

Look To!



The Eastern District Newsletter

September 2021

Words from your editor

A new lifting of restrictions and a new editor for Look To. It's good to see that many towers are ringing again on Sundays and practice nights. Ringing is starting to open up again, with plenty of events in the diary already. Be sure to check your emails and the website for the latest details – the more the merrier!

Read all about the seaside walk, the first ringing meeting of the year, the Sussex Young Ringers, the history of Hailsham's bells and more!

Samuel Canning

Look To Editor

Words from Marion – Your District Secretary

I do hope you are all managing to get back to some ringing and are keeping safe.

To date we have managed to have two meetings - first a walk along Eastbourne seafront with a picnic lunch for members to get together and chat. Our second meeting was outside at the newly named Forewood mini ring where members could ring, sit in the garden and chat followed by a lovely ringer's tea. At this meeting the membership generously supported a raffle in aid of the BRF and the restoration fund for the bells at Hooe church. The ringers at Hooe have expressed their thanks for the donation. I would like to thank all those who helped at these events particular thanks must go to Louise and Alan Pink who open their home to us all to ring on the Forewood bells which I know was enjoyed by all who attended. We have more meetings arranged for this year, details are in this newsletter and we hope to see some of you at them.

Marion Hollands

SUSSEX CLOTHING IS BACK

Loose polo shirts, fitted t-shirts, hoodies, rugby tops, fleeces – all embroidered with the Sussex logo.

Many colours, styles and sizes (including children) to suit all.



Please visit the Clothing page (can be found under Resources) on the SCACR website for full details and order form. Orders will be placed on the last day of every month, delivery time is approx. 4 weeks from the order being placed with the supplier.

Any questions, please get in touch with Sandra Alford at clothing@scacr.org

FEEDBACK SO FAR

I am really pleased with my rugby shirt – it is a great length for ringing!

I love my polo shirt, it's a really nice fit and colour.

Fleece and rugby shirt are lovely and fit very well, thank you!

I shall wear my t-shirt with pride!

Good price, good quality and good fit – thank you.

Love curling up in my hoodie!

-----Upcoming Events – Check the website at

<https://www.scacr.org/news-events/calendar> for the latest info

September - Sat 25th – Ringing Meeting at Alfriston, 10:30

October - Sat 23rd – Ringing Meeting location tbc

November - Sat 27th – Ringing at Westham, 14:30 followed by Tea

The Ringers' Seaside Trip

On Saturday the 26th of June, ten ringers came for a walk along Eastbourne seafront for the first meeting since COVID began.

We started at the Sea Cadet Centre near the Sailing Club and got underway (following some trouble parking; you'd be surprised just how many things the machine won't accept). We passed many notable landmarks, such as the Redoubt Fortress, a fort dating back to the Napoleonic Wars, the historic pier and bandstand and many more, before making our way to Holywell.

We then travelled around the Downland Beachy Head, seeing the unusual geoglyph depicting an Anglo-Saxon hairpin – part of the Frankish Woman trail. We next visited the Holy Well itself, before we sat down on the beach to enjoy lunch. The weather was rather

chilly for the time of year (I'm not sure Nick enjoyed his swim quite so much as he would have).

On the return journey there was some light rain, but not enough to ruin a lovely day out. It was good to catch up with each other in person after so long on Zoom and even though there was no ringing it still proved an enjoyable event.



Above left: The ringers with the hairpin geoglyph.

Above right: Eastbourne Pier, one of the locations along the walk.

The First Ringing Meeting of the Year

I doubt that any of us remember exactly the last ringing outing we went on before this, so it was quite exciting when we all spotted this event in the newsletter or on the website; it was ringing at the Forewood Ring, Crowhurst (8, 0-0-22 in B) - formerly known as Dewby's Bells and built by the late Alan Collings. The general opinion seems to be that they 'go' nicer in their new frame, and there are plans for the bells to be augmented to twelve.

There was ample ringing to be enjoyed (I managed to circle the tower!), from rounds to Grandsire Triples to Cambridge Major, and several people had their first go on a mini-ring. The highlight of the ringing was probably a course of Cambridge Minor rung by a band consisting of masters past and present.

