



Society of Royal Cumberland Youths Newsletter 2019



From the Master



It is my pleasure to introduce the newsletter for 2019. This has, once again, been produced and edited by John Ford and Penelope Sharpe, and I'm sure you'll join me in thanking them for their hard work.

It's great to be able look back at the Society's activities throughout the course of the year. Beginning in February, "Not the Dinner Day", with its tried and tested formula of peals and a curry, remains a popular fixture. We look forward to our imminent return to the Bangalore Express City.

Another highlight was the Summer Country Meeting, based in Beverley. Local members John Atkinson and James Blackburn worked tirelessly to ensure the event was a resounding success. It was also a privilege to sample the recently augmented bells at St Mary's, which now form a superb ring of twelve.

A couple of fixtures – the March Country Meeting and the Informal Dinner – attracted a smaller crowd but were nevertheless enjoyed by those who came. A proposal at the AGM resulted in the March meeting being dropped from the programme for 2020. The officers will continue to review the calendar and consider alternative ideas.

I was delighted that the SRCY team won the recent London 12-bell competition for the third year in a row. As with some of the other events, a fuller report can be viewed on the website.

Attendance at the Society's Wednesday night practices in London has increased in recent months and, in addition to the course-end treats provided by Stedman, a good variety of Maximus methods are practised on a regular basis.

Please do put the dates for 2020 in your diaries, and I look forward to welcoming you to a practice or event in the near future.

Benjamin Constant

SRCY Officers 2019-20



**Master
Benjamin Constant**



**Senior Steward
Shirley McGill**



**Junior Steward
Michael Crockett**



**Hon Secretary
David Bath**



**Assistant Secretary
Elizabeth Hibbert**



**Hon Treasurer
Claire Roulstone**



**Librarian
Jo Dorling**

2018-19 Officers: Master, Benjamin Constant; Senior Steward, Shirley McGill; Junior Steward, Michael Crockett, Hon Secretary, David Bath; Assistant Secretary, Tim Forster; Hon Treasurer, Claire Roulstone; Librarian, Geraldine Forster

Not the Dinner Day

2 February 2019

What better way to get over the January blues than joining friends from the Society for a day of peal ringing, finished off with a delicious curry?



All five peal attempts were successful and a total of 34 members took part in the days ringing, 14 of whom rang two peals in the day. In addition to regular towers booked for Society events, the Senior Steward managed to secure some rarer towers this year in Battersea and South Hackney and participants were grateful to score peals at new venues. Methods rung varied from single Surprise Major and Royal to Stedman Caters and Horton's 4 Spliced Surprise Major.

After the day's ringing we returned to the Bangalore Express City in the heart of the City for the fourth year running. 42 members sat down to enjoy fantastic Indian cuisine and discounted drinks. A wonderful evening was enjoyed by all who attended and the event was a great success thanks to the team of organising officers and the hospitality of the restaurant staff.

Timothy Forster

March Country Meeting

9 March 2019 - Redhill

On Saturday 9th March the Society ventured just south of the Surrey Hills for a day of ringing, business and socialising. In the morning, peals were scored at Dorking and Ranmore. Meanwhile, the rest of us went on tour, starting at Reigate (10 bells, described by the local as 'very available'...) before moving on to the pleasant light eight at Betchworth (of Four Weddings and a Funeral fame), followed by the six at Leigh, where the bells are rung standing on pews in the organ gallery. Despite this unique set-up, we rang some of the more obscure surprise minor methods from the standard 41.



Post-lunch ringing took place on the fine ten at Bletchingley before we moved on to Redhill for the main event.

The business meeting and meal were held in the shiny new parish centre right next to Redhill church. Pre-meeting teas and coffees were served, and I spent far too long trying to decide which one of the multitude of delicious-looking cakes I wanted most of all.

During the business meeting we remembered six members who had recently passed away, and elected one new member, Chris Mansfield. We also congratulated Andrew Davey, Adam Greenley, and the Master, Ben Constant, on their respective 1000th peals.



As the meeting was remarkably speedy and uncontentious, this left plenty of time for consuming beverages and catching up with friends before dinner. The food was huge dishes of lasagne, which, as I discovered, are not that easy to divide more-or-less equally among eight people. Sorry to anyone at my table who felt short-changed! Dessert was lemon posset or chocolate brownie, which I also made a hash of serving, but at least this time only to myself! The day was rounded off with after-dinner drinks and mingling. Many thanks go to Shirley McGill for co-ordinating the day and to Anne Rueff and her team of caterers and helpers for a very enjoyable meal.

Heather Forster

From your Librarian:

This year, copies of the Society's newsletter for 2017-2018, a copy of "Towers and Bells of Britain" (kindly donated by Maria Stanley, a member from Bristol) and DVDs of The Ringing World from 1970 to 2017 have been added to the Library. There is a full catalogue on the website at <https://srcy.org.uk/history/library.php>.

If anyone wishes to borrow an item please email me your request at librarian@srcy.org.uk.

Jo Dorling

Congratulations

6,000th peal - Alan Regin

5,000th peal - Paul Curtis

3,000th peal - Ian Butters

2,000th peal and 1000th peal as conductor - Emma Southerington

2000th peal - Paul Cammiade

1,000th peal - Derek Tysoe

1,000th peal - Andrew Davey

1,000th peal - Benjamin Constant

1,000th peal - Adam Greenley

1,000th peal for SRCY - John Loveless

Ringing a peal on his 90th birthday - Jeff Cooper

Bristol Maximus Celebration

On Saturday 31 May 1969, 24 members of the Society rang two simultaneous peals of Bristol Surprise Maximus, one at St Martin-in-the-Fields conducted by the Master, Dennis Beresford, and one at Shoreditch conducted by the Secretary, Derek Sibson. These peals were the second and third of Bristol Maximus by the Society, and only the sixth and seventh peals ever rung in the method. The first peal of Bristol Maximus by the Society had been rung just 5 months previously.

Nowadays we don't think of Bristol Max as being at the "cutting edge" of 12 bell ringing, but in the 1960s it was, especially so outside of Leicester and Birmingham. So, it was decided that SRCY would commemorate the 50th anniversary of the twin performances with a number of peal attempts in the method. Eight attempts were arranged, in London and across the country, all of which were successful:

Shoreditch, London, E.

