

Video link announces new and much improved website

Sheila Cheesman in Canada brings the Association into the world of online info and interactivity

The Surrey Association has a smart new website that is both a splendid advertisement for the county's ringers and a dynamic resource for all members. The site went live in time for the annual meeting on May 8 when Sheila Cheesman, the association's general master, 'cut the ribbon' via a video link from Toronto. The launch followed 18 months of work by the PR Committee to develop a new site map, appoint a web designer and transfer all information to the new website.

But why was a new website necessary? The Surrey Association has had an online presence since 2000. In the early days, the site basically described the activities of the committees and association events, but as the tower directory was developed, the website rapidly grew to about 100 pages and was becoming increasingly difficult to keep up to date and maintain.

After a year spent gathering ideas and input from members, we compiled a 'wish list' of design and content features. The key task was to find a web designer who could translate our ideas into a new site that would meet all our needs. In the event, we found a small company in London who specialised in developing websites using Drupal. The beauty of this software package is that it's free and we have full control over the management of our site. All the information is stored in a database, making the site easy to manage, and, thanks to lots of built in functionality, we don't even need to know anything about html coding to create new pages and upload new information. Rather than just relying on one person to look after the site, there is now a team to publish news directly onto the website.

So now to the website itself: The **Homepage** features a series of excellent bell ringing photographs (thanks to James Day at Buckland), a summary of the next three events coming up and the latest news. As well as the main tabs at the top of the homepage, there are four 'user journeys' which reflect the four main areas of the Surrey Association: providing a supportive community for ringers of all abilities, organising teaching and training programmes to help ringers advance their skills, supporting bell restoration projects, and providing a general resource of ringing information.

The **Towers** section includes an interactive search map using Multimap. Try the search filter to find towers, and once you've located your tower page, check that all the information is correct and up to date.

The association's **Events** are now summarised in one section making it easier to see what is happening from one month to the next. Peripatetics, Wandering Bobs and DFP practices are also included in this list.

About Us provides information of who we are and what we do. This section also contains news from the BRF and Public Relations Committee.

Ringers is the amalgamation of Northern and Southern district news. Over time we will develop this section further with the goal of setting up a members only forum.

Training details all training activity in the association and provides a resource of training guides.

Gallery and **Young Ringers** are a couple of new initiatives. If you have photographs of ringers, bells and or churches and would like them added to the gallery, just send us an email. The purpose of the Young Ringers page is to encourage our younger members to have a greater involvement in our Association and we will develop this section over the next few months.

Finally, **RSS feeds** have been added to the News and Events pages so now you can receive notification of new items that appear on the web.

Over the next few months, you should hopefully see further refinements to the website as we continue making it more user friendly and informative. We hope you enjoy using the website and don't forget to let us know your views.

Carolina Goodship, PR Officer in the future?

Does placing the band achieve better ringing?

I have always believed that a band should be placed, especially for ringing that has an audience, like weddings and on Sundays. It is a fact that there will be some ringers who are less experienced than others, and it seems sensible to place the weakest person on the bell which they will ring best, and so on until the most able ringer is on the most awkward bell. I cannot see any reason against this practice.

Practice ringing also benefits from band placing, but in a different way. Each piece of practice ringing is usually for the benefit of one or more people learning a particular skill, and it is only fair to them to place the strongest possible band around them. They will learn faster, and have a much greater feeling of satisfaction. It is of more benefit to ring once, and well, than to try twice and fire out because the band is too weak.

Outings and joint meetings can be very difficult due to large numbers of people, who may not be known to the organiser. But in this case I still believe that it is best to place most of the band, and then ask experienced people to fill in. There is a tendency to forget that we are representing the Surrey association when we are on an outing, and what the ringing sounds like DOES matter.

The opposing view to the above is that some people may not get a fair amount of ringing. My answer would be that if someone feels they are not being treated fairly, they should make their views known to the person in charge, and discuss the matter. Maybe they have been overlooked, or maybe they want to ring something that they or the band is not up to.

