

Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers

East Berks & South Bucks Branch

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Hambleden on Saturday 23 April 2016

The Chairman, John Davidge, opened the Meeting at 5.15pm. The earlier Practice had been attended by 19 ringers and the Meeting was attended by 23 members, representing 10 towers, and 1 visitor. The Chairman welcomed Hilarie Rogers, Guild Master.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Francoise Allen, Ralph Bagge, Margaret Carlyle, Beryl Coombs, Ken and Angela Darvill, Marcia Dieppe, Anne Frank, Ros Garrett Bowes, Sylvia Harrington, Jacqueline and Martha Hazell, Josie and Sammy Martin, John Payne, Fred Reynolds, Mandy Salter, Jane Thornley, Pam and John Warren, Naomi Wordsworth, Martin Whittaker, Doreen and Don Young.

2. Minutes of the HYM held at Chenies on 10 October 2015

These had been circulated prior to the meeting. There was a correction on Page 1 "Election of New Members: The following were nominated for membership of the **Guild**." After correction, they were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Obituaries

The Chairman announced the death in the last year of Peter Mackie (Stoke Poges), Ron Rogers (Denham), and Kathleen Horne (Maidenhead). Condensed versions of their obituaries follow.

Peter Mackie. Jane Lunsford spoke to the memory of Peter. Peter and his parents started ringing in Wellesbourne in 1965 and he rang his first peal in Canada in 1966 before going up to Oxford to read Medicine. He was elected a member of the Ancient Society of College Youths in 1970 and rang regularly with High Wycombe and at St Paul's Cathedral; he rang 318 peals. Peter had been Tower Captain at St Giles, Stoke Poges from 2007 until his death on 3 September 2015. He was an excellent teacher, displaying infinite patience, especially when teaching challenging, mature learners the basics of bell handling and introducing them to method ringing. Peter had also been an enthusiastic stalwart of the Branch, serving as Branch Secretary and as a regular tutor at Novices' Practices. The Stoke Poges ringers are indebted to Peter for the example he set as tower captain in encouraging the band to progress and learn, being tolerant of mistakes and always remaining patient and supportive.

Kathleen Horne. John Dieppe spoke to Kathleen's memory. Kath was born and lived all her life in Maidenhead, learning to ring at All Saints in 1949-50. She was a very loyal Sunday Service ringer, always attending Service. She only rang one peal – on 3 June 1953 for the Coronation of HM the Queen – although she rang many local quarters. Kath became unwell last year and was unable to ring or attend Service on Christmas Day 2015. She died peacefully on Easter Monday and her funeral at All Saints church was attended by about 80 people including 18 ringers. The eight bells were rung half muffled before the Service and Kath's family were delighted that the Guild banner stood by the pulpit.

No-one was present to speak to Ron Rogers' memory and no obituary had been provided.

A period of silence was observed in memory of these former members.

5. Officers' reports

The Ringing Master's report had been circulated in advance and there were no questions or comments.

The Treasurer's report and the draft Accounts had been circulated in advance. The Treasurer agreed

that a £10 book token had been miscoded to “Stationery” but there being no overall change, he proposed that the Accounts be accepted. This was seconded by Jan Galloway and the motion carried.

Bearing in mind the expenditure on Ringing World advertising, the Secretary asked if members felt this was a necessary addition to Bellboard advertising (which is free). It was agreed, with one vote against, that just the AGM and Half Yearly Meeting would be advertised in the Ringing World but that these plus all other Practices would be advertised online on Bellboard and Campanophile.

The Secretary reminded members that the Diary card (printed once annually) quickly becomes out of date and that it is preferable to check the quarterly programmes emailed to the Branch User Group or, better still, the Calendar on the website.

The Treasurer had informed members in his report that towers can nominate someone for election at the Half Year Meeting, but that in this case, Guild Rules demand that their full Subscription is paid, even though there are only two months of the Guild’s year remaining. Alternatively nominations can be held over to the AGM the following year. The Guild Master pointed out that earlier membership may be required if the person wishes to attend Guild training courses.

6. Election of members

The following had been nominated for membership of the Guild:

AMERSHAM	TURVILLE
Adam Gibson	Ann Lazur
BURNHAM	WINKFIELD
Mark Nelson	Joshua Hambridge
Mark Nichols	WRAYSBURY
Emma Gunner	Spike Poole
Cole Cesar	Zoe Slough
COOKHAM	Ellie Lunnen-Kay
Geraldine McIlwaine	
DORNEY	
Jenny Story	

The election of these members en bloc was proposed by Peter Jasper, seconded by David Cornwall and carried unanimously. Ann Lazur was present at the meeting and received her certificate of Guild membership from the Chairman.

