

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD CITY BRANCH

Annual General Meeting - 15th November 2008 St. Mary the Virgin, Iffley

The Branch Chairman, Canon Anthony Ellis welcomed to the meeting, the Master of the Oxford Guild, Robert Newton, the Branch Guild Steward Chrissy Cable and Guild Steward David Joyce.

He then thanked the ringers and friends for arranging the AGM and tea, the incumbent for taking the service and the Wolvercote handbell ringers for their contribution to the service.

All members stood in memory of Ralph Porter, a long standing and respected Branch member who died earlier in the year.

There were 29 members present, representing Marston, Kidlington, Iffley, Headington, St. Giles, St. Aldate's and Wolvercote.

1. Apologies for absence

Hilarie Rogers, Guild Secretary, Sylvia Browne, Basil Townsend, Simon Edwards, Graham Corbett, Peter Wilson, Elizabeth Pether, Derek Smith, Andrew Ford, John Battye, Paul Harden, Jonathan Cresshull, Robin Hall, Joy Fitzpatrick, Jan Lawrie, Lesley and Rebecca Smith, Carole Beckley, Graham Nicholls and Janet Farrow.

2. Approval of minutes of the half-year meeting held on 10th May at St. James, Cowley.

These minutes were circulated before the meeting; they were approved by the members and signed by the chairman as being a true record.

3. Matters Arising

On behalf of the Treasurer, David Lane confirmed that the accounts were in order and would be presented to the members at an Extraordinary Meeting to be held at a Branch Practice early in 2009.

He explained the difference between the Restoration Fund and the Guild Bell Fund.

The Oxford Diocesan Bell Fund is a registered charity which makes grants to churches in the Diocese of Oxford who wish to refurbish their bells. A grant may not be made in the case of an augmentation. Unless there are special circumstances it is currently the policy of the managing trustees to make grants of 15% of the estimated cost of qualifying works. If the eventual cost is materially different from that indicated at the time of application, the grant is reviewed and may be revised.

The Bell fund can only distribute monies from the interest earned on the fund capital.

The Restoration fund can use capital as well as interest earned on the capital if it is deemed appropriate by the fund trustees.

Robert Newton told members that the Restoration Fund had been in existence for longer than the Bell Fund.

Anthony Hughes asked if there was any difference in the time it took for either fund to respond to a request. He was informed that each case was judged on its merits and there was no difference in prioritizing requests.

Jonathan Beale asked to which fund the Branch regularly contributed. The Secretary informed him that historically the City Branch had contributed to the Restoration Fund but it had been noted that the City Branch was the only Branch in the Guild that returned a 0.00 balance in the form of donations to the Bell Fund. It had been agreed, at an earlier

meeting, that the Branch would contribute more regularly to the Bell Fund. The Secretary will refer this to the Treasurer to find out the current situation.

Action: CMAL & SLE

4. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

5. Election of New Members

The Secretary asked the members to ratify the election of the band at Stanton-St-John. She reminded the meeting that work had taken place on the bells at Stanton-St-John and a local band was now ringing for services and weddings. To ensure that these ringers were insured and able to make use of all the other benefits of Guild membership they had been elected in the presence of three Branch officers and several other Branch members at Sunday service ringing.

It was agreed that these elections should be ratified: Graham Corbett, Peter Wilson, Elizabeth Pether, Derek Smith, Andrew Ford, John Battye.

The following additional people were then proposed by Roy Jones and seconded by David Lane for election as members of the City Branch:

Marston: Kate Crosby
John Bethel
Charlie Lawrie
Neil Holdstock
St. Giles: Andrew Freer
Margaret Marsh
Matthew Malek
Garsington: Richard Jeffery
Kidlington: Jasmin Bastable
Shaide King
Claire Morgan
Elliot Daley
Abigail Dailey
Iffley: Brian Todd

These elections will take effect on receipt of the subscription by the Branch Treasurer Simon Edwards.

