-90s. If you haven't been, the church itself is within the grounds of Ashburnham Place, rather than the village itself, and this made it a handy place to visit before lunch, as Ashburnham Place has a restaurant in beautiful surroundings.



Above Left: Ringing up at Dallington. Above Right: Ringing at Ashburnham.

Lunch consumed and temperatures peaking, it was time to head to the third tower of the day, Hellingly. Most of us had rung at this tower before, and we also had an ulterior motive: to look at the staircase that was installed there from the ringing room to the belfry, as we have plans to upgrade the ladder which leads to ours. Inspections complete it was time to ring up, and by this point we were all overheating! The ringing here for me was probably the best of the day for the first 30 minutes, and then the heat got to me, and I found myself suffering from “brain fog” in the middle of the second course of Bob

Doubles! Never mind, it was about to get worse when I found I could no longer ring Plain Hunt!

Fortunately, it was time to lower the bells and stagger out into the sunshine before heading back home, in my case via a coffee shop for something “iced”!



Above: Ringing in the heat at Hellingly.

Thanks to all our ringers who came, and James, Sam and John from Christ Church Eastbourne and Hailsham towers for supporting us with extra numbers and experience. Also thank you to the ringers of Dallington and Hellingly for accommodating us and the vicar of Ashburnham for organising access.

Steve Pilfold, Tower Captain, Westham St Mary's

If you are organising an outing, the Central Council online shop has a FREE download of the “Organising an Outing” booklet. Although it is dated in parts, the overall timing guides and how and when to contact towers information is very useful: <https://shop.cccbr.org.uk/product/organising-an-outing-download/>

Also, Steve Coleman's excellent book, The Bell Ringer's Bedtime Companion has some helpful information in it. Available on many tower bookshelves, or at <http://www.ringingbooks.co.uk/>

An Historic Westham Happening

The above article proves Westham ringers to be a tenacious bunch. Apparently this is nothing new; 100 years ago, a Ringing World article about the bells appeared which included the following tidbit:

“About 40 years ago the newly-appointed Vicar told his ringers that in London, peals were rung which lasted three hours. They did not believe him, but in order to test it, six men rang rounds for three hours.”

When asked if there was any chance of a repeat performance, Westham tower captain Steve Pilfold replied, “No.”

Oddstruckness Meter Available to Borrow

The Association owns an oddstruckness meter, which can be used to measure and quantify how oddstruck bells are. This is very useful for adjusting bells to minimise oddstruckness. The meter can be borrowed for a donation to the Bell Restoration Fund (£5 suggested donation); please email Graham Hills via

brf@scacr.org. More information here:

<http://www.bagleybells.co.uk/osm/osm.htm>

Tower Profile: Berwick, St Michael and All Angels



Berwick has two bells hung in a west facing tower that has plenty of history. The tower was built in 1603 with a spire. In 1773, the tower was struck by lightning, causing great damage to both the spire and tower which led to a long and costly repair. The spire was rebuilt in 1856 and was resingled in the 21st century due to woodpeckers.

In order to protect the spire, it has been underlined with a lead to prevent damage by birds. Above the belfry, there is another chamber and the louvres appear to have bird boxes on the inside.

The bells are rung from the ground floor by red, white and blue sallied ropes in the North-East corner. Access to the belfry requires a 19-rung ladder through a hatch in the South-West corner. It would appear there was a permanent ladder here at some point because Elphick does not list a ladder requirement during his visit in 1938.

A sectional sketch shows us 4 ringers ringing from a gallery. This was removed some years later and an organ was put in its place. There is no date on this sketch but it would be wise to suggest that when the tower was built, 4 bells were hung at the time.

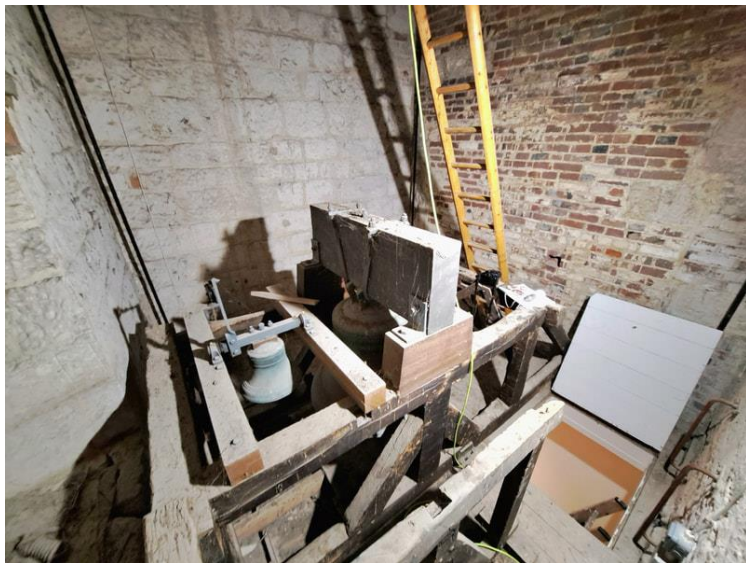
In 1677, the treble of the ring became cracked. This bell remained cracked until 1698 when it was recast by John Wood, an itinerant founder from Bishopsgate. Also, eight new brasses were made. This would suggest a ring of 4 were present - 2 brasses per bell.