On Saturday, December 28th, 1968, in 5 Hours and 54 Minutes

At the Church of St. Leonard

A Peal of 5280

Bristol Surprise Maximus

Tenor 28 cut. Lqr. 14 lb in C

Peter Beresford	1	John R. Pratchett	7
Susan E. Smith	2	Edward F. P. Bryant	8
Jane Foster	3	John S. Barnes	9
Joan Beresford	4	Derek E. Sibson	10
Christopher P. Starbuck	5	James A. D. Woolford	11
Peter M. Wilkinson	6	Dennis Beresford	12

Conducted by

Dennis Beresford

* First peal of Maximus

First peal of Bristol Surprise Maximus by all the hand and for the Society

London

On Saturday, May 31st, 1968

Two Peals of 5280

Bristol Surprise Maximus

St. Martin-in-the-Fields

In 5 hours and 32 Minutes

Tenor 30 cut. Lqr. 20 lb in D⁺

St. Leonard, Shoreditch

In 5 hours and 27 minutes

Tenor 28 cut. Lqr. 14 lb in C

Angela M. Wright	1	M. Louise Slater	7
Jane Foster	2	Adrienne Gibson	8
Joan Beresford	3	Susan E. Smith	9
Sheila M. Dobbie	4	S. Kathleen M. Baldwin	10
John R. Pratchett	5	Simon Humphrey	11
Peter M. Wilkinson	6	Michael H. D. O'Callaghan	12
Edwin A. Barnett	7	Christopher P. Starbuck	13
Kenneth Newman	8	Edward F. P. Bryant	14
John S. Barnes	9	Roger Baldwin	15
Howard W. Egglestone	10	Derek E. Sibson	16
James A. D. Woolford	11	Thomas H. Francis	17
Dennis Beresford	12	Stanley Jenner	18

Conducted by

Dennis Beresford

* First peal of Bristol Surprise Maximus

Conducted by

Derek E. Sibson

- | | | | |
|-------------|------------------------|------|--------------------------------|
| 31 May 2019 | Birmingham (handbells) | 5088 | conducted by Jack Page |
| 1 June 2019 | Bristol (St Stephen) | 5040 | conducted by Anthony Cox |
| 1 June 2019 | London (St Magnus) | 5042 | conducted by Jack Edwards |
| 1 June 2019 | London (St Sepulchre) | 5136 | conducted by Benjamin Constant |
| 1 June 2019 | Leicester Cathedral | 5186 | conducted by Richard Angrave |
| 1 June 2019 | Shoreditch | 5050 | conducted by Ian Roulstone |
| 1 June 2019 | South Petherton | 5040 | conducted by David Warwick |
| 1 June 2019 | Stockton-on-Tees | 5136 | conducted by Matthew Durham |

This was the most peals of Bristol Maximus ever rung on the same day. Simon Humphrey rang his 50th of Bristol Surprise Maximus on the 50th anniversary of his first. The peal at South Petherton included David Warwick and his daughter Lucy, the grandson and great-granddaughter of Shirley Burton, who rang in the first peal of Bristol Max at Leicester Cathedral on 22 May 1950. The 87 members involved ranged from Stan Jenner, with 60 years of membership, to Chris Mansfield, who was elected in March, and ringing his first peal in the method and for the Society.

Adam Greenley

National 12 Bell Contest

Our 2019 eliminator was at Leeds Minster where we came second behind Cambridge with 75%. The final at Exeter Cathedral on 22 June was won by the home team with 85%. We scored a modest 66%, and were placed eighth.



The 2019 SRCY National 12 bell band, clockwise from front right:

*Shirley McGill
Michael Crockett
David Bath
Geraldine Forster
Mary Holden
Ian Mills, Steve Bailey
Doug Beaumont
Benjamin Constant
Adam Greenley
Alan Regin
Tom Mack*

Ian Mills, a member of the 2019 band, provides some further details on Hawkear, its development and use as part of the National 12 Bell Contest in his article on page 21.

July Country Meeting

13 July 2019 - Beverley

This year's July Country weekend was based in Beverley, in the East Riding of Yorkshire with the meeting held on Saturday 13th July. It was an ideal location for the event with a plethora of good bells in the surrounding area and a lovely town centre, dominated by Beverley Minster.



As usual the weekend started early with peal attempts on the Thursday and Friday, meaning some less insane members travelled up (or down) on the Wednesday. Never ones to back down from a challenge, we departed at 05:30 on the Thursday to drive the 200 miles to Escrick for a 10:00 meet. However, the distance seemed to have little effect on the ringing and all five peal attempts on the Thursday were scored.

Friday also involved another early start, this time an 08:30 meet at St Wilfrid, York. All of us then dashed to Selby for a peal of Avon. A very relaxing day! Peals were also scored at Elloughton, Hessle, Kirk Ella and Pocklington. We all congregated in the evening at The Tiger Inn for many, many pints of lemonade although all the grown ups seemed to prefer the ample selection of beer on offer!

The four peal attempts on the Saturday morning all had different start times; I was very pleased to be in the 12:30 start at Barrow upon Humber as I could have a nice lie-in after two early starts. My plans were thwarted by being dragged along to the inaugural Parkrun at Beverley, Westwood. It was definitely worth it for the extremely large full English breakfast afterwards, but I think I'll stick with bell ringing!

Whilst we were venturing over the fantastic Humber Bridge to collect my third new county of the weekend, the general ringing tour went to St Mary's Lowgate, Hull, Hull Minster, the newly augmented twelve at St Mary's, Beverley and finished at Beverley Minster.

The meeting was held in St Mary's Beverley and was preceded by refreshments including very tasty cakes. The meeting was relatively swift as we remembered David J R Martin who had recently passed away and elected one new member, P Barry Jones.



The especially keen stopped off for a drink on the way to Beverley Masonic Lodge which was the venue for the evening social. It comprised of a delicious “pie and pea supper” with gallons of gravy and lemon cheesecake (not together!) followed by a quiz which concluded a thoroughly enjoyable weekend. I diligently returned to the accommodation but many continued late into the evening, enjoying the wild nightlife that Beverley has to offer.