Next it was time for the real reason some of us came – the tea! There was a large selection of delectable snacks and desserts, as well as a raffle to raise funds for the BRF, even if one of the prizes, er, disappeared (but the less said about that the better). Rob then gave a brief speech and Alan and Margaret Pink received their 50-year service certificates that would normally be presented at the ADM. Following this, there was more eating, chatting and ringing.

It was marvellous to get back to ringing and see so many people in person again and enjoy these lovely little bells in their new home.



Top left: The Forewood Ring sign.

Top right: The bells in their new home (tenor on the far left).

Bottom left: Alan and Margaret Pink receive their fifty-year long service certificates.

Bottom right: Just some of the marvellous treats available with the tea.



Tower History – St Mary-the-Virgin, Hailsham



Above: St Mary-the-Virgin, Hailsham

At 109 feet above sea level, St Mary-the-Virgin's church Hailsham is built on the highest piece of land in the town. It can therefore be seen from quite a few miles around, especially from the Pevensey marshes. The earliest reference to a church in Hailsham was in 1229 but no part of this building exists today. The nave and chancel of the present building date from about 1390 with the tower being added in about 1480. As with many churches at the time, the Victorian period saw some rebuilding work take place at Hailsham, notably the south and north aisles.

In 1663 five bells were cast for the church by the itinerant bell founder John Hodson in a field where Bell Banks Road is now and that is why the road is so named. The third bell was recast in 1768 by Lester and Pack of the Whitechapel foundry in London. In 1889 three trebles from the Whitechapel foundry were added to commemorate the 1887 Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria in order to make a ring of eight. They were hung in a new oak frame, which is still in use and in good condition today. The tower clock was installed to commemorate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 1897.

By 1951 the bells were becoming increasingly difficult to ring (they were a ground floor ring with a 70-foot draught of rope at that time) and, at a cost of

over £700, the front four were recast and the back four retuned by John Taylor and Co of Loughborough and all eight rehung with new fittings. The bells were rededicated on 23rd December by the Archdeacon of Hastings. In 1954 the present ringing floor was constructed in order to accommodate a new organ in the lower part of the tower. This also had the effect of making the bells much easier to ring owing to the much-reduced draught of rope.

In 1993 a simulator was installed in order to facilitate extra practices and quarter peals without disturbing the neighbourhood. It also enabled the tower to be available all day for a ringing course as and when required. In 2002 the Hailsham Ringing Centre was formally set up and recognised by the Central Council. At the same time George Francis of Warnham crafted and installed two dumb bells enabling the easier teaching of handling and the ringing of ten bells when connected to the simulator. The Centre won the Founders' prize for the most successful ringing centre in 2003.