In 1811, the treble was sold to Alfriston during their augmentation to 6 bells. In addition to the bell, Thomas Mears Junior of London added a treble and a 3rd. The tenor at Berwick was retained and bells 2 and 3 were sold off to provide money for the church. As the bells at Alfriston are in the key of A, this would have made Berwick's treble note E.

The tenor of the old ring of 4 was cast by Henry Wilner in 1629. Henry was based at Borden in Kent and only provided us with 2 bells, Berwick and Pett. Between each word is a diamond stop which is higher than it is wide. The letter S on the name THOMAS is reversed. It rings in the key of Bb making the former

treble 1 semitone higher than what it should be. A similar situation can also be found at Beddingham.

During the time the front 3 bells were sold off, a small ships bell cast in 1781 by William Chapman of Whitechapel was bought as the parishioners were displeased after losing their bells. An extension to the frame was made so that the bell swings beside the Wilnar bell. It measures 12.13" in diameter and rings in the key of F.



The Nominal of the treble and the tenor are now 2771.5Hz and 906.5Hz respectively making this the tuning of the treble and tenor of a ring of 12. The Chapman bell would have been fixed to a headstock by a peg canon but today it has since been removed.

In 1937, the bells were overhauled by Gillett & Johnston of Croydon, the tenor was hung dead and clocked and the treble was still hung for swing chime. In recent years, the bells had an overhaul by Whitechapel. The clappers were replaced with new ones, The treble was hung in a small wooden B frame which stretched across the 2 trusses of the Wilner bell pit, resulting in the bell swinging in the same pit as it. New pulleys and ropes were provided.

The Wilner bell is hung in a wooden O frame and the Chapman bell in B frame. The bells and church were in a fantastic condition during my visit in 2023.

Kye Leaver

A more expansive version of this article is available here:

<https://thebellsofsussex.weebly.com/berwick-st-michael--all-angels.html>

[ART Course Roundup](#)



As temperatures at Gatwick peaked at 31°C and parents up and down the country wondered why the summer had arrived the week that schools had returned, eleven

ringers from the local area and the Association Ringing Master were grateful for the air-conditioned luxury of the ringing room at Hailsham Church for our M1 course with David.

The day went extremely well, with a good mix of classroom learning and practical exercises, with excellent demonstrations and explanations of what we were doing and why we were doing it. The handstroke exercises were particularly well received, as this is the point at which stays are often bumped or broken during the learning process, which can be quite scary for learners and be the point at which they give up. David also gave the best lesson I have ever seen on making the first coil when ringing down, which will not only be helpful when teaching, but will also hopefully help me end my own attempts at macrame, which tend to ruin any ringing down in peal I am involved in.

In the classroom there was a good deal of information about best practice when it comes to teaching, including the “Whole-part-whole” process of breaking down complex tasks into smaller tasks that can be practiced individually and then combined and also things to keep in mind as to how you speak to and interact with your learner, to both encourage improvement but also not leave them feeling despondent when things don’t go well.

A good range of materials was provided in a folder on the day, including books and help sheets and we have all since received our “smART Ringer” log ins for the supporting website, which has lots of useful resources for teachers and students.

We are now going to follow the course up with discussions as to how we can potentially pool our resources in the local area to help support teaching for the many small bands across this rural area.

Thanks to everyone involved in organising the event, including of course David Sparling from ART, our District Secretary Marion Hollands and Christine Baldock and the other ringers at Hailsham for arranging the facilities and refreshments.

Steve Pilfold

BELLS OF SUSSEX

Crawley ringer Kye Leaver is working on a database featuring all of Sussex's bells – data on weights, diameters, and inscriptions with sound recordings and photographs. This is a fast-growing resource and can be found here:

<https://thebellsofsussex.weebly.com/>

Heathfield and Waldron day



The district outing to Heathfield and Waldron attracted over 20 ringers, from as far away as Cornwall! Heathfield was the first tower; ringing included Call Changes, Bob Triples, Stedman and Cambridge. This was followed by tea – black, due to a milk shortage – with biscuits and coconut bread (see below). Marian Hollands brought an historic attendance register along, which generated much interest and amusement.