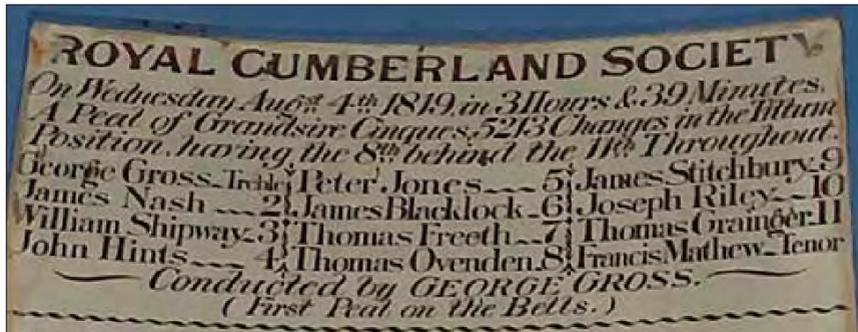
Many thanks go to the Master, Ben Constant, for co-ordinating the weekend and to James Blackburn and John Atkinson for organising the towers and the Saturday social, to Neville Pailing for hosting the challenging quiz for us and to David Wilson for the splendid array of cakes he provided before the meeting.



Daniel Page

Quex Park Revisited

On 4 August 1819, the newly erected Waterloo Tower at Quex Park, Kent, was ceremonially opened with a peal of 5213 Grandsire Cinques, rung by the Cumberlands, and conducted by George Gross.



The Waterloo Tower was built in the grounds of Quex Park by John Powell Powell to house a ring of 12 bells (15cwt) cast by the Whitechapel Bell Foundry.

In the words of the Cumberlands' Peal Book "the like is not to be found in the three Kingdoms of a private Gentleman erecting a Steeple having a peal of 12 Bells for his own amusement nor likewise a peal of 12 of that light weight...". The tower is 66ft high with a distinctive white cast-iron spire on top rising another 65ft.





On Sunday 4 August 2019 a Cumberland band celebrated the bicentenary of the opening ceremony with a peal of 5200 Stedman Cinques, conducted by the Master, Benjamin Constant.

The band (clockwise from front right): Michael Crockett, Paul Cammiade, Shirley McGill, David Bath, Anne Rueff, Benjamin Constant, Daniel Jarvis, Stephen Beckingham, Alan Regin, Stanley Jenner, Thomas Mack, Adam Greenley

Membership News

Welcome to the following new members, elected during 2019:

9 March - Christopher M Mansfield

1 May - Daniel R Jarvis, James L Yeoman

13 July - P Barry Jones

5 October- Clare M Merivale, Josh L Harris

Sadly we report the deaths of:

Rhian N Bagshaw ◦ Frank J Matthews ◦ Mary Bartholomew

Jacqueline S King ◦ Alan H Sturgess ◦ Peter J Eves ◦ James M Page

Rev John R Worsdall ◦ Anthony H G Parry ◦ David J R Martin

John S Barnes

Society peals in history

Society Peals 250 Years Ago, 1770

8/1/1770	St Mary Rotherhithe	5152 Plain Bob Major	Samuel Wood
27/1/1770	St Leonard Shoreditch	5040 New Double Grandsire Caters	Samuel Wood
10/12/1770	St Magnus the Martyr	5165 Real Double Cumberland Caters	George Gross

Society Peals 200 Years Ago, 1820

9/1/1820	St Matthew Bethnal Green	5120 Oxford TB Major	George Gross
13/6/1820	St John Southwark	5080 Oxford Treble Bob Royal	George Gross
24/9/1820	Kingston, Surrey	5080 Oxford Treble Bob Royal	George Gross
25/11/1820	St Leonard Shoreditch	5120 Oxford Treble Bob Royal	George Gross
26/12/1820	St Olave, Southwark	5040 Grandsire Triples	Joseph Sadley

Society Peals 100 Years Ago, 1920

3/1/1920	St Leonard Shoreditch	5019 Stedman Cinques	John D Matthews
27/3/1920	St Anne Highgate	5024 Kent Treble Bob Major	Frank Smith
8/5/1920	St Mary Rotherhithe	5088 Kent Treble Bob Major	Edgar Wightman
15/5/1920	Southwark Cathedral	5016 Plain Bob Maximus	John D Matthews
8/11/1920	Surfleet, in a cornfield	5040 Grandsire Triples (handbells)	Alfred H Pulling
30/10/1920	St Anne Highgate	5056 Plain Bob Major	Frank Smith
5/11/1920	Hendon, 2 Bell View Terrace	5056 Plain Bob Major (handbells)	Charles H Martin

The date of the 27/1/1770 peal at Shoreditch is given as 30/12/1769 in the Felstead database, and 21/1/1770 in the SRCY Peal Book, but both dates are incorrect. The peal is actually reported in the *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* of Wednesday, 31 January 1770 as having been rung “on Saturday last” which would make it 27/1/1770. The 1820 peals include two towers that are now lost. St John’s Southwark may be better known as Horsleydown. The bells and much of the church were destroyed by enemy action in 1940; just 19 peals were rung on these bells including the first ever peal of Stedman Caters on 28 May 1787. St Olave Southwark, which was mentioned in the Domesday book and rebuilt in 1740, had a ring of 8 with a tenor circa 21cwt; the bells were destroyed by fire in 1843, just 14 peals are known to have been rung there. The church was partly demolished in 1926 with the tower being removed in 1928. 1920 saw seven peals rung and included a peal of Plain Bob Maximus at Southwark Cathedral, the tenor being rung by Walter Ayre in 4hrs 12mins. Just 5 had been rung in 1919 as ringing recovered from the Great War.

Alan Regin

Peals Summary 2018-2019

Between 1 August 2018 and 31 July 2019 168 peals were rung for the Society, 145 tower bell peals and 23 handbell peals. 10 of the peals were rung in Ireland, one was rung in Scotland and one in Wales. The remaining peals were rung in England.

243 members took part in peals. The most popular method was Bristol Surprise Maximus.