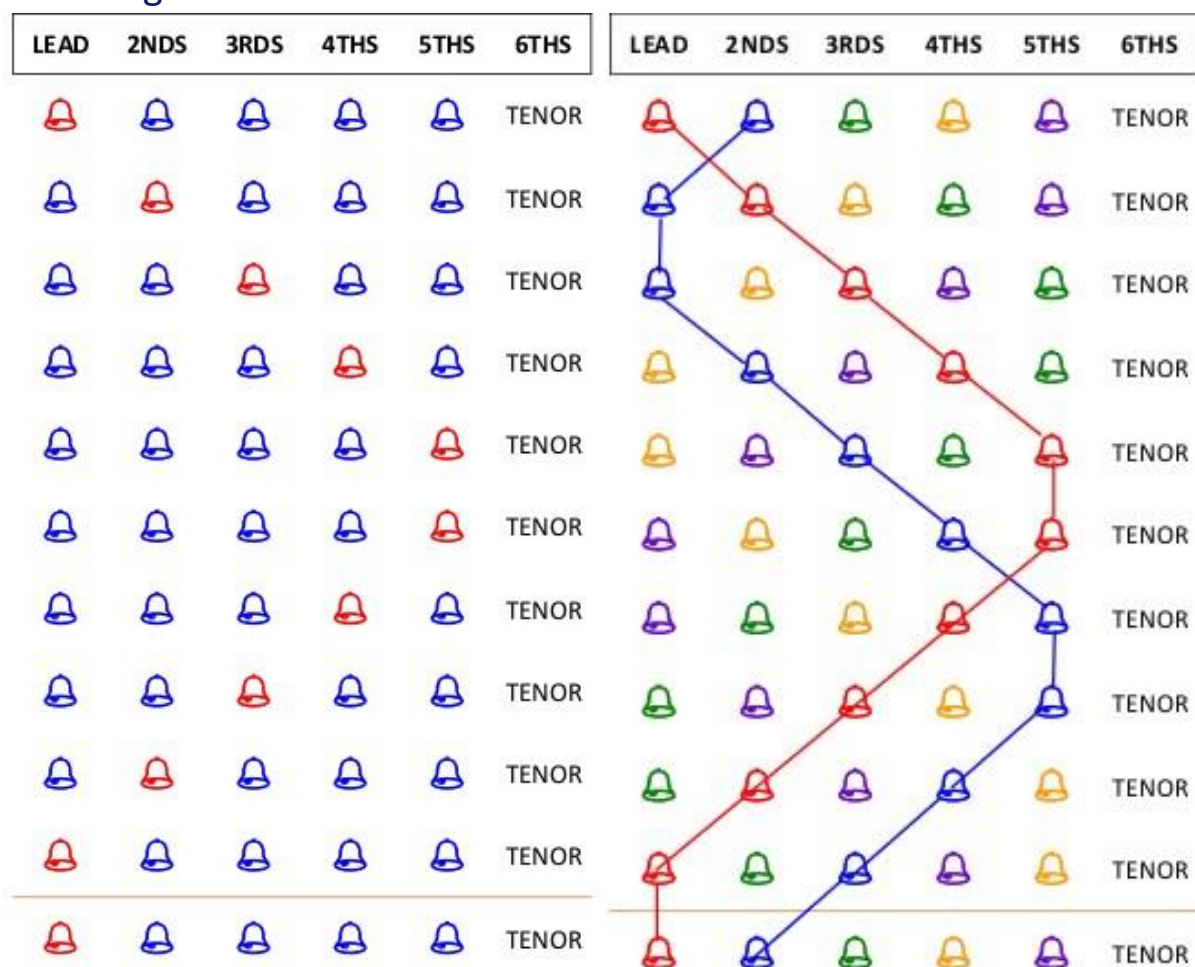
Coming more up to date, Nicholson Engineering did a complete overhaul in 2015, replacing the bearings and some of the pulley blocks, fitting two of the bells with different thickness insulation pads, overhauling the clapper assemblies and adjusting them so as to eliminate the odd-struckness. Members of the local band assisted with the work, de-rusting and painting the headstocks and other ironwork.

Over the past few years, the PCC have been embarking on a re-ordering scheme for the church and, when this reached the west end, it caused a number of lengthy interruptions in the availability of the tower for ringing. The organ was removed, and a new floor built in between the ground and the ringing chamber floor to give an additional room for meetings and seating for services; the west door is to be made the main entrance for the church. The ringing chamber has been glazed in so that anything happening in the church and the ringing do not interfere with each other. Ventilation is now provided by means of air conditioning. The floor covering and furnishings have yet to be replaced in the ringing chamber and the simulator reconnected.

Alan Baldock

A New View for Plain Hunt

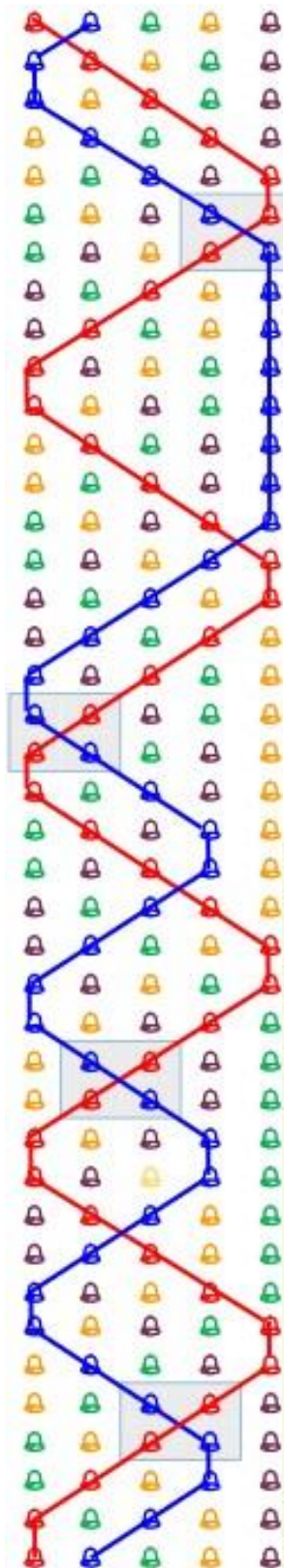
When you first learn Plain Hunt, you might ring it by the numbers – however, to progress through method ringing you need to get the hang of ringing by rhythm. These diagrams show the Plain Hunt pattern without showing any numbers, so you can think more about the place you're in than the bell you're following.