It is accepted practice among the best ringing groups that the band is placed. A peal band is always placed. I think this should be the same with all ringing.

Anne Rueff

Walton on Thames News

We are sorry to have to tell you of two things that currently affect ringing at Walton. Firstly a gudgeon has broken on the treble and it will now be out of action until the proposed re-hang is completed. Secondly, we have had to deal with intruders on practice nights and only just stopped them going up past the ringing chamber so have now instituted a bell system. The porch door to the tower does not fit exactly to the top, so if you put your hand over the edge you will find a bell push. We can then let you in.

Summer Business Meeting and Barbecue

Saturday 26th June was my second time to a Surrey Association Barbecue but my first visit to Buckland. I have been learning to ring since January 2009 based at St. Mary's Oxted under the guidance of Ian Griffiths, and Saturday was a good day to obtain a few more pointers from other expert ringers.

It was a great day all round, starting with climbing the beautiful wooden spiral staircase to the very cosy bell tower of St. Mary the Virgin church. Here everyone that could squeeze in (many having to wait on the stairs) was made to feel welcome and a fair few ringers had their turn(s) ringing various methods, call changes and/or rounds - depending on their ability. I was lucky enough to have several attempts at nurturing my basic skills at Plain Hunt with the talented Jeremy Cheesman by my side whispering tips in my ear to help me ring the method - without doing it by numbers - Boy it's hard to un-learn bad habits!! All in all I felt pretty good about my ringing that day and it was great to ring with so many advanced ringers. It was soon time for the 'serious' bit of the Summer Business Meeting and the bells had to be rung down and the tower locked up. But that was not the end of the sound of bells in Buckland...



Trafford Mini-ring being set up

Photo: Ian Griffiths

The team on the barbecue had cooked up a great feast and as many were munching on a burger or 2 (soon after a fleeting visit by the Red Arrows overhead) a van pulling a small trailer appeared next to us on the village green. In what seemed like no time at all a group of men had assembled an interesting contraption with 6 bells on top. I had heard of these 'Mini-rings' but had never seen one in the flesh. Another first for me that day was to actually have a go on the mini ring - which was easier said than done to start with. However, saying that, it did take me a little quicker to (almost) 'master' the technique of ringing the small bells of a mini ring than the somewhat larger bells of a church tower - both of which have very different styles of ringing. This was a strange, almost unnatural, sensation - and that's someone who hasn't got church bell ringing ingrained into them saying that! Once again many people took turns 'having a go' and for some it was also their first time. Rounds were rung and some even managed a few call changes. The mini-ring had a lovely gentle sound to it which reminded me of an old fashioned musical box but we were soon reminded of who was boss as a few ringers had sneaked back up St. Mary's tower and started competing with us for attention. The bigger bells were obviously more assertive but both kinda complemented each other so I would call it a draw!

The day soon came to an end but I went home feeling satisfied with a good day out with a few more tips to think about each time I ring. Thank you to all who made me feel welcome and helped me try to improve my skills and techniques - Its much appreciated and I look forward to next year's barbecue!

Nikki Paintin

Editor's Note: The evening ringing at Buckland was pre-arranged solely for the crew of the Trafford mini-ring, and they were most appreciative of that opportunity.

The Masterpiece

Recently I rang at Albury (lovely bells) and I spotted this “Honours” board on the wall. I was pleased to see another F. Stedman ringing three centuries after the original. What did surprise me was the division of the ringers into Senior Team and Junior Team !

Nowadays no-one would make such a distinction, but things *were* different seventy-five years ago.

Thinking on I realised that within each band there exists a “Pecking Order” and that every ringer knows their position in that order, just as with a pack of hounds, or hens in a farmyard.

WHY IS IT that so often we find ringers snatching hold to ring a method for which they are not fully competent, and why is it so rare for anyone to whisper them some good advice, or for the leader to advise (or impose) restraint.