Leading Towers

Shoreditch	10 peals
Basingstoke All SS	8 peals
St Magnus the Martyr	4 peals

Leading Conductors

Tower Peals:

Jack Page	29
Benjamin Constant	17
David Warwick	15
Richard Hobbs	8
Ian Fielding	6
Ian Roulstone	6
Matthew Durham	6

Handbell Peals:

Roger Baldwin	18
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Leading Ringers

Benjamin Constant	51
Adam Greenley	47
Alan Regin	44
David Bath	41
Jack Page	39
Daniel Page	38
Claire Roulstone	37
Shirley McGill	36

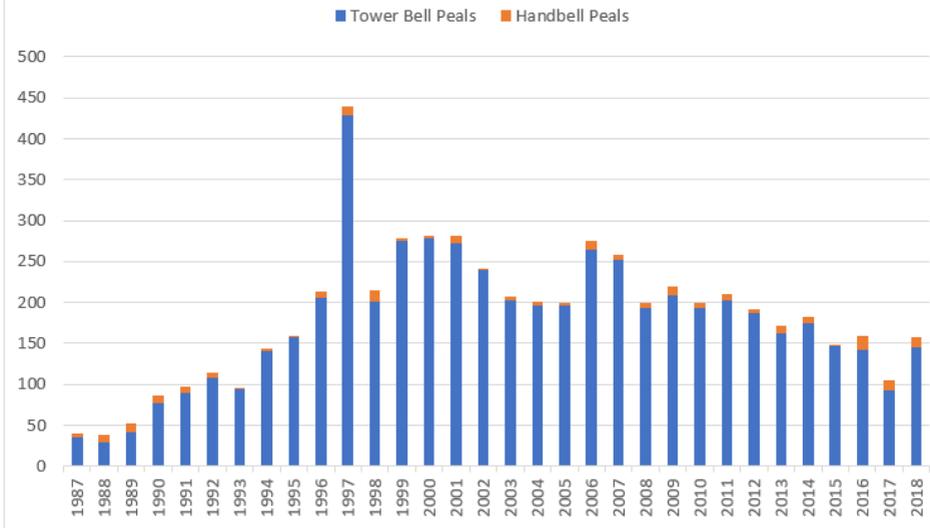
Geographical Spread

Greater London	29
Hampshire	20
Hertfordshire	20
Yorkshire	14
Northern Ireland	10
Surrey	8
West Midlands	7
Somerset	6
Other	54

Methods

Doubles	1
Minor	25
Triples	2
Major	72
Caters	6
Royal	27
Cinques	2
Maximus	30
Cinques/Maximus	3

SRCY peals per calendar year



Around the Towers

Stockton on Tees

SRCY's Northern practices have continued most months at Stockton Parish Church, but we continue to have problems in getting the numbers, so one practice was cancelled and we rang a quarter peal of Cambridge Royal at another. Attendance has varied between 11 at the fewest and 20 at the most. This is not due to lack of enthusiasm, but is more a symptom of modern life, with people often having to travel or have meetings late into the evening as part of their employment. Another reason has been the addition of young children for some of the band (a good omen for the future perhaps) and the fact that some of the ringers are students and the terms at Durham Cathedral are quite short.



The usual method repertoire is Cambridge, Yorkshire, Bristol, Phobos and Stedman with Zanussi having been added in recently. There is a definite improvement both in method capability and in performance, especially from some of our less experienced ringers.

We haven't found time to arrange any quarter peals this year and we didn't enter the national 12 bell competition. However, our plans for the year ahead are to organise quarter peals to supplement the practices and to give an opportunity for more sustained ringing.

Jennie Town

St Martin in the Fields

St Martin's has seen a fair number of changes this year. At the band's AGM in February the Secretary and Treasurer both stood down after several years of hard work, for which we are most grateful. Several members have also left us, having moved or joined other towers.

One new member who joined at the AGM immediately stepped into the role of Treasurer, and during the year we have attracted several new regular service ringers. Overall, numbers have improved and we usually ring at least eight bells for morning service.

Regular Monday practices ceased last year; however we have been able to grow our method repertoire, whilst maintaining a focus on good striking. We regularly ring Bristol, Cambridge and Superlative S. Major, Cambridge S. Royal, Stedman and Grandsire Caters for Sunday services. We hope to arrange occasional focussed practices in the New Year to expand our method capabilities. Notable performances this year have included quarter peals of Stedman Caters and Bristol S. Major for the outgoing and incoming associate vicars, and a quarter peal of Bristol S. Maximus, a first for the band's Vice Captain.

In November we descended on Guildford for our first tower outing in several years. We rang at five towers, the highlight being a touch of Stedman Cinques at Guildford Cathedral. We also enjoyed a pub lunch in Shalford. The Secretary set a high standard of organisation and we have received offers to visit both Kent and Devon next year.

There have been challenges. The Secretary has undergone heart surgery, and another long-standing member of the band has been diagnosed with cancer and has also needed heart surgery. We were all saddened by the loss of John Barnes, a dedicated service ringer at St Martin's for many years. John continued to attend service ringing long into his illness and he will be greatly missed by all. We rang a half muffled quarter peal of Plain Bob Maximus in John's honour shortly after he died and plan to ring a peal in the New Year.

We will be ringing for the Victims of Homicide memorial service in December, and a number of Christmas services, several of which will have quarter peal attempts arranged.

We are always pleased to see SRCY members at Sunday service ringing and look forward to welcoming more in the forthcoming year. *Tim Forster, Captain*



St Leonard Shoreditch

So far in 2019 there have been 8 peals and two quarter peals at Shoreditch. These included the 1000th peal by the Society at the tower, a peal of spliced Maximus on 14 April.

The Society holds its weekly London practice once a month at Shoreditch. The bells are readily available for quarter peals, peals, outings etc; there is an online booking form and calendar on the SRCY website (<https://srcy.org.uk/towers/shoreditch.php>).

Many thanks to Richard Hobbs for looking after the bells and fulfilling the role of tower secretary.



Christ Church Spitalfields

We have maintained the regular Sunday service ringing on the first Sunday of each month, which is only possible with the regular support we get from a dedicated group of ringers, many travelling a long distance to help with this. If you would like to help with service ringing at Christ Church please contact Alan Regin.

