

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS
OXFORD CITY BRANCH

Annual General Meeting – Saturday 3rd February 2024

Minutes

1. Apologies for Absence
Steve Everett, Simon Edwards, Gregory Rose, Dorothy Hall, Kathy Xu, Andrea Rowley, Maarit Kivilo
2. Minutes from 2023 AGM
Confirmed as accurate, signed by Paul Lucas (in the chair)
3. Matters Arising (none)
4. Election of New Members

Iffley: Jane Donald, Andrew Honey, Steve Bardsley, Martin King
Proposed by Mike Kinghan, seconded by Elizabeth Mullett

Wolvercote: Steve Roberts
Proposed by Jonathan Beale, seconded by Hugh Deam

Headington: Penny Clark, Kim Thornley
Proposed by Clare Fairbairn, seconded by Annika Everett

Marston: Carolina Redolfi
Proposed by Roy Peach, seconded by Hugh Deam

Kidlington: Susan Kambalu
Proposed by Philip Meredith, seconded by Hugh Deam

St Giles: Andrew Williams, Jonathan Finnerty
Proposed by John Pusey, seconded by Hazel Rothera

St Aldate: Rose Esbester
Proposed by Hazel Rothera, seconded by Peter Spain

Garsington: Britta Horsthemke
Proposed by Mark Hunter, seconded by Brian Lowe
5. Presentation of Certificates by Catherine Lane
6. Reports from Officers

Ringling Master 2023 has been an encouraging year for the City Branch.

We have held branch practices at almost every tower in the branch, with attendance ranging from 5 at Garsington over the summer to regularly over 20 at recent practices. Please encourage any ringers to attend who would benefit from a strong band for their next step.

Headington have been continuing to hold a monthly advanced practice catering to those wanting to progress in their 8-bell ringing, which are increasingly well-attended with many ringers travelling some distance to support and participate. These have regularly featured ringers' first attempts in Stedman Triples and simple Surprise Major, but also recently including Double Norwich and all of the core seven Project Pickled Egg methods, including in spliced.

St Giles' has also been hosting a series of quarters on Sunday afternoons, with 27 scored since the last meeting including six of Surprise Major and many firsts for local ringers. Some highlights were first quarters for Marc and Geraint Jones and Jane Bishop, as well as Marc's first inside, on 8, and of Major and his elder sibling Sara's first as conductor, turning in the tenor and circling the tower. There were also many firsts in methods including Little Bob Major, St Clement's, Double Norwich and Superlative, as well as Grandsire and Stedman Triples.

We were able to send bands to both the 6- and 8-bell striking competitions this year, with Marston representing us at the 6-bell. Please get in touch if you would like to be considered for the 8-bell team for 2024, as we will begin organising team practices shortly.

Secretary Thanks for help organising branch practices and thanks to the tower contacts for replying to emails and finding them when they end up in your spam folders.

Sadly over the last year we have lost: Edgar Litt, past tower captain from Stanton St John, having been ringing for over 70 years. David Coombs, who rang at Wheatley from 2008-2014. Jennifer Barson, Cowley.

Treasurer Peter Bayliss reported on the accounts for the last year. Members were reminded to claim for any training days they go on, along with a reminder about the deadline for the Radley ringing course.

Branch Reps The Guild expressed the hope that as many towers as possible would ring or chime their bells during the Coronation weekend and on the day of the coronation, 6 May. Activity in preparation included intensive teaching of new ringers and weekly broadcasts following a BBC Radio Oxford reporter as she learned to handle a bell.

City Branch contributed a creditable sum of six quarter peals to this effort (two at St Giles', Oxford, two at Old Marston and one each at Iffley and Headington). Eleven towers in the Branch recorded general ringing for the occasion, in some cases with more than one performance during the weekend and in almost every case including experienced and new ringers at the tower. Sadly the occasion did not prove to be an opportunity for bells that could not be rung full circle, or tubular/Ellacombe chimed bells, to be chimed. One peal of 5058 Yorkshire Surprise Major was rung and recorded for the Guild on 9 May at St Thomas the Martyr, Oxford.

7. Election of Officers

Chairperson: Simon Edwards

Proposed by Craig Robertson, seconded by Lindsay Powell

Secretary: Geraint Jones

Proposed by Marc Jones, seconded by Rachel Croft

Vice Chair: Paul Lucas

Proposed by Hugh Deam, seconded by Elizabeth Mullett

Ringling Master: Craig Robertson

Proposed by Paul Lucas, seconded by Elizabeth Mullett

Treasurer: Peter Spain

Proposed by Craig Robertson, seconded by Lindsay Powell

Auditor: Katherine Stonham

Proposed by Peter Bayliss, seconded by Craig Robertson

Branch Reps: Lindsay Powell, Elizabeth Mullett

Proposed by Hazel Rothera, seconded by John Pusey

Webmaster: Andy Dunn

Proposed by Hugh Deam, seconded by Paul Lucas

8. Guild Ringing Day – Monday 6th May

The City branch is responsible for organising the Guild Ringing Day on the early May bank holiday this year. This is a chance for members across the Guild (and further afield) to ring at lots of towers local to Oxford in this instance. There is a route planned, and towers are open for an hour along the way. We try to provide 2-3 stewards per tower depending on the number of bells available. Ringers will drop in at various towers to ring and we want to make sure they can.

Thanks to all the tower contacts who have already replied regarding this.

9. Branch Training Opportunities

Want to start running some branch training which has a specific focus, in addition to branch practices. The idea being that these would be 2h workshops looking at both theory and practical work, with two groups. The idea for the first session is place counting, ropesight and listening to your bell. The date is Saturday 16th March 10.30-12.30 with location tbc (possibly Cowley).

Tower captains will be emailed for feedback re June/July options to see which is most wanted in the branch. The choice is in moving on from doubles to minor or triples.

10. Any other business

Please remember to update the branch secretary with any changes to practices or tower contacts. It is important that we can update both our website, and the guild email addresses.

MemberMojo is planned to be introduced across the Guild and will aim to make sending information out easier, be completely GDPR compliant. It is already used by several other bellringing guilds and other societies. Catherine Lane explained more fully, but there will be a followup email explaining it all (this was read out in the meeting).

Young ringer practices for the Northern branches of the Guild are being organised by Colin Lee. Anyone who is interested please get in touch with Dorothy Hall and she will pass on details.

11. Prayer