Waldron was next – a bit of a rare grab, and a lovely church. Plain Hunt, Call Changes, Stedman, and Grandsire were among the ringing. A good time was had by all, and we must thank the local ringers for their hospitality.



Top left: Ringing at Heathfield. Above left: Waldron's beautiful interior. Above right: Call Changes at Waldron.

Coconut Bread

INGREDIENTS



- 6 heaped cups of flour
- 3 heaped teaspoons of baking powder
- 1 teaspoon of salt
- 1 teaspoon mixed spice
- 1 cup of sugar
- 1 $\frac{2}{3}$ cups desiccated coconut
- 1 cup of milk
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of sunflower oil
- $\frac{1}{3}$ heaped cup of brown sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of raisins (optional)

METHOD

- 1) Mix the flour, baking powder, salt, mixed spices, sugar and 1 cup of desiccated coconut in a large bowl.
- 2) In a separate bowl, mix the milk, oil and eggs.

- 3) Gradually add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients, while mixing by hand until the dough is damp throughout. You may wish to add 1tbsp warm water if the dough remains dry after thorough mixing. Add raisins if desired.
 - 4) On a clean surface dusted with flour, knead the dough and divide into five or six loaves. Shape the loaves to have a well in the centre.
 - 5) Mix the remaining coconut with the brown sugar and vanilla. Place the mixture in the well of each loaf. Pinch to seal the well then score each loaf with a knife. This gives the loaves a sweet coconut core.
 - 6) Bake in an oiled pan for 40-45 minutes at Gas Mark 5. When tapped, it so sound hollow and a clean knife should come out dry once inserted. Baste the loaves with sugar water (2tbsp brown sugar and 2tbsp hot water) before and after.
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SERIAL

The Island – Part 5

“The young woman is right. Eight of the country’s finest ringers have been brought together to be offered an opportunity you cannot refuse.”

An ominous rumble emanated from the wall and Stefan nearly jumped out of his skin. The ornate fireplace was, it seemed, not a fireplace at all but a door; one which had now opened.

“Enter,” the Voice ordered. There was a moment’s hesitation, followed by the voice adding, “now.” Stefan was perturbed. The computerised Voice did not sound angry – of course it couldn’t - but that made it more threatening in a way. The ringers pulled themselves off the chairs and sofas – some with extreme reluctance, particularly Colin Byrd who had been dosing until the Voice woke him up. Most had to duck as they shuffled through the doorway single file, which opened up into a corridor and then a cavernous chamber. A light flickered on, and it became clear the sort of chamber it was.

“Welcome,” the Voice said, “to the rarest grab one could ever conceive of.”

Stefan could scarcely believe it. Eight ropes, with the classic red white and blue sallies, hung on a spider in the centre of the chamber. The walls were bare, harsh stone, with little decoration. He realised it must have been dug into the rock.

“Impossible,” Gordon Wrings sniffed. “There’s no ring of bells here listed in Dove.”

Thomas, clearly used to this sort of remark from Gordon, calmly replied, “I have a feeling that Lord Patcham or Mr. X or whoever owns these bells doesn’t want their existence to become public knowledge.”

“Yes,” the voice said, “The privilege of ringing on this splendid Eijsbouts” (the mechanical Voice’s pronunciation understandably butchered the Dutch foundry’s name) “octave is one that is being offered for the first time since their installation.”

“What’s the catch?” Gordon demanded.

There was a brief pause. Stefan wondered if the person behind the Voice was caught off guard. Perhaps not – perhaps they were evilly smiling...

FQC

Keep up to date with the Sussex County Association of Change Ringers!

Visit www.scacr.org

Don't yet have a subscription to Soundbow, the Association Newsletter? Contact Kathy Howard at Soundbow99@gmail.com or by telephone at 01903 813653. Yearly postal subscription for four fat issues is only £7! Why not set up a tower subscription if you haven't already?

Find the SCACR on Facebook - search for 'SCACR' - the Association has a page and our members have a secure, closed group for their posts about ringing in Sussex.

Find SCACR on Twitter. Use [@scacr_bells](https://twitter.com/scacr_bells) and [@sussexbells](https://twitter.com/sussexbells).

Contact Vicky Chase, your Communication and Events Team Leader, at publicity@scacr.org if you want to know more about publicity or social media.



The next edition of Look To! will be February 2024.

The deadline for write ups, events and relevant material is the end of January.

Send it all to news-east@scacr.org

Many thanks to everyone who contributed