2018 saw 1 further peal since the last report, 11 in total for the year. 2019 has seen 12 peals and 1 quarter peal to date, along with 4 outing bands, 4 weddings for which the bells were rung and 1 Society practice which also celebrated the centenary of the dedication of the bells. Members may know that the bells were cast in early 1919 for St Stephens Clapham Park and opened on 7 June 1919. We have been pleased to host the ringers from St John at Hackney on two occasions during 2019 – they were not able to ring in their own tower due to the major restoration work going on in the church there.

Christ Church Spitalfields was very pleased to host the Society AGM on 5 October 2019.

Once again we thank the Rector, the Rev. Andy Rider, and his wife Carol for their support and friendship during the year. I would also like to thank Edwin Pillans, the premises manager, who co-ordinates the bookings for this busy church.

Alan Regin – Steeplekeeper at Christ Church



Anniversaries of membership

70 years

Elected 1949: Audrey Allaway ◦ Beryl Reed ◦ Patricia Cross
Stella Knight ◦ Trevor Cross

60 years

Elected 1959: Stanley Jenner ◦ Mark Lewis ◦ Derek Wilkinson
Ian Zass Ogilvie ◦ John Allen ◦ Chad Coussmaker ◦ Ivy Senior
Clive Smith ◦ Andrew Strathdee ◦ Michael Fairey ◦ David Leach
Maria Stanley ◦ Reginald Stretton

50 years

Elected 1969: Frank Blagrove ◦ Kenneth Darvill ◦ Frances Dodds
Maureen Hanney ◦ Jean Nixon ◦ Lucy Smith ◦ Jeremy Cheesman
Katharine Firman ◦ Susan Read ◦ Jennifer Starbuck ◦ Graham Duke
Jeanette Harris ◦ Janet House ◦ Valerie Roberts ◦ James White
David Harris ◦ Felicity Warwick

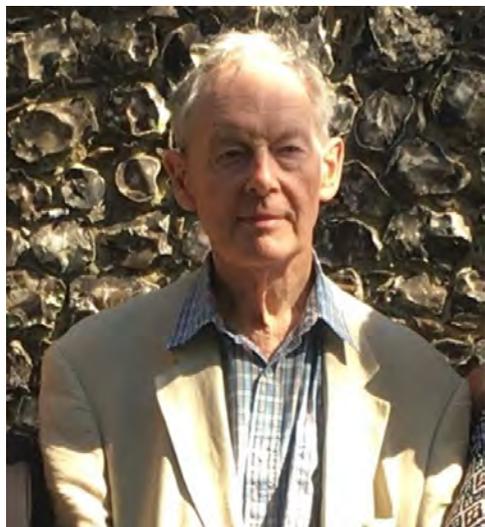
40 years

Elected 1979: Barbara Barnard ◦ Douglas Beaumont ◦ Joseph Beaumont
Rosemary Cattell ◦ Linda Garton ◦ Kevin Lucas ◦ Janet McKernan
Maureen Poole ◦ Linda Armitage ◦ Christina Sanderson ◦ Gary Audley
Barry Peachey ◦ Nigel Self ◦ Charles Sinden ◦ Rebecca Cox
Anthea Enzor ◦ Philip Gorrod ◦ Anna Piechna

25 years

Elected 1994: John Boorman ◦ Caroline Champion ◦ Conrad Warford
Julie Abbott ◦ Andrew Brown ◦ Lloyd Cartwright ◦ Gail Graves
Alison McCormack ◦ Margaret Miller ◦ Allen Nunley ◦ Gregory Watson
Lesley Belcher ◦ Catherine Colman ◦ Julian Colman ◦ Heather Frizzell
Adam Kilgour ◦ Barbara Mosedale ◦ Simon Walker ◦ Timothy Barnaby
Alan Champion ◦ Godfrey Foat ◦ Alison Holden ◦ Terri Horton
Angela Mitchell ◦ Lynne Stretton ◦ Helen Taylor ◦ Margaret Bale
Michael Bale ◦ Kenneth Ballou ◦ Anthony Cotton ◦ Ann Dorking
Roger Dorking ◦ Shirley McGill ◦ Matthew Sorell ◦ Andrew Warboys
David Bishop ◦ Karen McCleave ◦ Lucinda Woodward

John Spencer Barnes



John Barnes passed away peacefully at home on Saturday 19 October.

John learnt to ring 72 years ago at Holy Cross, Caston, Norfolk. He first rang for a service on the Sunday after Christmas, 1947, and rang his first peal, for the Norwich Diocesan Association, on 25 August 1948 at Caston. He went on to ring nearly 100 peals for the Norwich Diocesan Association, and conducted several peals of Minor for them.

In 1961 John moved to Orpington, having taken a teaching job there, and started ringing in North-West Kent and later in London. He had been elected a member of SRCY in March 1953 and 10 years later he was able to ring regularly with the Society. Dennis Beresford was Master at this time and recognised in John both a good method-ringer and an accurate striker. John was soon involved in the 10 and 12 bell ringing that was being practised. John served as Junior Steward, twice as Senior Steward, twice as Secretary and ultimately Master in 1979. He was elected as a Society Representative on the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers in 1969. More recently he was a Society Trustee for 20 years, taking special interest in the Society's Library and other assets.

For many years John co-ordinated the annual Society Peal Weekend. The 2019 Peal Weekend peals have been dedicated to his memory, in recognition of the vast amount of effort he expended to ensure each weekend's success.

Practices and peals of London Royal, Bristol Royal and Maximus, although now commonplace, were ground-breaking in the 60s and John took part in these. He rang in the first peal of Bristol Surprise Maximus for the Society (more at page 5), and many other notable peals including multi-method peals of 165 Spliced Surprise Major, 126 Royal and 110

Maximus. But John felt that the pinnacle of his peal-ringing was a peal of Orion Surprise Maximus at St Sepulchre's Holborn in September 2001.

John did not keep any record of his peals. His peal total of 507 included 268 for the Society, including peals in the United States and Australia. His leading peal tower was Shoreditch with 105 peals. A serious road accident some 20 years ago damaged his left hand, necessitating a change in his ringing style, which accounts for a reduction in peals in later years. His last peal was in 2014.