Once you've got the hang of Plain Hunt, a good method to try is Devon Place. The Blue Line is below on the left, and you can learn it if you like. However, it's easier to ring it by a set of rules:

- 1) Always Plain Hunt between first place and fourths place, UNLESS;
- 2) If you take the treble from lead (i.e., if you ring over the treble in seconds place at backstroke before leading), hunt out to the back and ring eight blows in fifths. Then hunt down to lead and carry on with the previous rule.

Make sure you know where to start as it's different to Plain Hunt – the 5 starts by doing three extra blows at the back instead, and the 3 makes fourths and hunts down to the front immediately.



Sussex County Association

Westham, Sussex

St Mary the Virgin

Wednesday, 1 September 2021 in 44m (10-1-10 in G)

1280 Doubles (3m)

480 each Reverse Canterbury & Plain Bob and 320 Grandsire.

- 1 Meg Lansom
- 2 Samuel P R Canning
- 3 Marion C Hollands
- 4 Alastair D Macfadyen
- 5 Alan R Baldock (C)
- 6 Nicholas J Cant

To celebrate the 80th birthday this day of Joyce Huggett, a long time valued former member of the Westham band.

Left: The Blue line for Devon Place Doubles.

Right: Quarter peal for Joyce Huggett's birthday.

Milestone at Westham

Joyce Hugget is a long-serving former member of the Westham band, who celebrated her 80th birthday on the 1st of September. We rang a quarter peal of

1280 changes to mark the occasion in three methods, which we scored (in spite of a minor interruption!) after 44 minutes.

Recipe: Biscoff Rocky Road

Ingredients

400g white chocolate 50g butter

125g biscoff spread 150g mini marshmallows

250g biscoff biscuits –chopped

Method

Line 8/9" square tin with parchment paper

Place chocolate and butter in a large bowl and melt over a pan of hot water, making sure the water doesn't touch the bowl (or in the microwave in short bursts). Stir till smooth.

In another bowl melt the spread in microwave for 30 seconds or so until runny and then beat this into the melted chocolate mixture. Once all is combined, add marshmallows and chopped biscuits mix well and pour into prepared tin and even out. Place in fridge till set.

For extra kick melt some extra spread and drizzle over top of the rocky road and sprinkle with some more of the crushed biscuits.



Keep up to date with the [Sussex County Association of Change Ringers](#)

Visit **www.scacr.org**

- Don't have a 'Soundbow' subscription? Contact Kathy Howard at Soundbow99@gmail.com, 01903 813653. Yearly postal subscription for four fat issues is still only £6! Why not set up a tower subscription if you don't have one already...
- Find 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 and @sussexbells
- Contact Alison Everett, your Communications and Events Team leader, at publicity@scacr.org if you want to know more about publicity or social media



The Sussex Young Ringers

One of the many disadvantages of lockdown was not being able to meet up with others and ring. This affected the Sussex Young Ringers too, with the lockdown coming just before a planned meeting at Fairwarp. Nonetheless, we were also one of the first groups to meet again when restrictions eased in May, at Ashburnham Place. Although we couldn't ring tower bells, handbells and boomwhackers (plastic tubes of varying lengths that sound different pitches) were enjoyed. Since then, we have had meetings with real tower bell ringing at

Heathfield, Arundel and the newly restored 6 at Rodmell. Then, at the end of July, we had a day outing to Hastings, ringing at the town's three lovely eights. We usually have a good turnout of between 10 and 20 ringers and can usually ring a variety of methods including Cambridge.

On Saturday the 11th of September, we will be sending a team to Worcester to compete in the Ringing World National Youth Contest, ringing a touch of Grandsire Doubles at All Saints. Be sure of a report in the next edition of Soundbow (got to promote those other publications!)

Below left: St Peter's Rodmell, whose six bells have been recently restored.

