



KCACR ROCHESTER DISTRICT

NOTICEBOARD

www.rochesterdistrict.org.uk

groups.yahoo.com/group/rochester_district

JANUARY 2007

MILTON BELLS RING AGAIN – On Saturday 13th January the bells of Milton-next-Gravesend rang out for the first time since damage was caused during a storm a few years ago. In summer last year Gareth Lawson (District Ringing Master) made enquiries with the tower secretary, Maria Yetman as to why the bells were silent. It became apparent that a louver had blown in during a storm and landed on the wheel of the third bell causing it to break. As a result pigeons used the belfry as their home; some became trapped and died, and as you can imagine the mess made was not pleasant. The vicar prevented access to the tower for health and safety reasons and arranged for the hole to be blocked off and the pigeons (and mess) to be removed. Prior to Christmas the belfry was inspected by Alan Driver (District Chairman), and two weeks into the new year Brian Butcher (Bell Restoration Officer) joined him with the third wheel of the old installation from High Halstow, which practically fitted like a glove. The pulley wheels were freed from the pigeon mess and the bells were tested one by one. Florence Hamp, Gareth Lawson, Graham Cottle, Paul Coffill and Peter Hartley joined them in the afternoon making seven ringers and they rung a plain course of Plain Bob Minor on the back seven with a tenor cover. Some rounds were also rung on the front six, and all appears to be in order. Brian Butcher has said that work will soon need to be carried out on the bells - namely the clappers and ground pullies. A trap also needs replacing underneath the fourth to stop the bell from 'shouting' down the tower. Some work is also required on the walls within the ringing chamber to stop the chalk from flaking away. However, all that is required in the immediate future is a good spring clean of the tower - from top to bottom! Maria Yetman was delighted that the bells are once again ringable, and extends her thanks to all those involved. She is very keen to get the bells ringing again on Sunday mornings before looking to instigate a weekly practice, and with a local band of only four ringers Maria is very keen to hear from anyone that may be able to assist for service ringing, and other special occasions such as weddings. If you would be available to help out please contact Maria (see handbook for contact details).

GRAND DRAW – Thanks to all those who took part. We raised £401 for the BRF. Well done to Brian Trill (Hoo) for winning first prize of £100 and Barbara Randall (Rainham) for second prize of £30. I am looking for a tower to sponsor the cost of the tickets for this year. Please contact me on 01795 880344 if you can help. [Sonya Gowdy]

TRAINING – The district is looking to provide basic training for ringers/towers. If you would like any basic training or feel your tower could benefit please get in touch with any of the district officers, who will be happy to assist in putting together 'basic' training programmes for you. The KCACR provide specialist training events at county level (lookout for their training poster).

CHRIS TRAFFORD'S MINI-RING - The construction of Chris M Trafford's portable mini-ring is nearing completion. There are six bells cast by Taylors in 2003 with the tenor weighing 38.9 lbs in E. Chris (tower captain at Bobbing) is hoping to have the district's newest addition up and ringing in the next few months, and he is looking to bring it along to any local bell ringing events or church/school fetes throughout the summer. It has also been suggested that the mini-ring could be used in conjunction with bell ringing recruitment for your local tower. For further details please contact Chris (junior) by email (trafford1081@hotmail.com) or call 01795 427763.

HARTLIP REHUNG - The bells at Hartlip are now back and ringing on new bearings. The old iron staples have been removed and the clappers refitted with independent staple bolts. The tenor is now easily ringable, whereas before keeping at the back in rounds was a struggle. The treble is so light that our ringers are having trouble with it - not like the good old days when you could give it a real good tug. The children in the tower can now ring round to the three or four. Only problem now is that we have no excuse for bad ringing! [Peter Blandon, Tower Captain]

EMERGENCY LIGHTING - Have you got some in your tower? If there is a power cut can you stand your bell in the dark? What about your nervous learners? One tower in the district had two power cuts in the last two months. You can have emergency lighting wired in, or a simpler solution is to have a rechargeable lantern, which is plugged into a power socket and will automatically come on if the power fails. These cost from about £15 and are available from the likes of Argos. [Florence Hamp]

FORTHCOMING EVENTS (all welcome)

Sat 17th February – District Practice, Bobbing (10am-12pm)

Sat 17th March – District Practice, Chatham (6-8pm)

Thu 29th March – 10 Bell Practice, Rochester Cathedral (7.30-9.15pm)

Sat 9th April – KCACR Annual General Meeting

Sat 21st April – Quarterly Meeting, Rochester St Margaret

- 3.30pm Open ringing
- 4.30pm Tea
- 5.00pm Meeting
- 5.30pm Open ringing

Sat 19th May – Call Change & Striking competitions at Cuxton (tbc)

Sat 16th June – District Outing