

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD CITY BRANCH

Annual General Meeting – 20th November 2010 St. Nicholas, Old Marston

The Branch chairman, Rev. Canon J. Anthony Ellis led the service before tea and the Annual General Meeting.

He welcomed to the meeting, the Guild Master Robert Newton, Guild Hon. Gen. Sec. Hilarie Rogers and Guild Steward, James Haseldine.

There were 27 members present, representing Marston, Kidlington, Iffley, Headington, St. Giles, St. Aldate's, Cowley and Garsington.

1. Apologies for absence

Alan Marchbank, Deputy Guild Master, Brian Gatward, Guild Treasurer, Stuart Gibson, Assistant treasurer, David Lane, Branch Representative, Jan Lawrie, Richard Youdale, Anthony Hughes, John Pusey, Richard Verrall and Adrian Gray.

2. Approval of minutes of the half-year meeting held on 8th 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.

Proposed by Roy Jones

Seconded by Katie Lane

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Election of New Members

The following member was proposed for election:

Caroline Taylor, St Aldate's

Proposed by Jonathan Cresshull

Seconded by Katie Lane

5. Reports from Officers

a) Hon. Secretary

The Secretary reminded members that information for the Guild Report would be due shortly.

The Report recognises long service and there are several members of the branch who come into this category:

Bob Benstead, Rachel Hands, John Pusey, Dermot Roaf, Douglas Wilks (70 years), Clive Holloway, Roy Jones and Basil Townsend

The secretary has found out that certificates are available for long service and can be acquired from the Hon. Guild Secretary on presentation of the date of election and name of the member at the time of election. In order to discover this information the secretary has been researching the Branch Minute Books in her possession and is collecting earlier minute books at the Committee Meeting at the end of November.

Subscriptions are due at the start of 2011; tower correspondents are responsible for completing the form, collecting the monies and returning the information to the secretary.

The Guild Festival will take place in Oxford on Saturday 9th July 2011 and members were asked to keep the date free. At present it is not known if City Branch towers within the ring-road will be opened.

The secretary drew to the attention of the members the significant dates for next year. She confirmed that she would circulate these promptly so that the dates can be entered into diaries. The half year and AGM venues have been fixed, Kidlington (combined with the 6 bell competition) and Wolvercote.

Finally the secretary asked members to keep her informed of activities taking place in the branch. The recent introduction of the Newsletter (*Hugh's News*, produced by Hugh Deam and Paul Lucas) is very successful but there have been several occasions when the secretary has discovered an event has been arranged and taken place within the branch of which she has had no knowledge at all. She asked that events and changes to the branch calendar be notified to her so that she is kept informed of branch business.

For a few years the secretary has arranged for Guild Membership Certificates to be presented to new City Branch members at the meeting at which they are elected. Unfortunately there have been far too many occasions when names have been brought forward for election, certificates made and neither the ringer nor the subscription has ever been heard of again. Consequently the secretary will no longer request Membership Certificates from the Guild Membership Secretary until she has seen the ringer who is proposed at the meeting and has received their subscription. She was delighted to be able to confirm that the subscription for the Caroline Taylor had already been received!

b) Hon. Treasurer

The treasurer was able to confirm that the Branch funds stand at about £1,880 which is the same as 2009.

Four £20 contributions were made towards members' Michaelmas Course expenses in September.

Donations of £67 each have been sent to the Bell and Restoration Funds. Accounts will be presented as at 31 December as normal.

c) Ringing Master

The Ringing Master said that 6-bell ringing in the branch was strong, but it had been hard to make progress with 8-bell practices; in the future 8-bell practices will concentrate on method rather than call changes. He asked for more support for the 8-bell practices.

He suggested that when the City Branch diary of events is completed it should be circulated to every member.

d) Representative

The application for listed Building Consent for the removal of the bells from St. Cross church was not successful. Neither the Diocesan Advisory Committee nor the City Council was in favour of removal because the bells are considered to be an historical asset to the church.

8. Election of Officers

The following officers were duly elected *nem con.*

| Position | Name | | Proposers |
|-----------------|---------------|--------------|--|
| Chairman | Anthony Ellis | Not standing | |
| | Simon Edwards | Standing | 1 st . Katie Lane 2 nd David Lane |
| Deputy Chairman | Roy Jones | Standing | 1 st . Katie Lane 2 nd David Lane |
| Treasurer | Simon Edwards | Not standing | |
| | Matthew Malek | | 1 st Susan King 2 nd Katie Lane |
| Secretary | Katie Lane | Standing | 1 st Roy Jones 2 nd Hugh Deam |
| Ringling Master | Hugh Deam | Standing | 1 st Roy Jones 2 nd Anthony Hughes |
| Representative | David Lane | Standing | 1 st Basil Townsend 2 nd Roy Jones |
| Representative | Clare Morgan | Standing | 1 st Katie Lane 2 nd Chris Fenn |

The Branch Fund Raising Office, Graham Nichols, had presented his resignation and it was decided not to replace him. The post of Fund Raising Officer would return to being an informal position which would for the time being be held by the current Branch Ringing Master.

The Chairman and members recorded their thanks to Graham for all his fund-raising efforts over the last few years.

The Branch Web Manager, Andy Dunn, agreed to continue in post. He, too, was thanked for his contribution to the City Branch.

The new responsibility of Newsletter Editor was recognised and Paul Lucas was given a round of applause for his management of the *Hugh's News*. It was agreed by everyone present that he should continue to be editor and responsible for its circulation.

9. Any Other Business

Deputy Chairman, Roy Jones, said that a suggestion had been made for a ringing outing to London to take place in 2011 on the 3rd Saturday in October. He emphasised the high standard of ringing that would be expected in London towers and explained that all City Branch members who could ring very competently on 10 and 12 would be required to attend in order for the outing to take place. He referred to the theme of the address in the service prior to the meeting that it is up to those who are able, to help others to improve. The next matter he raised was the question of which Saturdays in the month would be most convenient to members for City Branch events. Currently most events are planned for the 1st and 2nd Saturdays in the months; the Deputy Chairman asked members to give consideration to the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month. This change would take place, if agreed, in 2012.

The Guild Master, Robert Newton, gave some advice regarding the proposed outing to London: he made a request for his name to be added to the mailing list for *Hugh's News*.

The Chairman, Rev. Anthony Ellis, then stood and thanked the City Branch members for all the support that he had received from them during his 10 year tenure as chairman. He had enjoyed his time in post, but, looking ahead to retirement in rural Herefordshire within two years he realises that he has to start relinquishing some responsibilities.

He thanked the generosity of Marston ringers, not only for providing the venue, but also for presenting the members an excellent tea with no charge! He thanked the organist, Robert Bruce for his skill and commented on the hearty hymn singing of the branch, better, indeed, than many wedding congregations!

Deputy Chairman, Roy Jones, replied on behalf of the whole branch and thanked Anthony for his excellent chairmanship and for always being there when he was needed. He wished him, on behalf of all the members, a long and happy retirement with plenty of excellent ringing.