Below right: A set of Boomwhackers.



The RWNYC, or, Was that in the Risk Assessment?

The Ringing World National Youth Contest. The ultimate test for any young ringer – but more than a competition. More a festival of youth ringing everywhere, and a celebration of everything that makes The Exercise special. So, it was not only to vie for the Whitechapel Trophy that we descended upon Worcester, but also to enjoy ringing with other youngsters from around the country.

Those of us travelling by train meet up at Lewes railway station at 16:57 on Friday, ready for action. The journey up was spared the wrath of “BR luck” and the journey went largely without a hitch. After changing to the Worcester train at Paddington, we were able to relax and play some games – where better to play a game about travelling by train than when travelling by train? It was dark by the time we got to Foregate Street station, and so upon getting to the hotel we all quickly settled our brains for a good long nap. That was some energy we were going to need!

After breakfast at Wetherspoons, Tower 1 of the day was St-Martin-in-the-Cornmarket (10, 6-2-17 in B), a light and easy-going ring with very colourful sallies. After taking the opportunity to practice our test piece, it was off to the Cathedral Chapter House to peruse the various stands.

But now was the time of the competition ringing, so we headed for All Saints (12, 20-1-1 in Eb). Our test piece was 180 Grandsire Doubles (BPSBSPSSSx2 in case you wanted to ring it). The ringing settled down after a lead or so and the sweet spot was hit in the very middle. There were varying opinions as to how well we had done, but I reckoned it was worthy of a top three finish at least!

There wasn't time to rest on our laurels though – it was our slot at the Cathedral (12, 48-0-2) next! It was quite nerve-racking, especially as someone who has never rung on twelve before. The bells certainly need a long, firm pull but the glorious sound is well worth the effort; the praise I so often hear directed towards them is justified!

Next it was time for our minibus ride to Kempsey (8, 15-0-0 in E), courtesy of our driver Billy. They are a nice octave and not too difficult to ring, but the bells are anticlockwise which has the potential to mess with your brain sometimes. We rang Call Changes and Stedman Triples there.

After a picnic lunch, the village church of Stoulton (6, 7-0-5 in B) was next on the itinerary. A nice, light, and easy ring of six allowed us to enjoy an unusual touch of Plain Bob Minor as well as Cambridge Surprise.

The next tower, Claines, (10, 13-3-26) was less pleasant but a singular challenge. The tower is rather thin and the first remark upon seeing it was “No way is there a ring of ten in there!” The bells are hung in a multi-tiered frame, and some of the bells are so much higher up that they are virtually inaudible, which, combined with their oddstruckness, makes good striking difficult to achieve. Nonetheless, we were able to ring some reasonable Call Changes there.

Next, it was back to All Saints for our slot to ring on all twelve there. Also available was the Ambergate Campanile (10, 0-0-10 in F#), a mini-ring which could generously be described as a miserable peal of tin cans. Despite this, along with some ringers from the other teams, we were able to rattle out some Plain Bob and Grandsire before heading upstairs to enjoy some Call Changes on all twelve bells. There was also some silent handbell ringing with the Durham and Newcastle band.

After a brief respite at the hotel, it was results time. After hearing our neighbours, Kent, had won the Call Changes category, we waited with anticipation to see where we had placed in the method category. Winchester & Portsmouth, Gloucester & Bristol, Yorkshire, Durham & Newcastle - Sussex! That's a very respectable second place, just behind the previous years' winner, Oxford.

Now it was time for the evening social event, meaning pizza, games and handbells. (Ringing handbells in the dark supplies an unusual but fun challenge.) Some of the Kent band even rung a quarter – I listened to the last couple of courses and found the ringing most agreeable. On a less serious note, Mark Regan and others ended up entombed within toilet paper. We were able to catch up with old friends and make a number of new ones.

Alas, all good things must come to an end, and the next morning we all had to go home (some of us via the infamous Pershore Abbey (8, 25-2-0 in D) - not me, note!), arriving back at Lewes almost exactly 48 hours after we left! The next RWNYC is in Exeter on 2nd July 2022, which we await with great anticipation. -



The next edition of Look To! is for December 2021.

The deadline for write ups, events and relevant material is

November 27th 2021

Send it all to news-east@scacr.org

Many thanks to everyone who contributed

