

THINGS to DO, PLACES to GO

Striking Contest Heats on March 4th 2006.

Newhall for the Southern District,
Etwall for the Central District

Tea and results for both districts at Ticknall Village Hall at approx 5:00pm
and evening ringing at Ticknall.

See notice in towers for full details

BARN DANCE on April 1st

At

Brailsford Village Hall (on the A52)
7:00pm—11:00pm

Dancing to the Stedman Stompers
Licensed Bar with REAL ALE

£7.00 (includes light supper)

Get your tickets from:

Lizzie Cotton Ssec@derbyda.org.uk

or

Steve Harpham Cesec@derbyda.org.uk

Situation Vacant

The DDA Education Committee organises training events for the Association. These have included the two recent and successful one-day courses as well the bell maintenance course and other half day courses. It is also running the series of conducting courses. The Committee is made up of two people from each District and meets 3 or 4 times a year. However, since the Derby District merged with the Ilkeston District and then split into two new Districts, each of the new Districts has a vacancy for one Education Committee member. The work involves keeping eyes and ears open to find out what training needs there are in the District and requires some organisational skills. It isn't necessary to be a fancy ringer and in fact the less experienced ringers may have some good ideas about what they need.

Interested? Why not give it a go?

JEH.

CONTRIBUTIONS for the next issue are needed by **March 6th 2006**. Please post to Jenny Booth at 51 The Plain, Brailsford DE6 3BZ, or e-mail to Strike Notes@derbyda.org.uk
Strike Notes is compiled by Jenny Booth and printed by Steve Harpham

Strike Notes

February 2006 Issue 61

News, Information and Trivia for ringers in the Central & Southern Districts

Southern Secretary's Salutations

I am writing this after a lovely bright sunny day. Is spring just round the corner? Joshua and I walked up the lane to the farm today and I was amazed at all the snowdrops in flower, I have also seen daffodils at full height with their buds awaiting to open, none like that in our garden!

Firstly I would like to congratulate Christian Peckham and Rachael Eagle, ringers at Derby Cathedral, who were married at Reymeston in Norfolk in January.

We have been raising money through Webb Ivory for the Association Bell Repair Fund for the past four years. For those who are not aware, Webb Ivory is available to individuals who wish to raise money for a chosen charity, in our case the Association Bell Repair Fund. Any sales made through them qualify for a portion of that sale to go to the chosen charity, up to 25%.

We didn't have quite so good a year as last year, with less people buying and those that did spent less, although 2004 was an exceptionally good year. This year total sales were £723.41 and this brought in a profit of £128.26. A big thank you to those you ordered. I will

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Central Planning

The Central District Committee has met twice since the last edition of Strike Notes to plan a programme of events for 2006-7. Details should be published next month once some fine-tuning has been done to avoid possible clashes with Association events and confirmations have been received from some towers.

The recent trip to the Marston's brewery was a great success (see details elsewhere in this issue); thanks to Chris Willis for organising this.

I'm told tickets for the Annual Dinner have been selling well in the last few weeks but, at time of writing, there are still places available.

Even though the "closing" date is not until the 28th of February, if you are thinking of entering a team in either the Arthur Ashby Cup or Horsley Cup contests, please let me know as soon as possible. This would be a great help in planning the results meeting and tea.

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Similarly, if you cannot commit to the draw-on-the-day arrangements due to weddings, please contact me and we will try to accommodate you.

That's all for now.

Steve Harpham
Central District Secretary

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again ask my company to kindly match this profit under their £ for £ fund raising scheme which will mean we hope to donate in excess of £ 250 to the BRF. If you have any suggestions or ideas to increase the overall profit, or to make it more appealing to people to take part in, please tell me. We again ordered labels for the cards to show they were purchased for charity and I hope everyone liked them.

The stock of general cards & wrapping paper we have proved popular this year. We have taken these to various events to display and sell, as well as to friends and family. In addition to the above catalogue sales profit figure, we raised £ 29.75 this way.

