

Minutes of The Annual General Meeting of the Suffolk Guild of Ringers held on Saturday 17th April 2004 at Sudbury

The Chairman, Mr Winston Girling, opened the meeting and welcomed the 43 members present, mentioning how good it was to hear the bells of All Saints being rung again. He thanked Revd. Andrew Platt, whom he wished a very happy forthcoming retirement for a very enjoyable service, and Beverley Ablett for playing the organ. He also thanked Virginia Bonner and her band of helpers for providing the tea.

2. Apologies for absence were received from Michael and Jennifer Warren, Ralph and Tessa Earey, Sally Munnings, Alan Munnings, Alan Rogers, Katrina Rogers, Mary Garner, Chris Garner, Ruth Suggett, Ann Henderson, Bel Rivers, Ray Rivers, George Pipe, Diana Pipe, Ray Rainbird, Peter Allen, Paul Stannard, Jenny Beckwith, David Mulrenan, Tim and Naomi Shaw, Richard Gates, Margaret Cherry, Angela Cable, Peter Davies, Jonathan and Suzanne Stevens, Milly Clark, Ian Holland, Marigold Salmon, Catherine Colman, Julian Colman, Margaret Lambeth, Geoff Pulford, Leslie Southgate, Audrey and Alan Foreman, d and Mary Hynard, Charles Ablitt, Simon Pilsbury, Stephen Pettman, Ann Brechin, Veronica Downing, Owen Claxton, Adrian Knights, Barbara and Tony Claydon

3. Minutes of the 2003 AGM

These had been previously published in the Annual Report. It was proposed by Maurice Rose, seconded by Revd Brian Redgers and agreed that these be accepted, with the correction of the spelling of the names of Ted Sampson and Josephine Beever.

4. Matters arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

5. Officers' Reports:

The Chairman began by thanking everyone for their support during his first year of office, which he had enjoyed. He emphasised the strength of the Restoration Fund and grants offered, and put in a plea for more towers to enter the St Edmund Clapper competition this year.

Master: David Salter presented the Mater's report as printed.

In answer to questions he defended his upbeat comments, saying that he had received many positive comments throughout the year. He felt that the downturn in entries for the striking competition was due to the location in the South West, which made it difficult for more distant bands to enter. The problem of peals being credited to other Associations whilst being rung in Suffolk towers by Suffolk members was discussed. There was a strong feeling that loyalty to the Guild should be paramount. The Master explained why he was not listed in the Annual Report under a church tower.

The report was accepted by the meeting.

Secretary: Sandra Pereira presented the Secretary's report as printed. This was accepted by the meeting.

Treasurer: Eric Bull presented the accounts as published, highlighting some of the figures.

John Girt asked that we look more closely at how we spend money, and expressed concern at the lack of younger members.

In response to a question from Brian Whiting, the treasurer agreed to categorise the St Edmund clapper income separately. The report was accepted by the meeting.

James Smith reminded the meeting that the Charity Commissioners required a statement explaining the level of reserves now held by charities.

Public Relations Officer: The public relations officer had resigned part way through the year due to ill health. There was, therefore, no report.

Technical Adviser and Belfry Advisory Committee: Winston Girling and Alan Moulton proposed that the report as written be adopted. This was agreed.

The tower listings had been updated so that bells with estimated weights were rounded to the nearest hundredweight.

Librarian: Gillian Wakefield proposed, that the Librarian's report as published be adopted. This was agreed.

The restored handbell was on display at the meeting. Mrs Wakefield thanked Winston Girling for restoring it.

Peal Secretary: In the absence of the Peal secretary, the meeting agreed to adopt his report as written.

Handbell Trustee: The Chairman gave a verbal report reminding members that there are handbell sets in SW (with Winnie Lockwood) and NE districts (with Jonathan Stevens), and two sets in his care. All were in good order. He proposed, that the report be adopted. This was agreed.

6. Subscriptions and fees for 2005:

The GMC proposed that subscriptions and fees for 2005 be the same as for 2004:

Ringling Member	£13.00
Ringling Member over 65	£ 6.50
Ringling member in full time education	£ 5.00
Associate member	£ 6.50
Non Resident Life Member	£6.00
Peal Fee	£ 1.00

Donations

Friends of St Peter's Sudbury	£50.00
Friends of the Cathedral	£50.00
Suffolk Historic Churches Trust	£50.00
Donations in lieu of Wreaths	£25.00

The proposal was seconded by Gordon Slack.

Carol Girling proposed, seconded by Jackie savage, that subscriptions be £10 for all adults and a reduced subscription of £6.50 for all in full time education and non-resident life members. After considerable discussion, this amendment was withdrawn. The original proposal was then agreed by the meeting: 32 votes for, 2 against and four abstentions.

7. Election of Officers for 2004/2005:

Vice-Presidents: Brian Redgers proposed, seconded by John Pereira that the Vice presidents as listed in the 2003 Annual report be re-elected en bloc. This was agreed.