John felt strongly about ringing for Sunday services and for many years was a member of the band at St Martin-in-the-Fields and latterly supported ringing at Christ Church, Spitalfields and St John's Waterloo Road.

At the Central Council, John realised the need for a committee to help affiliated societies with bell restorations, so he proposed that a Bell Restoration Funds Committee be formed. This was agreed at the Lincoln meeting in 1975, and John became the Committee chairman and the driving force behind all its work. He arranged seminars in different locations, to which he would invite parishes with unringable bells. As enquiries from parishes grew, John relinquished the chair to become the Parish Contact. John would give advice as needed; by e-mails, long telephone calls, and frequently by travelling to the parishes for one-to-one contact or to address a local meeting. He must have given advice to over 250 parishes – a tremendous amount of work. There are many parishes up and down the country which would not have restored their bells had it not been for the support that John gave so willingly. The Central Council acknowledged this by conferring upon John the honour of Life Membership of the Council.

In 2017 the St Martin's band marked John's 70 years of ringing during the morning ringing on Sunday 14th January. John gave a brief talk about his ringing career to the congregation at the end of the service, and the band then rang a specially organised quarter peal of 1270 Spliced Maximus, followed by a lunch to celebrate his huge contribution to bellringing.

John made an unrivalled contribution to the Society, to ringing in general, and at St Martin-in-the-Fields. He will be greatly missed.

Ian Oram et al

Informal Dinner

On Saturday 14 September 2019, as can be seen below, the Society held a most enjoyable informal dinner at Browns Restaurant in Old Jewry.



The London 12 Bell Competition

On Saturday 26 October, the SRCY team and nine other London teams assembled at All Saints Kingston on Thames for the 11th Annual Competition for the Whitechapel Trophy, the first time that Kingston had been chosen for this particular battle. We were all made very welcome by the local team and clergy.

We were drawn last – 10 of 10 – absolutely the worst possible – but everyone just got on with it, spending the time socialising, shopping, eating, drinking (not too much) and generally marking time. When our turn came, we gave a very creditable rendition of Yorkshire Surprise Maximus with no method errors.

The judges, Jack Page and Anna Sherwood, were listening to a sound feed in a small, secluded room on the ground floor of the church. They did not use any electronic marking devices.

When the judges' comments had been delivered it was clear that there had been some very good ringing and the judges had been challenged to separate the top teams. We made it by a 2% margin and were very pleased to win the trophy for the third consecutive year – a great achievement.



The Master with the trophy



The 2019 SRCY London 12 bell band, clockwise from front right:

*Jo Dorling
Shirley McGill
Michael Crockett
David Bath
Mary Holden
Geraldine Forster
Timothy Forster
Ian Mills
Stephen Bailey
Adam Greenley
Benjamin Constant (C)
Thomas Mack*

Shirley McGill

Peal weekend is the third weekend in November. In 2019, 41 peals were arranged and 211 members took part. 33 peals were scored, 7 peals were lost and one that had been arranged could not go ahead because the bells became unavailable. Peter Waterfield and Russell Brown rang the most peals (5) and Jack Page and Peter Waterfield were the leading conductors (3). All the peals were dedicated to the memory of John Barnes, who acted as peal weekend co-ordinator for many years. Many thanks to Tim Forster for taking over this task. View all the successful 2019 peal weekend peals at https://srcy.org.uk/archive/reports/2019/peal_weekend.php.

FROM MICROPHONE TO FEEDBACK

*How does HawkEar work? How does it help the 12 bell competition judges?
How does it help the contestants? Ian Mills explains*

Early Days. Way back in 1997, the idea of using a computer to judge a National Twelve Bell Striking Contest was trialled at St Martin-in-the-Fields. A system using vibration sensors glued to each clapper and wired to a BBC computer was used to assess the viability of a computer program to mark the ringing. For whatever reason, the system wasn't immediately adopted, but being a permanent fixture, it was subsequently put to use by the local band on Sunday mornings, suffering much criticism from some band members, particularly when they didn't score as highly as they felt they ought to have done. Alas, the system became defunct, when the tenor clapper was replaced.

Development. Ten years later, with the advent of Digital Signal Processing and use of the Fast Fourier Transform algorithm, a breakthrough was made in the ability to determine the strike point of each bell, based on the sound, or spectral frequency signature the bell makes, rather than by sensing the vibrations from the clapper, thereby enabling a microphone to be used as an input device, which makes the system much more portable; thus HawkEar was born. At this time, helped by an exponential rise in available computer memory, a variety of

strikeometer algorithms were devised and assessed by comparing their results with those of human judges. These algorithms were initially incorporated into CAS (short for Computer Analysis of Striking), to present the analysis in a format useful to the judges and performers.

The Present Day. Subsequently, a single package termed HawkEar was produced that combines the functions of the original HawkEar, Strikeometer and CAS. This was used for the 2019 National Twelve Bell Striking Contest.

How Does it Work? The first step is to accurately determine, from a digital recording or a live feed, the precise strike time of every blow of every bell in a piece of ringing. Each strike time is rounded to the nearest 10 milliseconds. As to the accuracy of logging the strike times, there is no definitive way of checking, but we are told it very much depends on the bells. Heavier bells are generally harder to transcribe. HawkEar reports transcription difficulty and inspection of striking graphs usually shows very few anomalies. At Exeter, however, there were no rogue timings to be corrected, despite the bells being heavy.

The second step is to define the ideal time each blow should have struck. This is not an exact science, as the speed of the ringing is always changing, albeit by small amounts. That's why several algorithms were used in the development stage, to find one which best agrees with a human judge's ear. The current favoured algorithm is the Flockton model, which includes a Kalman filter. This model attempts to predict the ideal time for each blow based only on ringing that it has listened to. The trick is to ignore rogue blows, when calculating the change of speed of the ringing. Obviously, the ideal is for all the gaps between the bells to be equal, except for the handstroke leads, and for all the handstroke lead gaps to be the same. In order to determine what the size of these gaps should be, the system needs to have "listened" to some of the ringing. As there are twenty-three times as many inter-bell gaps as handstroke lead gaps, it will need to "listen" to quite a lot of ringing before it can calculate correctly what handstroke lead gap the ringers are aiming for.