March is the District Striking Contest Heats and I look forward to receiving lots of entries, none so far! At this meeting we will also talk about the vacant Education Committee position. John Heaton, our representative has written an article, elsewhere in this issue, explaining a little bit more about what is done, to encourage one of you to take up the position.

M Elizabeth Cotton
Southern District Secretary

MERCASTON REDISCOVERED!

Nobody is sure where Mercaston is, ask any Parcel Force driver on his rounds! A lot of Council Tax money has gone into road signs pointing towards Mercaston making it the most signposted, nonexistent, place in Derbyshire. The weary traveller, dodging with tractors on the local minor roads and single track lanes, only knows the place has been passed when the signs start pointing the other way. More serious travellers may consult a map and follow the blue line of Cutler Brook as it wends its plain course near to Mercaston Hall.

A major surprise to many people is that Mercaston was once much less obscure. Centuries ago it was a regular plain hunting ground for Royals who chased deer in the adjacent Ravensdale and Mansell deer parks. The tradition has declined somewhat with infrequent appearances today by a principal Royal who has been known to ride with the Meynell Plain Hunt searching for Mercaston (and the occasional fox). However, unknown to many, the easiest way of locating Mercaston was to buy each of the Mugginton ringers a beer at the Cock Inn. You might then be invited to the top of Mugginton church tower where the striking and intoxicated views allow the full extent of Mercaston to be plausibly pointed out.

Happily, all of this is history and there is no longer a need to run out to the tower, although Mugginton ringers are still willing to have beer bought for them! Mercaston has been redefined

and now has its very own place notation giving method to its rediscovery. To be precise it is:

X34X16X12X36X1456X56 LH12

and goes by the full title of **Mercaston Treble Place Minor**. Unusually the treble dodges in 1,2 and 3,4 up and down, but makes 6ths, 5ths, and 6ths places at the back. The full extent was seen from the Mugginton ringing room on Friday 27th January 2006 during ringing of the first quarter peal.

Our thanks to Alec Humphrey who was commissioned to propose a blue line and who ably conducted this first quarter peal of the method. Members of the band were Peter Sutton, Chris Willis, Peter Harris, Graeme Hughes, Mike Banks (the only Mercaston resident) and Alec Humphrey.

Mike Banks

A Pint of the Best

This was a superb evening out organised by Chris Willis with her usual efficiency. Twenty members of the old Derby District and friends met for a tour of Marston's Brewery. There wasn't a bell in sight but that didn't stop people turning up for the 'free' beer.

The ticket price for the evening included the tour of the brewery with its Burton Union Brewing system, a bangers and mash supper (with mushed mushy peas for the brave-hearted and unmashed mushy peas for others) and 'unlimited' drinks from the bar afterwards. Actually the drinks were nominally limited, but I don't think anyone found what the limit was other than time - the bar closed at 9.30pm.

John Marston built his brewery in Burton upon Trent in 1834 because of the remarkable water in the wells and springs that dot the Trent valley. Marston's Brewery merged in 1905 to become Marston, Thompson & Evershed and was taken over by Wolverhampton and Dudley in 1999.

CAMRA have stated that it will not campaign against any further brewery closures in the UK as it may be detrimental to the real ale cause. However, there is one exception to this rule - that is if Pedigree were to be brewed anywhere other than the famous the Unions rooms at Marston's brewery.

The tour covered all parts of the brewing cycle from cleaning and crushing the malt right up to fermentation in the Burton Union System (where the beer is fermented in large wooden casks to maintain the yeast strain). The fermentation takes 3-5 days (depending on the weather).

At the top of the brewery was a rope hoist above a trapdoor in the floor used to lift grain up to the top. The rope had an interesting splice at the end which one or two members of the party noted was incorrectly finished off and had to resplice it. (*You can take bell ringers away from the bells, but you can't stop them playing with the ropes!*). There was also some consideration as to how easy it would be to install a set of bells and save a walk to the pub after ringing.

Many thanks to Chris Willis for organising a good night out.

Chris Booth