Chairman: Maurice Rose proposed, seconded by John Girt, that Winston Girling be elected as Chairman. Mr Girling was elected,

Ringing Master: Carol Girling proposed, seconded by Gordon Slack, that David Salter be elected as Ringing Master. Mr Salter was elected

Secretary: David Salter proposed, seconded by John Taylor that Sandra Pereira be re-elected as Secretary. Mrs Pereira was elected.

Treasurer & Gift Aid Secretary: Shirley Girt proposed, seconded by Maurice Rose, that Eric Bull be re-elected as Treasurer. Mr Bull was elected.

Technical Adviser: John Pereira proposed, seconded by John Taylor, that Alan Moulton be re-elected as Technical Adviser. Mr Moulton was elected.

Chairman of the Belfry Advisory Committee: John Pereira proposed, seconded by Gordon Slack, that Winston Girling be re-elected as Chairman of the Belfry Advisory Committee. Mr Girling was elected.

Public Relations Officer: As there were no nominations for this post, it was left vacant.

Librarian: Shirley Girt proposed, seconded by Sandra Pereira, that Gillian Wakefield be re-elected as Librarian. Mrs Wakefield was elected.

Report Editor: Sandra Pereira proposed, seconded by Maurice Rose that Ruth Suggett be elected as Report Editor. Mrs Suggett was elected.

The thanks of the meeting were expressed to Ruth for the effort she has put into producing this year's report.

Newsletter Editor: John Pereira proposed, seconded by Brian Redgers, that Isobel Rivers be re-elected as Newsletter Editor. Mrs Rivers was elected.

She had put in a request that the dates of the newsletter be Spring, Summer Autumn and Winter to allow more flexibility in timing. This was agreed by the meeting.

Peal Secretary: Alan Mayle had decided to stand down after twenty years in this office. The thanks of the meeting were expressed to him.

Maurice Rose proposed, seconded by Canon Lawrence Pizzey that Christine Knight be elected as Peal Secretary. This was agreed by the meeting.

Auditor: Maurice Rose proposed, seconded by John Girt, that Larking Gowen be re-elected as Auditor. This was agreed.

Handbell Trustee: Richard Knight proposed, seconded by Lawrence Pizzey, that Brian Whiting be re-elected as Handbell Trustee. Mr Whiting was elected.

Central Council Representatives: John Pereira proposed, seconded by Trevor Hughes, that David Salter, Lawrence Pizzey, Stephen Pettman and Alan Smith be our Central Council representatives for the coming triennium. This was agreed by the meeting.

8. Election of Life Honorary Members

There were no nominations for Life Honorary membership.

9. Election of New Members

It was agreed that the following be elected members of the Guild:

Richard Clarke from East Bergholt - proposed by Sally Munnings

Celia Sims from Falkenham - proposed by Sally Munnings

Both nominations were seconded by John Pereira.

10. Proposal for Rule Changes

A proposal was put to the meeting by the GMC to change the following in the Constitution and Rules:

Rule H5 to read:

A person resident outside the Diocese who wishes to be associated with the Guild may be elected a Non Resident Life Member. A one off subscription is payable by such members. Any Non Resident Life Membership ceases if the member takes up residency within the Diocese.

This was proposed by David Salter on behalf of the GMC, seconded by James Smith and agreed by 42 votes with one abstention.

Rule H 2.3 to read:

Persons in full time education and members over 65 years of age shall pay a reduced rate of subscription.

Members over 75 years of age shall pay no subscription.

Rule H 2.4 to be deleted.

This was proposed by David Salter on behalf of the GMC, seconded by James Smith and agreed by 41 votes with two abstentions.

It was emphasized that members between the ages of 65 and 75 currently enjoying free membership would continue to do so.

11. Date and Venue for 2005 AGM

The 2005 AGM will take place on Saturday April 2nd 2005 in the North East District at Beccles. Lawrence Pizzey commented on the current low attendance, and recalled the days when 150 members would

attend the AGM. He asked that the GMC look at the format of the day to try and make it more attractive for more members.

12. Any Other Business

The secretary drew members' attention to the CCCB guidelines on child protection and sample parental consent form that were distributed with agendas. It is hoped that all towers will use these documents in order to fulfil the law on child protection.

John Girt felt that the current officers had a lack of concern for the members. He put in a plea for more social events to concentrate on members and put less emphasis on the apparent obsession with restoration.

David Salter reminded members about the Loyalty service with the Bishop to be held on 18th July at Debenham and encouraged all members to attend.

Muriel Page reminded members about the Veterans Day at Debenham on 14th July.

Gillian Wakefield offered to take commissions to paint portraits, with proceeds going to the library fund.

Brian Whiting expressed concern about the website. John Pereira had been abroad and had not been able to do recent updating. Stephen Young had offered to be web master; it was hope that he would take it on soon.

Rolie Whiting reported that the collection from the service amounted to £101.80. This would be donated to All Saints bell restoration fund.

In answer to a question from Bruce Wakefield about cover for bell ringing being in household insurance, David Salter said that he doubted that most policies would include such cover.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 5.12 pm.