

Look To!



The Eastern District Newsletter

December 2021

Words from your editor

Ho ho ho! By the time you read this, the nights will be drawing in, wintry weather will have arrived, and the festive season will be beginning. Many people associate bells with Christmas – just think how many carols involve them – and many churches will be filled to the brim with members of the community from all walks of life. In a sense, this is the time of year when ringing is the most important. So, whether you're ringing Call Changes or Cambridge, let's make the ringing extra special.

In this issue – reports on events from the last three months, an interesting method for you to try, delicious recipes and more!

Samuel Canning

Look To Editor

Words from Marion – Your District Secretary

Thank you to everyone who has supported and helped the district restart the monthly practices. We have now held a few meetings since ringing was able to restart. We are taking a break for December and January from the Saturday practices but it would be good to see you all at the ADM in Heathfield in February.

On behalf of the committee I would like to wish you all a merry Christmas and a happy new year,

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

Angela Long - There will be a memorial service for Angela Long on Wednesday January 26th at 2.30 p.m. at St Mary's church, Westham. Open Ringing from 1.30 p.m.

ADM Heathfield – 2.30 p.m. ringing, 4.00 p.m. tea. Names for tea to Marion marionbells@btinternet.com

ART Courses

At Hellingly we are running a recruitment campaign to get new ringers as we have lost a few people for a range of reasons over the past couple of years.

I am part of the recruitment team, and really there is only one person sufficiently skilled and confident in our Tower to teach total beginners and I would like to go on a course to gain the confidence to teach as well. I have a background in teaching so feel sort of qualified to do that...

It seems unfair to put all the responsibility onto one person - you might know him, Bill Lovell.

The Hellingly ropes are particularly challenging as they have a very long drop without any guides so it can be quite scary with absolute beginners.

I have had a look at the ART website and I note that there is now a different method of teaching learners compared with how I was taught. I have had a look at YouTube clips etc. and I think this might be the way forward at our Tower.

I approached the ART and expressed an interest in attending a course but nothing is scheduled for this area, so as an alternative I am thinking about hosting an ART course at Hellingly and would like to advertise for course participants or for people who could be interested. I have asked for some dates from ART when a teacher could be available.

So really, I am letting you know as you might know of people who could be interested and also to keep communication going.

If anyone is interested in participating as a potential teacher, or as a learner, please contact Nick Cant. nickcantbells@outlook.com

Alfriston Meeting

You may remember the 26th of September as the height of the Great Fuel Crisis of '21, but for some of us, it also meant the opportunity for some exciting ringing at St Andrew's Alfriston (6, 8-0-2 in A). Unusually the bells are rung from the chancel crossing in the middle of the church, a feature fewer than 30 towers have around the country. They are easy going and enjoyable.

Along with the opportunity to ring a variety of things from rounds and Call Changes to Grandsire Doubles and London Surprise Minor, it was the first time many of us came out to ring at another tower, following lockdown. Some of us took the opportunity to buy some Christmas cards and decorations – never too early – from the church and enjoyed some of Andy's delicious bread pudding.

We had a brilliant morning and would like to thank the Alfriston ringers for their hospitality.

Below: Alfriston, St Andrew.



Represent the ringers in your district and become a member of the Central Council of Church Bellringers

It used to be the case that to get involved in anything at Central Council level in the world of bellringing one had to be a rep, which makes you a member of the CCCBR. This is why I took on the role of the Eastern Rep some three years ago, at one of the Eastern District's well-attended ADM's (possibly in Hastings, great ringing, great company, excellent tea, you know the drill...)

When I started ringing some 12 years ago, I didn't find it that easy to see how everything fitted together - the towers, districts, our own SCACR association, Central Council etc. I asked lots of questions and probably got on a lot of nerves but started building up a better picture. You can subscribe to your own and any other emailed District newsletter, you can set up a direct debit for the quarterly Association magazine Soundbow (or buy a copy if you go to a monthly district ringing gathering - it's not online) and we have a great website <https://www.scacr.org/> too. There are lots of ringers across the county and association who organise ringing gatherings, workshops and social events too but we're part of something much bigger, and if you're new to bellringing that symbiotic relationship is not obvious.