So often one sees two learners in a band, each being stretched a little beyond their limits, resulting in a disastrous smackabout, hurting the neighbours ears, and the confidence of the very learners we are trying to progress.

Everyone deserves to make progress, but it should be on a planned basis, going from one step to the next.

The next door “Honours” board at Albury described the Coronation ringing – and one of the Junior Team had earned his place on that board – perhaps 75 years ago they had some method in their madness after all.

John

Membership News

Noel Gibbin writes: I am sorry to have to inform you that **Mary Johnson** from Caterham, St John’s (and previously St Michael’s Penselwood, Somerset) died peacefully early on Monday 12 July morning after a long illness. Her funeral will be held at St John’s on Wednesday 28 July at 11.30am. There will be ringing before and after the service.

Welcome to the following four who were elected at the Summer Business Meeting:

Holly Ramsden of Merstham, **Sam Slater-Rafferty** of Nutfield and **Laurie David** of Caterham St Mary. **Benjamin J Carey**’s belfry election prior to peal attempt at Nutfield on 29th May was ratified.

Call Change Striking Competition

The Surrey Association annual call change striking competition took place on Saturday 3 July at Addington. Three bands out of sixty-eight competed for the trophy this year and Quentin Jackson was the judge. The result was:

1st Croydon 2nd Beddington 3rd Wandsworth, Holy Trinity

This competition is open to all towers in the Association and should appeal to bands at all levels but the turn out in recent years has been disappointingly low. This year was no exception. The Southern District was notably absent, where were you all? What kept you away? Your committee members would like to understand what we can do to improve turnout at this event.

Steeple Keeping Course

I have only been ringing since the start of the year, and was a bit surprised when our Tower Captain asked if I would like to attend the above course. Being an engineer, it seemed like a good idea.

The course started at Oxted and I arrived at the same time as John, so helped lug all the heavy equipment from his truck, afterwards introducing ourselves, 3 students, 2 maintenance teachers, and the organiser, Kate .

We ascended to the bells for a detailed explanation of all the relevant parts, and what to keep an eye on and adjust where necessary. Two ropes needed changing, so under Vicky Williams' guidance I replaced one and the other two students did the other watched by John Squirrell. This turned out to be a much simpler task than I expected.

We then went back down and had to loop the bottom of the rope, although not hard, this proved to be fiddly. An hour of paperwork followed, more of a guidance list with Health and Safety in mind. The morning lasted about two hours, after which we found a nice watering hole for lunch.

Around 2pm we met the Tower Captain at St John's, Caterham, to see the Hastings stays and plain bearings as these are not too common. However, before this we had to go to the top of the tower to raise the England flag and admired the great view of Caterham.

The clappers were missing on our visit due to repair work, which enabled us to stand in the tower whilst a bell was rung up. This gave us the opportunity to watch the action of the stay. We then had a go at splicing a rope, Vicky explained the procedure with some good diagrams and a Swedish fid, a strange looking rope maker's tool, but this was very easy to use. More tea, coffee and biscuits were supplied by Kate during this fiddly exercise, but we all completed it and were pleased with the results.

This was a very well run and informative day and I believe much needed as it's better to have a couple of people to maintain the bell tower than none at all. If you ever get the chance to attend, have a go!

Thanks to you all for your time that day.

Mark Davies

The Annual General Meeting at Beddington

This year's AGM was always going to be something different. For a start, a year's notice of the General Master's absence at a family wedding in Toronto gave plenty of time to arrange a video link for Sheila Cheesman. As you've already read, she officially launched the new website as well as welcoming everyone to Beddington before handing over to the General Secretary and making her way to the wedding.

The Reports of the General Officers are all included in the Annual Report (the one with the kneelers on the front cover) which every member should have by now so you can read them in your own time. It was an exciting first year for Michael Uphill as Training Officer and the Belfry Repaid Fund has continued to offer advice and grant money so it was not just about the PR Committee's work on the website.

