

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD CITY BRANCH

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting - 18th November 2006 St. Giles, Horspath.

There were twenty-three members present who were pleased to welcome the Hon. Gen. Secretary of the Oxford Diocesan Guild, Hilarie Rogers and Ann Mayou, Guild Child Protection officer.

1. Apologies for absence

Brian Gatward, Robert Newton, John Pusey, John Beale and Lesley Smith.

2. Approval of informal minutes of the half-year meeting held at St. Giles', Oxford

The Minutes which had been circulated previously, and copies of which were available at the meeting were approved by the members and signed by the Chairman, Rev. Anthony Ellis.

3. Matters Arising

Item 3: Matters Arising

The Secretary has omitted to investigate a standardised Child Protection Policy.

4. Correspondence

There had not been any correspondence.

5. Election of New Members

The following ringers were proposed for membership:

Unattached: Richard Motson Proposed by: Leon Thompson

Unattached: Michael Lowe Seconded by: Andrew Dunn

Kidlington: Christine Fenn Proposed by: T. Peter Franklin

Tim Hillsdon Seconded by: R. Jones

Horspath: Michelle Thompson Proposed by B. Lowe

Seconded by N.D. Lane

These ringers were elected by the members present.

6. Presentation of Certificates

Hilarie Rogers presented the membership certificate to Susie Pavelin which was received, in her absence, by R. Jones.

7. Reports from Officers

a) Hon. Secretary

The email circulation seems to be working efficiently but the problem with email is that there is sometimes uncertainty over the recipient having received the information, and also the tower correspondent may not print out the paperwork

and distribute it to the tower. If there are any members present who do not feel that they have been kept informed of Branch business, now is the opportunity to inform the Branch Secretary so that the situation can be remedied.

A list of email addresses was circulated at the meeting and members were requested to add to, or amend the details.

T. P. Franklin requested a hard copy of all information. **Action: C. Lane**

The Guild Festival was a success from many people's point of view, but it was hard work for a few of the Branch members and reports had been received that some ringers felt that there were not enough towers open in the city. It is not commonly understood that the Colleges apply their own restrictions which cannot be overcome.

To give our own members a further opportunity to ring at some of the Oxford towers Jonathan Beale and Hugh Deam are going to organise a Branch outing to the city and more information will be circulated later.

The Guild is giving consideration to running a festival every five years, and some suggestions have been made that it should be in Oxford. This will be discussed at the Autumn General Committee meeting on 25 November.

There are some changes to Corporation Tax which will have an effect on the accounts of the Guild and Branches and which Simon Edwards will explain in his report.

Peter Davies, who masterminded the Roadshow, has taken over from Bobbie May as PR officer. He will be responsible for establishing and maintaining media dialogue – press releases, copy for The Door, display and publicity material and dealings with the Central Council.

There is often discussion regarding membership: Honorary Ringing members must have 30 years membership and be 65 or over, Long Service members must have 50 years membership.

This information resulted in the election of several Branch members to Honorary Membership status:

Bob Benstead was unanimously proposed by all the members present

Clive Holloway: Proposed by N. D. Lane

Roy Jones: Seconded by B. Masterman

The secretary was asked to investigate any other members who might be eligible, including Douglas Wilks.

Action: C. Lane

There is a new Guild Events 15 year plan and the first commitment that the City Branch has in that plan is the Guild Ringing Day and the 8-bell striking competition on 7 May 2007.

The details of the draft itinerary have already been circulated. If anyone has a good contact with any other tower mentioned please could they confer with the Secretary.

It has been suggested that we open some towers in the centre of Oxford in the evening. This is a good idea but complicated by the fact that the people required to steward the towers will also be committed in the striking competition.

Susan King asked why an arbitrary decision had been made with regard to the time of the ringing on the 7 May, and if there was 'anything in it' for the tower?

The Secretary replied that she had arranged the itinerary so that the towers formed part of a circuit and (as Iffley was in the middle of that circuit) there was little opportunity for adjustment. During Guild Ringing Days it was not custom and practice for the individual towers to receive a subsidy; the Guild Secretary advised Susan King that an additional contribution to the tower could be asked for, if required.