7. Election of officers for 2015/16

The Chairman handed over to the Deputy Ringing Master. His re-election was proposed by John Dieppe, seconded by Janice Dieppe, and carried. The Chairman then took the Chair again and the following officers were elected or re-elected:

		Proposed by	Seconded by
Ringing Master	Ken Darvill	Stuart Galloway	Barbara Oldham
Deputy Ringing Master	Jan Galloway		
Secretary	Maryanne Roach		
Treasurer	John Dieppe		
Newsletter Editor	Patricia Newton		
100 Club Manager	Stuart Galloway	Jan Galloway	Patricia Newton
Independent Examiner	Stan Barlow	John Dieppe	Robert Newton
Branch Representatives on Guild General Committee	John Davidge	Robert Newton	John Dieppe
	Jan Galloway	Robert Newton	Derek Fowles
	John Dieppe	Robert Newton	David Cornwall

8. Branch Website

The Secretary explained the need to re-develop the website in a Content Management System (CMS) that could be easily maintained by members without sophisticated IT skills. The Webmaster, Graham Firman, stated that he was willing to continue updating the current site for 6 months whilst the new site was specified and built. There being no volunteers to build the new website from amongst the membership, two

external outline quotes had been acquired ranging from £600-1000.

About 8-9 other branches had replied to the Webmaster's request for information. Of these, all but two were similar to our current situation i.e. a technical person was using raw html coding; the other two were using a CMS. The need for a website was queried. We need a site to which the Guild site can link to provide information about towers and tower contacts. It was also stated that we need a "Window on the World". The number of "hits" currently being achieved was unknown and there is no search optimization.

John Davidge proposed that expenditure up to £1000 be approved should no Branch member come forward, Graham Firman seconded and the meeting voted in favour, with two votes against. However, the Secretary will first advertise again for a volunteer stating the likely cost in the event of no-one coming forward; members were also asked to discuss this face-to-face with tower colleagues.

In the meantime, the Secretary is gathering input from volunteers (more would be welcome!) as to the Must Have and the Nice to Have features of a new website so as to draw up the brief for the developer. A decision as to who should be the new Webmaster will be held over until this specification, and hence workload, has been agreed.

9. Branch 6 Bell Striking Competition

Two options had been suggested in the event of a single entry:

Option 1

In the event of there being only a single entry, the competition shall be deemed not to have taken place so there is no winner. In this case: -

- The Trophy shall not be presented and is returned to the Branch until the next competition.
- The Band that entered **shall** be eligible to enter the Lorna Newton competition.
- The Branch Officers shall invite a tower to represent the Branch in the Guild Six-bell competition, and that tower shall still be eligible to enter the Lorna Newton competition.

Option 2

In the event of there being only one entry, the competition shall be deemed to have taken place and the team that entered to have won "by a walkover". In this case: -

- The Trophy shall be presented to that team
- The team shall be eligible to represent the Branch in the Guild Six-Bell competition
- The team that represented the Branch (with the exception of one member) **shall not** be eligible to enter the Lorna Newton Competition

The reason for the exception is that the Lorna Newton Rules allow the "borrowing" of one individual from another tower. So that would seem to be unfair to exclude the whole band.

It had been suggested that neither require an alteration in any Rules but it was pointed out that this is not the case. Individuals from the winning band can enter the Lorna Newton Competition if assisting other towers ("The ringers who rang in the winning band may ring in a round of the current competition only as an individual (one per band) and only if they have a regular link with the tower concerned.") Hence the third bullet point in Option 2 was re-worded to:

The members of the team that represented the Branch shall only be eligible to enter the Lorna Newton Competition in accordance with Rule 3a.

Graham Firman stated that Option 1 was not in the spirit of the Lorna Newton Competition which had been conceived to give all towers a chance of winning and not just the strongest. Robert Newton called for more towers to enter the Branch 6 Bell Competition and was concerned that the Lorna Newton Competition was making the Branch Competition second best. It was also pointed out that the same individuals who ring in the Branch competition should ring in the Guild Competition if possible..

A vote between the two Options (amended for Option 2 as above) was held; there were 5 votes for Option 1, 15 for Option 2 and 1 spoiled paper. Hence the modified Option 2 policy will be adopted.

10. Report and Accounts of Fundraising Committee

These had been circulated in advance. There were no questions. Derek Fowles proposed that the Accounts

be accepted, Robert Newton seconded and this motion was carried.

11. Guild activities

Patricia Newton listed up-coming events:

Guild AGM Vale of White Horse Branch – 21 May
Ringing for the Official Birthday of HMR – 10-12 June
Guild Festival, Oxford – 9 July

She also noted that Guild training courses (Radley, Steeple Aston, Michaelmas) had not been so well supported recently and requested that members promote these to their tower colleagues as they provide excellent opportunities to ring for a day with experienced helpers.

12. Any other business

The Secretary reminded everyone that the deadline for Round 1 of the Lorna Newton Competition was May 1 and encouraged those towers who had not reported results (Chalfont St Giles, Old Windsor, Clewer, Maidenhead, Amersham, Winkfield, Lane End, West Wycombe, Beaconsfield, Windsor, Horton, Burnham, Dorney, Langley) to do so by that date.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 6.25 pm.

Maryanne Roach
Secretary, EBSB
April 2016