At the election of new members, the Association elected four new Honorary Life Members (under the 30 years' membership rule): Pat Jenkins (Caterham St Mary) and Sarah Gilmore from Reigate plus Liz Grover from Banstead and Caroline Flockton (unattached ND).

Page Six Word Search

As the Open Golf Championship at the home of golf, St Andrew's, has just ended for another year and Louis Oosthuizen celebrates his victory, golfers start looking forward to October's Ryder Cup. The subject for this issue is golf. As usual, the words can be found forwards or backwards; horizontally, diagonally or vertically. The 16 unused letters spell out a further a word and a phrase linked to golf.

H A Z E L I R V I N E D S H O T N E I C N A D N A L A Y O R
I O L I N K S C O U R S E C N A R R O T M A S D D L A N O D
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F O N R R F O R E Y K U N D T R C H M W T I R O N A Y Y L S
T C G E L G O D G Y D R D R U U P I O O P G A L F O A A A O
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K E N B R O W N P P I K O G L S N N L E M N I P S K C A B T
C H A M P I O N U E E I N O E A T N O V A D R A C E R O C S
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T D I E C I L S T R I A N E C C L A R D U O R S A Q T I P L
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V L A I W R Y N I U A R L I C N E P O L A B E S F T S E L N
E E J E D A A E S C C L A R E T J U G V D R A N P E A K L A
R B Y L N M W G E S D L E I F R I U M T I O G Y I I T E E I
M O N O A B A N R I Y D D A C E S R U O C D L O A H N R R R
E G O H S L L I P T Y R E M Y A K C I W T S E R P L S R B E
D E T O W E L R P R O F E S S I O N A L R E T L U O P N M V
A Y A W R I A F O U R S O M E G D E W G N I H C T I P N U E
L L E W O D C M I C K E L S O N E S R E T T E P N N A Z U S

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2010 / 2011 Southern District Team and Contacts

Master	John Squirrell (jgs.bells@hotmail.co.uk) 17 Burnham Drive, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 9HD	01737 242109
Secretary	Gail Terry (gail.terry@btinternet.com) 18 Budgen Drive, Redhill, Surrey, RH1 2QB	01737 762592
Assistant Secretary	Kate Desbottes (kate.desbottes@kjdesbottes.co.uk) 28 Westway, Caterham, Surrey, CR3 5TP	07768 934677
Team Members	Ian Griffiths (ian@signals-bells.eclipse.co.uk) 14 Westlands Way, Oxted, Surrey, RH8 0ND	01883 712546
	Anne Rueff (a.rueff@ntlworld.com) Willow House, 22 Park Road, Redhill, Surrey, RH1 2AF	01737 762534
	Vicky Williams (buckruddles@gmail.com) 17 Roffes Lane, Chaldon, Surrey, CR3 5PU	01883 340911
NotS Editor	Richard Wallis (richard.wallis@gmail.com) 51 Addison Road, Caterham, Surrey. CR3 5LU	01883 380745

Next Editions of "News of the South"

Saturdays 25 September (Items to Editor by 11 September, please) and 27 November (13 November).