Jonathan Beale asked if adjustments could be made to the Guild 15 year plan if a decision is taken to hold the Guild Festival in Oxford every five years because hosting the Festival and the Ringing Day in quick succession is very onerous for a small Branch.

Action: C. Lane at Gen. Com. Meeting

There are 1st Quarter Peal Certificates and Guild badges available from Hilarie Rogers. The Quarter Peal Certificates are individually inscribed and must be ordered.

Action: R. Jones to confirm if some are required.

The Guild Report will soon be collated and membership information will be required. Please ensure that Simon has all the details so that the records can be updated.

If there are any changes to service times, practice nights or responsibilities in any of our towers, please inform the Secretary by email or in writing.

Action: Tower Correspondents

The dates' list for the forthcoming year has been circulated electronically. Please try to avoid making alterations to the list because it becomes most confusing if dates and details are changed. If there are to be changes please inform the Secretary so that revised list can be issued.

The Ringing Master notified the members of alterations that had already been made. A revised list will be circulated.

Action: C. Lane

b) Hon. Treasurer

Simon Edwards presented the accounts to the members. There were a few questions from the members regarding some minor details in the accounts which the Treasurer was able to explain to everyone's satisfaction.

The changes in Corporation Tax raise a liability for the Guild which will be reflected in the Branch accounts; Branch income will be added to the Guild income and tax paid pro rata. The Branch accounts must be submitted to the Guild Treasurer and conform to the year end at 31 December.

There was a certain amount of discussion about how best to achieve ratification of the Branch accounts without having to change the date of the AGM.

Finally it was proposed by the Chairman, and seconded by Jonathan Cresshull, that an Extraordinary Meeting should take place at the first Branch Practice of each year in order to ratify the accounts, which should be circulated by email before that meeting.

It was also agreed that because the accounts for this year have to be revised from April 2006, in order to be correctly presented to the Guild Treasurer, that Simon Edwards has a further month to prepare them and they will be ratified at the Branch Practice at Kirklington on 10 February.

The discussion reverted to the accounts that had already been presented and Anthony Hughes asked if the monies for the Guild Festival had taken into account the cost of the stay that was broken at Carfax. *(For the additional information of City Branch members the cost of the replacement stay has been met by the Guild).*

Next there was discussion about Branch funds being used to subsidise training courses. No vote was taken because the Branch has already agreed a policy for subsidising courses, but it was determined that any City Branch member has access to £80 to help fund attendance on a course or courses. The member may not exceed this amount in total but may access it by degrees if required. The maximum amount available to City Branch members in any one financial year may not exceed £160.

c) Ringing Master

Hugh Deam reflected on the improved performance of the City Branch over the last four years. He reminded members of the increase in the training programme, the number of outings and social events that now regularly take place, and the Branch website. He decreed that many of our ringers now felt more confident and aspired to a variety of 6-bell methods, quarter peals and conducting.

The Ringing Master hoped that our skills could now be extended to 8 and 10 bells and that he had approached John Wells to assist with training.

He said that his prime aim was to make sure that all the towers in the Branch felt valued and relevant, and he thanked all the tower correspondents who had helped him.

The Chairman applauded the increased level of ringing activity within the City Branch and thanked Hugh Deam and Roy Jones for their very significant contribution.

d) Branch Representative

Anthony Hughes regretted that he had not been able to attend two Guild meetings during the year due to his indisposition. He will attend the Autumn General Committee Meeting at Mollington in November.

He expressed his concern at the loss of the Easthampstead Course and asked if the members would like him to raise the subject at the meeting.

There was considerable discussion regarding this matter and the members were unanimous in their regret at the demise of Easthampstead. However Hilarie Rogers explained that the cost of the residential course had become prohibitive

but wondered how much City Branch members might be willing to pay for such a weekend course. When it was realised that it would be unlikely to cost less than £300 the members understood how impractical it had become.

It was finally agreed that the City Branch were in favour of supporting Guild courses and would endeavour to support any alternative to Easthampstead that could be economically provided.

8. Election of Officers

The Chairman stood down and Roy Jones took the Chair; he asked if there were any nominations, other than the Rev. Anthony Ellis, for Chairman. There were none and Anthony Ellis was re-elected.