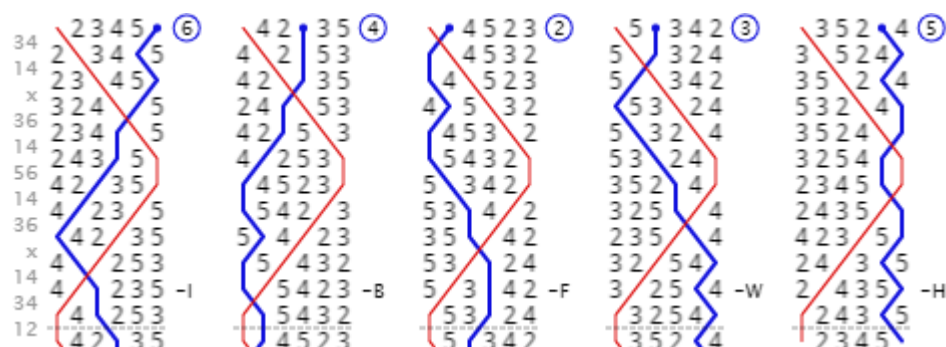
If you volunteer to help with any roles for the Sussex County Association of Change Ringers you can claim expenses; we're a charity but you and I also have to make ends meet and put food on the table. The annual cost to be a member of the association is miniscule compared to membership for many other activities you might enjoy, and part of your subscription funds volunteer expenses, including travel for our Central Council Reps to attend the CC AGM. In return the CC Reps report back to their District 'constituents' via newsletters and emails to SCACR members will seek to know and represent their views. CC Reps are also on the SCACR General Committee, who meet (currently virtually as it happens due to you-know-what) every few months, you can see who they are here: <https://www.scacr.org/about-us/committees-teams/general-committee>

Alison Everett

CC Rep for the Eastern District

"What shall we ring?" "I don't mind!"

Quite probably we've all had a conversation like this at practice night at one point, and this happened at Hailsham a few weeks ago. However, I wouldn't imagine you thought, "Let's ring a method called 'I Don't Mind' next," but that's just what we decided to do! The blue line is below.



Above: The blue line for I Don't Mind Bob Minor.

At first glance it can appear rather daunting but take a closer look and you may see some similarities to other methods. Firstly, the backwork is identical to Double Oxford (and the place bell order is the same), and secondly, Stedman

whole turns occur either side of making seconds at the lead end. If you've rung London Surprise Minor, the fourths and point leads will feel familiar too.

Probably the most difficult thing about the method is the three blows in fourths; few methods regularly rung have three blows in one place. It can feel very unnatural, so count all your places.

Bobs and singles are the same as Plain Bob, but they feel very different, not least because you'll end up doing six blows in one place when you make the bob. What happens on the front at a bob is like a Reverse Canterbury bob, and what happens on the front at a single is like those in Grandsire.

To conclude, this is an unusual method for sure, but it's rather fun and can spice up a practice night!

A Family First Weekend

Across the weekend of the 6th and 7th of November, the Canning family had two major firsts. I rung my first peal on the Saturday, and my father his first quarter peal on Sunday.

Samuel Writes: The peal was 5040 Grandsire Triples in 2h47m – A J Corrigan's six-part, conducted by Alan Pink. Many non-ringers have asked me how I managed to move my arms for so long – but my legs ached more to be frank, for the rest of the day. The ringing was enjoyable, however – Grandsire Triples is in that sweet spot where it isn't so taxing, but it's musical and challenging enough to avoid boredom.

At the end of the peal, while having a band photo taken by a bemused passer-by, Cllr Paul Holbrook, the mayor of Hailsham, came over on the way to one of his civic duties and congratulated us.



Above left: Samuel Canning with Cllr Paul Holbrook, Mayor of Hailsham.

Above right: The band in ringing order, clockwise from front right.

John Writes: I rang my first quarter peal at St Mary and Virgin, Hailsham on 7 November 2021. I covered on the tenor for three methods (Bob Doubles, Grandsire and Reverse Canterbury). It was just one day after my son Samuel scored his first peal (we started together, but he has made much better progress than me!) so it was a big ringing weekend in the Canning household. Many thanks to Alan Baldock (conductor) Elizabeth, Samuel, Hilary and Sandra for making it all happen.

Both performances can be found on Bellboard here:

[Ringing World BellBoard](#) - Peal

[Ringing World BellBoard](#) - Quarter peal

October Saturday Meeting

Following the successful ringing meetings at the Forewood Ring at Crowhurst and the September meeting in Alfriston, in October the district met at Peasmarsh, a 9 cwt ground floor ring of six. The practice started just after a wedding was concluded. It was good to see ringers from a good number of Eastern District towers; in fact, there were ringers from 9 different towers.

Frances Bradford efficiently organised the ringing to accommodate the needs for those present. We rang rounds and call changes, together with some Plain

Bob and Grandsire, a little bit of minor and also some surprise minor with Cambridge.

It was good that some ringers were able to practice with an experienced band around them, something that some were unable to do at their own tower. This concentration of ringers with a mix of experience is one of the strengths and benefits of these District meets.

We were lucky with the lovely late autumn afternoon weather and would like to thank Peasmarsch for allowing us to ring there.



Above: SS Peter and Paul, Peasmarsch.

Eastern District Committee

We are looking for new people to join the committee, to help and to bring forward new ideas.