Word Search Words

Albatross, Allenby, amateur, approach, Asian Tour, Augusta, backspin, bag, ball, birdie, bunker, caddy, card, Callaway, champion, chip, Claret Jug, clubhouse, Cristie Kerr, Curtis Cup, divot, dogleg, Donald, double bogey, driver, eagle, equipment, European Tour, etiquette, fairway, flag, foursome, fringe, Furyk, Grand Slam, graphite, green, Harrington, hat, hazard, Hazel Irvine, head covers, hickory shaft, hole, hole in one, hook, Hoylake, iron, Jack Nicklaus, Kaymer, Ken Brown, Kim, lay-up, lie, links course, loft, LPGA, Lytham and St Anne's, majors, marker, Masters, matchplay, McDowell, McIlroy, Mickelson, Muirfield, Nick Faldo, Nike, Old Course, Open Championship, par, penalty, pencil, Peter Alliss, PGA Tournament, pitching wedge, playoff, Poulter, Presidents Cup, Prestwick, professional, putt, putter, ramble, ranking, regulations, Road to Dubai, rough, Royal and Ancient, Royal Birkdale, rules, Ryder Cup, Sam Torrance, sand iron, Sandwich, scorecard, scratch, Senior Tour, Severiano Ballesteros, shot, Silver Medal, slice, Solheim Cup, spin, stableford, St Andrews, Stricker, strokeplay, Sunshine Tour, Suzann Pettersen, Taylor Made, tee, Tiger Woods, titanium, Titleist, Tony Jacklin, towel, Troon, Turnberry, umbrella, unplayable, US Open, Walker Cup, water, Wayne Grady, wedge, Wentworth, Westwood, wood.

Sudoku Caters


To solve this puzzle each 3x3 box, each row and each column must contain all the numbers 1 to 9 - just the once. This Sudoku is described as "Hard".

			5	9		6	8	
	5		6	2		3		
8								
9		6						7
	8		9		7		4	
7						9		8
								1
		5		8	2		6	
	1	7		6	5			

Missing words: Driving Range, Cart

Diary Dates

August

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- Sun 1 Regular first of the month Pinch Punch Advanced practice is a pre-arranged quarter peal - an e-mail asked for volunteers a while ago.
- Mon 2 The Peripatetics might meet today at 11am and at 2pm but no details have been passed on to let you know where. If you want more details, please contact Ken Brooks (01883 626172).
- Sat 7 **Training Event** Teaching Ringing at Colliers Wood (9.45am start). Without new ringers our historic art will die out, and to develop them we need a sufficient number of good teachers. Chris Stanley, one of our most experienced rope handling tutors, will be providing training and sharing his experience of starting beginners.
- The Northern District and Leatherhead District of the Guildford Diocesan Guild hold their annual joint practice at **Kingston upon Thames** (12) from 7.30 to 9.30pm. All invited to join them.
- Mon 9 The DFP is tonight at **Buckland** (6). This monthly practice is for those wanting to ring more advanced minor methods. Contact Diane Pratt (020 8642 1543) for details.
- Mon 16 Today's Wandering Bobs practice is at **Newdigate** (6) from 10.30am to 12.30pm followed by optional lunch. Contact Sue Bailey (020 8669 0602) or Kath Chilcott (020 8686 2272) for more.
- Fri 20 New monthly Surprise Major practice at a venue still to be confirmed. Contact Clara Westlake (020 8879 9836) for more details.
- Sat 28 The long summer continues and whilst it might be a bank holiday weekend, there is still the usual fourth Saturday Allcomers practice - at **Nutfield** (6). All most welcome along.

September

- Wed 1 Regular first of the month Pinch Punch Advanced practice for 7 and 8 bell ringing. The venue, time and methods for this one will be passed on to members much nearer the time.
- Mon 6 Details of today's Peripatetics are not known as NotS goes to press.
- Sat 11 **General Event** The General Master has arranged the band to represent the Association at this year's Essex Trophy at Coggeshall - hoping to improve on last year's third place.
- Mon 13 Tonight's DFP is at **Ockham** (6).
- Fri 17 Contact Clara Westlake for details of the probable Surprise Major practice tonight.
- Sat 18 **Training Event** An Up and Down Morning replacing the one cancelled due to the snow earlier in the year. Look out for the regular Training Committee poster to appear in your tower for more details - including the time, venue and how to enrol!
- Mon 20 Today's Wandering Bobs is at **Carshalton** (8) from 10.30am.
- Sat 25 **HIGHLIGHT** No news on the general location for this year's Autumn Outing but keep the date free and come along - it might be fun. If your tower isn't having an outing this year, why not come along today as a group?

**All events are from 7.30 to 9.00pm, unless otherwise stated.
Look on the website for more details of any particular event.**