Chairman: Rev Anthony Ellis

Proposed by: Roy Jones

Seconded by: All the members present

All the remaining officers agreed to stand and were re-elected.

Deputy Chair: Roy Jones

Proposed by: Anthony Ellis

Seconded by: Hugh Deam

Hon. Sec: Catherine Lane

Proposed by: Roy Jones

Seconded by: N. David Lane

Hon. Treasurer: Simon Edwards

Proposed by: Roy Jones

Seconded by: N. David Lane

Ringing Master: Hugh Deam

Proposed by: Roy Jones

Seconded by: Bernard Masterman

Branch Rep: Anthony Hughes

Proposed by: Jonathan Beale

Seconded by: Brian Lowe

Branch Training Officer: Jonathan Beale

Proposed by: N. David Lane

Seconded by: T. Peter Franklin

Branch Fund Raising officer: Graham Nichols

Proposed by: Hugh Deam

Seconded by: Roy Jones

9. Reports on Fund Raising Efforts

Hugh Deam read the report from Graham Nichols:

During 2006 I have attended many Car Boot Sales at Burcot, Drayton and Tetsworth and so far the venture has been a great success. At present the total achieved is £34.60 since the commencement of the venture in April.

If I am elected to do another term of office I am happy to continue doing this.

Special thanks to Hugh Deam, Wendy Austen and June Steele who have donated items, especially Hugh Deam who is storing the overflow stock.

In early March I shall welcome more bric-a-brac ranging from books to model trains. Anything you no longer require will be most welcome. Please give generously to either Hugh or myself; we are onto a good thing. Since becoming Fund Raising Officer I have raised £6.50 in aluminium can recycling; I believe Hugh Deam may also have taken some cans for recycling. A temporary halt has been reached on the recording of local bells.

There was a lengthy discussion concerning the destination of fund raising efforts. The secretary reminded the members that historically the City Branch has donated everything to the Guild Bell Fund with the result that we return a zero contribution in the Guild Restoration Fund accounts, and are frequently the only Branch to achieve this. The Secretary found this to be an embarrassing situation and felt it would be appropriate if a proportion of our contribution were paid into the Restoration Fund.

The Hon Guild Secretary, Hilarie Rogers, briefly explained the two accounts: the Bell Fund is for refurbishment and the Restoration Fund for augmentation and installations.

It was proposed that £50 should be donated annually to the Restoration Fund and the remainder to the Bell Fund.

Proposed by: Roy Jones

Seconded by: Catherine Lane

10. Approval of Candidates for Educational Courses

This matter was fully covered in the Treasurer's business. There were no candidates put forward at the meeting.

11. Any Other Business

The Secretary reminded the members about the Guild logo competition.

Hugh Deam asked if a Social Secretary could be added to the list of officers. The Chairman and other members felt that it was too big a decision to be made in AOB and should be an agenda item at the next meeting when a formal resolution could be made.

Meanwhile Donna Murphy had agreed to informally arrange social events for the Branch.

Hugh Deam spoke about the proposed outing to Oxford, he wanted to ensure that a significant number of ringers, who were capable of ringing on higher numbers, were available for the date, and had been concerned to learn that Simon Edwards would not be available on 8 September, which had been booked with the Secretary of the Oxford Society. Hugh enquired about changing the date to a more convenient one. David Lane, the Secretary of the Oxford Society, expressed his concern about any alteration to the date due to the number of bookings he had committed to already for 2007.

The two gentlemen agreed to act promptly to avoid disappointment.

Action: H. Deam and N.D. Lane

T. Peter Franklin asked about the striking competition certificates and before he had finished his sentence the Secretary was able to reassure him by declaring that she had them in her hand.

She then presented the Chairman who represented Kidlington with the winners' certificate and the Chairman presented second and third to Wolvercote and Marston respectively.

T. Peter Franklin told the members that Kidlington had enjoyed taking part in the Guild 6-bell competition and had been placed last in a very tight heat.

The Chairman then closed the meeting with thanks to the Rev. Richard Cowell for taking the service, to the organist and to the ladies of Horspath who had provided tea.

Horspath ringers generously donated all contributions for tea to Branch funds.