Presenting the Result. The third and final step is to portray the results of the marking process in a meaningful way, both for the judges and as a way of providing subsequent feedback to the band.

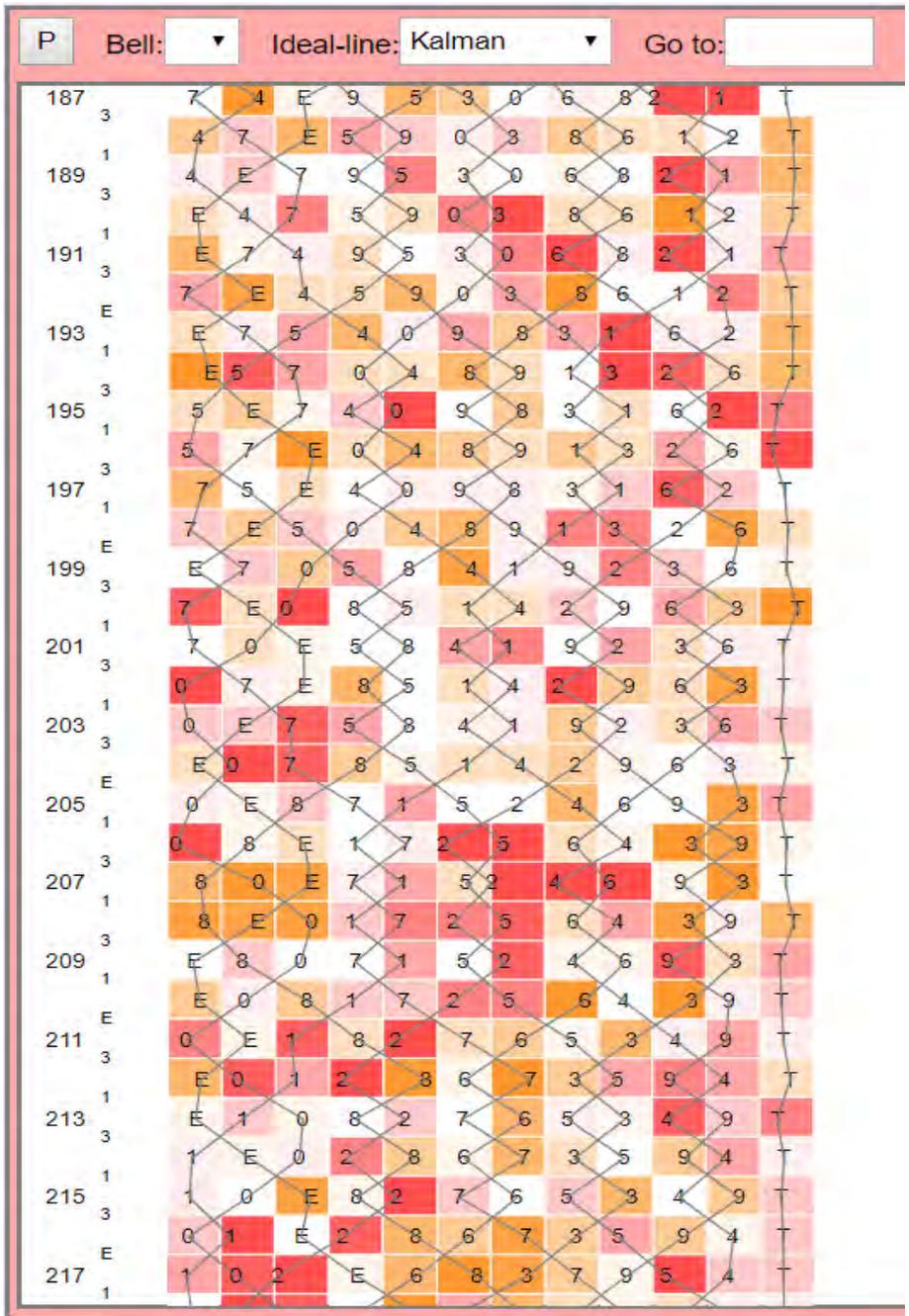


Figure 1 - Striking Explorer

This is the job of HawkEar’s graphical interface, which opens with the Striking Explorer section, where the first chart is a printout, in a recognisable grid format with bells printed in ringing order from left to right and rows printed top to bottom, except that the bell numbers are printed where they were judged to have rung, relative to where they should have rung, with corresponding backgrounds in shades of orange for slow blows, or red for quick blows, with shades of increasing intensity, proportional to the magnitude of the error (Figure 1).

A recording of the test piece is mapped to this chart and can be played back from any row. As each row is rung, the corresponding row on the chart is surrounded by a thin rectangular frame. Clicking on a row further up or down the chart causes the recording to jump instantly to that spot and it will continue to play from there. Imagine trying to do that on a magnetic reel to reel tape recorder (if you’re old enough to know what a tape recorder is)!

Alongside the main chart is a table of statistical data for all bells, such as Standard Deviation, Inter-Bell Gap, Model Handstroke Gap, Audible Handstroke Gap, Lead RMS Error, Lead Standard Deviation, Lead Average Error and Errors greater than 50ms (Figure 2).

All bells	Both	Hand	Back
Standard Deviation  	29.4ms	29.7ms	28.5ms
Standard Deviation %  	14.4%	14.5%	13.9%
Inter-Bell Gap  	204.5ms (= 3:34 Peal speed)		
Model Handstroke Gap  	399.7ms (= 1.95 * Inter-Bell Gap)		
Audible Handstroke Gap  	411.4ms		
Lead RMS Error  	32.6ms	32.4ms	32.9ms
Lead Standard Deviation  	32.6ms	30.8ms	33ms
Lead Average Error  	2.8ms	10.4ms	-4.8ms
Errors greater than 50ms  	253	135	118

Figure 2 - Statistical Data - All Bells



Figure 3 - Statistical Data - Individual Bell

Whilst in the Striking Explorer section, there is an option to select a particular bell. Doing this causes the other bells in the chart to fade into the background, and shows a second table of statistical data for the selected bell, broken down into “Both”, “Hand” and “Back” (Figure 3).