6. Presentation of Certificates by the Guild Master

Certificates were available to present to Steven Peer, Tracy Menzel, Celia Page, David Coombs, Geoff Smith and Jackie Grant, all members of Wheatley and Graham Corbett, Peter Wilson, Elizabeth Pether, Derek Smith, Andrew Ford, John Battye of Stanton-St-John. None of these members were present to receive their membership certificates and no one was available from their towers to represent them.

The Secretary expressed disappointment that newly elected members were very seldom present at the meetings to collect certificates.

There were no striking competition certificates available.

Action: CMAL to discuss with HD

7. Reports from Officers

a) Hon. Secretary

- The secretary asked members to confirm that emails were being received from her. It was seldom that any response was received from the Branch membership and left alone at the computer she wondered if there was anyone out there!

- Guild Report for 2008. Shortly the secretary will be requesting membership details from the tower correspondents, service and practice times. Please ensure that these are accurate.
- For the Branch records it would be useful to have additional details: month and date of birth, address and email.
- The Guild Report will also contain obituaries for 2008. Tower correspondents should send this information to the secretary.
- There are Guild badges for sale at £1.70 available from the secretary.
- The secretary apologized for omitting Jan Lawrie and Susie Pavelin from the Guild Report 2007.
- Stanton-St-John now has an active band ringing for services and Thursday practice night.

Roy Jones asked if the secretary could confirm that ringers were covered by Guild insurance at Stanton-St-John; the secretary was confident that ringers were but to reassure RJ she said she would investigate further.

(The secretary asked this question at the General Committee Meeting on 22 November 2008 and it was confirmed that if ringers are paid-up members of the Guild they are covered to ring anywhere.)

RJ was also concerned that the Stanton-St-John bells had been declared unringable. The secretary informed the meeting that John Davidge, Chairman Towers and Belfries Committee, was arranging a visit to S-St-J.

- Before the meeting Roy Jones had asked the secretary to find out if a reduced subscription for Under 16s was available. At the meeting the secretary advised members that there is no reduced rate for U16s but individual towers may reduce the subscription if they wish and make up the difference from other sources.
- The secretary thanked the members for their long-sufferance of the rather haphazard way in which she has carried out her duties in recent years. Much to her relief the pressures of work will be finished by April 2009 and she will be able to dedicate more time to the Branch and its members.

b) Hon. Treasurer

In the absence of Simon Edwards it was reported that the Branch finances were in order. A cheque was requested for Mary Carroll to cover the Branch Contribution to the Steeple Aston Course

Action: S.E

c) Ringing Master

The ringing master reported that there had been a wide range of well supported activities throughout the year and that the picnics had gone particularly well despite the inclement summer weather. He advised members that there were many more events planned for 2009.

Hugh Deam read out the report from the Branch Fund-raising officer, Graham Nicholls indicating that he is happy to continue with fund-raising activities including the can collection and selling items at car boots sales, once the season begins. He cannot, however, store any items over the winter months.

d) Representative

The Branch representative had nothing additional to report

The chairman stood down from office while the deputy chairman took over the meeting for the election of the Branch Chairman.

8. Election of Officers

a) Chairman Anthony Ellis
Prop. David Lane Sec. Roy Jones

The Rev. Canon Anthony Ellis was unanimously re-elected as Chairman of the City Branch.

All the other officers were put forward for re-election:

b) Deputy Chairman Roy Jones
Prop. Katie Lane Sec. Paul Lucas

a) Hon. Secretary Katie Lane
Roy Jones Andy Dunn

b) Hon. Treasurer Simon Edwards
David Lane Anthony Hughes

c) Ringling Master Hugh Deam
Jonathan Beale David Lane

d) Representative David Lane
Hugh Deam Roy Jones

e) Fund-Raising Officer Graham Nicholls
Hugh Deam June Steele

f) Webmaster Andy Dunn
Paul Lucas David Ingrouille

9. Any Other Business

- The Guild Master, Robert Newton, told members that he had brought a selection from the Guild Book Stall with him.
- Chrissy Cable, Guild Steward, thanked Branch members for their help on the Steeple Aston course and gave a reminder about the Radley course on 4 April 2009.
- Iffley ringers donated the £65 raised from the service collection to the Oxford Night Shelter
- The raffle raised £35 for Branch Funds