It would be good to find someone who would like to plan and arrange the programme for the forthcoming year. Help is also needed to arrange and run midweek . Please consider what you can do to help our District move forward during the next few years.

The more people we can have to help the more we can share the workload for the district.

Two Festive Recipes

All Butter Mincemeat

Ingredients:

250g currants

250g raisins

250g sultanas

100g mixed peel

1 cooking apple, peeled, cored and finely chopped

125g butter, cut into cubes

50g whole blanched almonds, roughly chopped

225g light muscovado sugar

1/2 tsp ground cinnamon

1 tsp mixed spice

Finely grated rind and juice of 1 lemon

200ml brandy, rum or sherry

Method:

Makes 4 x 370g jars.

Measure all of the ingredients except the alcohol into a large pan. Heat gently, allowing the butter to melt, then simmer very gently, stirring occasionally, for about 10 minutes.

Allow the mixture to cool completely then stir in the brandy.

Spoon the mincemeat into sterilised jam jars, seal tightly, label and store in a cool place.

Tips: Use clean sterilised screw-top jars saved from bought marmalade or jam.

The mincemeat can be made up to six months ahead and stored in a cool place.

There's no need to freeze mincemeat unless frozen as mince pies.

Christmas Crumble

Ingredients:

8 tablespoons mincemeat

Tin of Peach Slices

4oz Flour

2oz Butter

2oz Caster Sugar (Golden caster)

2oz Ground Almonds

Method:

Spoon the peach slices into a dish with a little of the juice and cover with the mincemeat.

Make the crumble by rubbing the butter into the flour and stir in the sugar and almonds. Sprinkle evenly over the mincemeat and bake for 25 minutes at 180C.

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
-



his daughter

Alan was born on February 3rd, 1940, at Plymouth and learned to ring tower bells at St. Andrew's Minster as a teenager. He attended Birmingham University graduating in applied chemistry and was awarded a PhD for his work on the effects of particulates on the lungs, ultimately becoming well known in the field of toxicology.

In 1962 he married his childhood sweetheart, Mary Congdon at St. Andrew's Plymouth. They went on to have three daughters, Elizabeth, Alison, and Helen, all of whom were introduced to tower bell ringing at an early age.

In his 20's Alan was given a set of twelve bells that he used to encourage other ringers to play simple carols and tunes around the streets to raise funds for the Church of England Children's society, sharing mince pies made by Mary. When living in Edinburgh he even managed to get his work colleagues to perform at the Assembly rooms dressed as angels, complete with coat hanger halos (surely a tribute to his leadership skills).

Alan was not a prolific peal ringer, ringing 21 peals and conducting 2 but he was a prolific quarter peal ringer, ringing a great many on his mini ring at Dewbys Bells. Living at Edinburgh, Bedfordshire, Surrey, and Sussex, plus his

time at Birmingham university. He was an enthusiastic church member and ringer wherever he found himself,

Alan's term as chairman of HRGB South East Region saw great development and his leadership and organising skills became evident. Under his leadership the South East Region blossomed. It was Alan that found Guildford Cathedral as the venue for the region's annual festival, where it has remained for many years.

His old set of twelve bells needed attention and was restored by a friend. Having seen larger teams at rallies, he set about getting a five-octave set for his team, ultimately building his ringers into a group of some renown, taking part in international symposiums and touring in the Caribbean, Canada, and USA. and performing on BBC Television at many high-profile concerts to critical acclaim.

On retirement to Sussex Alan formed the Senlac Handbell Ringers, quickly achieving a creditably high standard of performance, this group of loyal and talented people enjoyed Alan's leadership and music making, whilst raising money for charities.

Alan had been encouraged to try Handbell Restoration, and after retiring to Sussex also he developed this skill into a successful small business, 'Handbell Solutions'. Another retirement adventure was the development of his own mini ring, 'Dewbys Bells' to a unique and readily portable design, fulfilling a long-held ambition. Hundreds of quarter peals were rung on his bells, consistently becoming among the leading quarter peal towers. Ringers at Dewbys could always expect a cup of tea and a slice of Mary's wonderful cake. Throughout all his many projects and activities, he was aided in so many ways by Mary; she was his constant support, providing a warm welcome and great hospitality in her own quiet, kind and often almost invisible way. Alan was planning an HRGB rally to be held locally but sadly, this was not to be.

He died on 26th November following health complications initiated by a fall that broke his femur.

Alan and Mary, (the double act) will be sadly missed from both Handbell and Tower-bell ringing. We will all miss Alan, the gentle, kind man, generous to a fault, a quiet and unassuming leader who, with Mary, has done so much to further our enjoyment of ringing.



The next edition of Look To! is for March 2022.

The deadline for write ups, events and relevant material is 26th
February 2022

Send it all to news-east@scacr.org

Many thanks to everyone who contributed