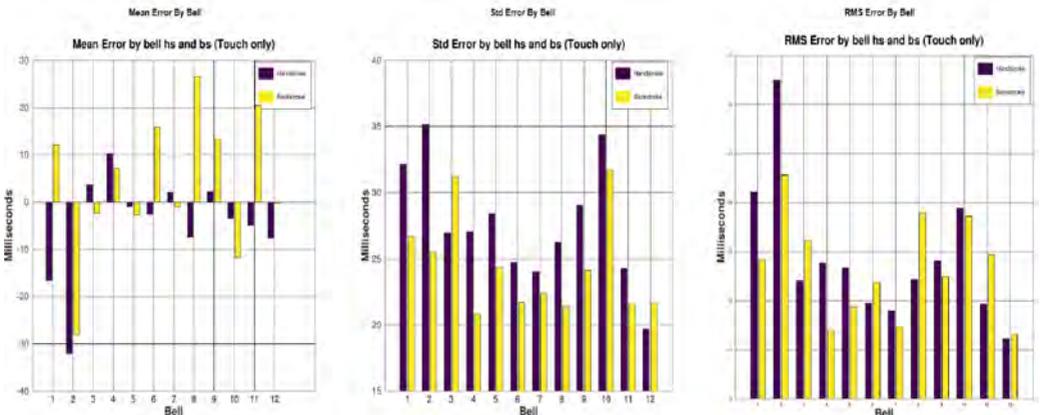


Figure 4 - Individual Bell Errors

The second section is the report to the judges. This is just a simple printout showing a few key statistics, including overall standard deviation and number of faults greater than 50ms, followed by a breakdown of the touch into 11 roughly equal sections, with peal speed and standard deviation for each section, to provide a quick overview of how the ringing changed from start to finish.

The third section shows a variety of graphs for individual bell errors, starting with three bar charts showing: Mean Error By Bell, Std Error By Bell and RMS Error By Bell (Figure 4). These charts show (for both strokes) how quick or slow the bells were, how consistent they were and how detrimental the errors were to the ringing.

After these bar charts, come two charts showing: Whole Band ringing in given position and Whole band ringing after other bell (Figure 5). These charts show the shape of the ringing and possible effects of using ropsight.

Finally, there are two blocks of four charts, which show: mean and standard errors, bell-in-position and bell-after-bell, at handstroke and backstroke (Figures 6 and 7). These charts help to identify where individual bells have problems ringing over other bells, or ringing in certain positions.

Ian Mills

Whole Band ringing in given position

	Mean		Std	
	Hs	Bs	Hs	Bs
1	10	-5	31	33
2	7	8	29	33
3	7	10	27	29
4	5	13	25	29
5	4	14	28	27
6	1	5	32	28
7	-5	5	26	32
8	-14	3	30	28
9	-17	-4	26	27
10	-26	1	24	25
11	-22	0	25	22
12	-8	0	19	22

Whole Band ringing after other bell

	Mean		Std	
	Hs	Bs	Hs	Bs
1	-4	1	25	29
2	-4	7	28	27
3	0	13	25	27
4	8	8	25	28
5	-4	8	31	26
6	2	26	27	24
7	-7	4	26	26
8	-9	-5	26	22
9	-8	9	30	26
10	-19	-8	32	29
11	-21	-8	30	27
12	10	-5	31	33

Figure 5 – Whole Band Performance

Mean error (ms) Bell-after-bell at Handstroke



Mean error (ms) Bell-after-bell at Backstroke



Mean error (ms) Bell-in-position at Handstroke

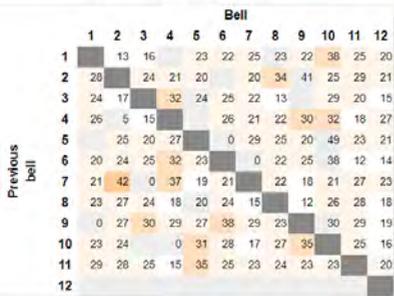


Mean error (ms) Bell-in-position at Backstroke

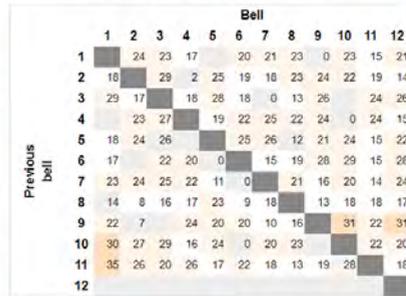


Figure 6 – Comparative Performance

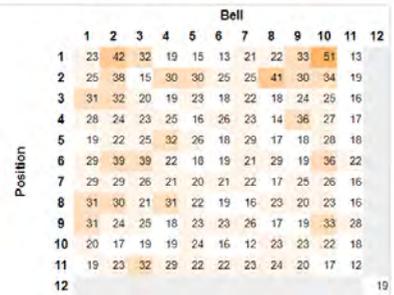
Std error (ms) Bell-after-bell at Handstroke



Std error (ms) Bell-after-bell at Backstroke



Std error (ms) Bell-in-position at Handstroke



Std error (ms) Bell-in-position at Backstroke

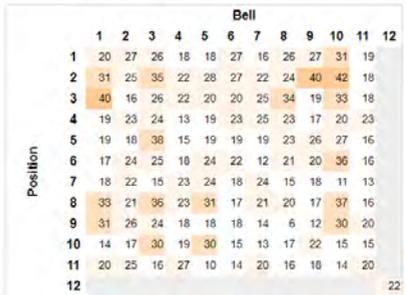


Figure 7 – Comparative Performance

Calendar 2020



Below is a list of upcoming dates for your diary:

8 January	Business meeting	London
1 February	Not The Dinner Day	London
6 May	Business meeting	London
9 - 11 July	Country meeting	Chester
12 September	Informal dinner	London
3 October	AGM	London
21 - 22 November	Peal weekend	

To find out more, or to sign up for any of these events, please visit the website or contact the Assistant Secretary, Elizabeth Hibbert, at assistant.secretary@srcy.org.uk.

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