

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Suffolk Guild of Ringers held on Saturday 14th April 2007 at Stonham Aspal

1. The Chairman, Mr Winston Girling, opened the meeting by giving a warm welcome to the fifty five members present, especially Christine Knight recovering from a serious illness. He thanked all those involved in the day's arrangements, especially Jenny Scase.

The meeting stood in remembrance of members who had died during the past year.

2. Apologies for absence were received from Sue Freeman, Mandy Shedden, Alan Moulton, Margaet Lambeth, David & Katharine Salter, John & Sandra Pereira, Stefan Labedzki, Frank & Gwen Bloomfield, Di Dockery, Brian Aldous, Jonathan & Suzanne Stevens, Ian and Pamela Harris, Carl Melville, St John Perry, Elizabeth Teverson, Ian & Marion Holland, Rose Godfrey, Jenny Scase, Thomas Scase, Diana Pipe, Bernard Pipe, Chris Munnings, Jason Busby, Pat Bailey, Angela Cable, Mary Ridd, David Stanford, Annie Quilton, Hazel Judge, Winnie & Tinker Lockwood, John Smith, Josephine Beever, Mary Allum

3. Minutes of the 2006 AGM

These had been published in the Annual Report. They were accepted by the meeting and signed as a true record.

4. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Officers' reports

Master: Richard Munnings presented the Master's Report as printed in the Annual Report. It was seconded by Maurice Rose and accepted by the meeting

Secretary: Mary Garner proposed the acceptance of the Secretary's report as printed. This was seconded Shirley Girt and agreed by the meeting.

Treasurer: Keith Ashton Jones presented the accounts as published, commenting that they had now been audited. There were questions regarding the amount recorded under peal fees and non-resident life member fees. It was explained that almost £300 had been entered just after the accounts had been sent off. He proposed the acceptance of the accounts for 2006, which was seconded by Sally Munnings and carried by the meeting.

Public Relations Officer: Bruce Wakefield said it was his aim to raise the profile of ringing through advertising and supporting local events, to which end he urged the Guild support of Open Churches week, from 14th July. He reminded the members to ask if they wish an event to be publicized. He was thanked for his work on behalf of the Guild. He proposed the acceptance of his report which was seconded by Keith Ashton Jones and agreed by the meeting.

Belfry Advisory Committee: Winston Girling proposed that the report as printed should be adopted. A question was asked about Assington and the local difficulties were explained to the meeting. Richard Knight thanked Winston for his hard work at All Saints Sudbury, which was much appreciated by the SW District. The report was seconded by Mary Garner and agreed by the meeting.

Librarian: Gillian Wakefield proposed the report as printed. This was seconded by Muriel Page and agreed by the meeting.

Peal secretary: Christine Knight addressed the meeting and spoke of the Guild as a body which has always given support and encouragement to others. Richard and Christine have been very touched by the abundance of care and support shown to them during the past few months and offered their thanks to everyone. She proposed the acceptance of her report as printed. It was seconded by Ruth Suggett and agreed by the meeting.

The chairman thanked her and added that it was good to see that the number of peals had increased from previous years.

Handbell Trustee: Brian Whiting, the Trustee, reported that one set was held in the SW, another in the NE

and two sets with him. There had been no demand for loans this year. He proposed that his report be adopted, which was seconded by Lesley Wilson, and agreed by the meeting.

6. Subscriptions, fees and donations for 2008

The GMC proposed that subscriptions should be amended as follows for 2008:

Ringling Member	£ 14.00
Ringling Member 65-74	£ 7.00
Members 75 and over	Free
Ringling member in full time education	£ 5.00
Associate member	£ 7.00
Non Resident Life Member	£ 6.00

It proposed that fees and donations should be held at the levels for 2007:

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 Alan Smith and carried unanimously.

Maurice Rose thanked the GMC and all the Guild and District Officers for their hard work throughout the year.

7. Election of Officers for 2007/2008:

Vice-Presidents: Chris Garner proposed and David Steed seconded, that the Vice Presidents as listed in the 2006 Annual Report be re-elected on bloc. This was agreed.

Chairman: Maurice Rose proposed, seconded by Chris Garner, that Winston Girling be re-elected as Chairman. Winston was elected. He said that he had enjoyed four years in the post and would do his best for the coming year, but that by the next AGM he would have completed five years and a new chairman would need to be found.

Ringling Master: James Smith proposed, seconded by Adrian Knights, that Richard Munnings be re-elected as Ringling Master. Richard was elected and congratulated on his work during the year. He thanked the members following a round of applause

Secretary: Marion Turner proposed, seconded by Simon Cottrell, that Mary Garner be re-elected as Secretary. Mary was elected. She was thanked for her work during the last year.

Treasurer & Gift Aid Secretary: James Smith proposed, seconded by Alan Munnings, that Keith Ashton-Jones be re-elected as Treasurer and Gift Aid secretary. Keith was elected. He was thanked for all his hard work during the past year.

Technical Adviser: Bruce Wakefield proposed, seconded by Trevor Hughes, that Michael Rolph be re-elected as Technical Adviser. Michael was elected

Chairman of the Belfry Advisory Committee: Mary Garner proposed, seconded by Ruth Suggett, that Winston Girling be re-elected as Chairman of the Belfry Advisory Committee. Winston was elected.

Public Relations Officer: Richard Munnings proposed, seconded by Alan Munnings, that Bruce Wakefield be re-elected as Public Relations Officer. Bruce was elected.

Central Council Representatives: Laurence Pizzey, Stephen Pettman, David Salter, and Alan Smith had declared their willingness to stand for re election for the coming triennium. John Girt proposed, seconded by Maurice Rose, that Richard Munnings, as master, should be elected as a representative. Richard was elected. Alan Smith addressed the members saying that he would stand down. He was thanked by the chairman. Alan Smith proposed, seconded by Alan Munnings, that Laurence Pizzey, David Salter and Stephen Pettman should be Guild representatives. This was agreed by the meeting. There was a round of applause for Alan Smith. James Smith said that Alan Smith was held in high regard at Central Council, a statement supported by John Girt.

Librarian: Shirley Girt proposed, seconded by Sally Munnings, that Gillian Wakefield be re-elected as Librarian. Gillian was elected and thanked for her work with the library.

Report Editor: Maurice Rose proposed, seconded by Keith Ashton Jones, that Ruth Suggett be re-elected as Report Editor. Ruth was elected.

The chairman expressed grateful thanks to her on behalf of the Guild for a labour of love. She thanked the many people who had helped in its production.

Newsletter Editor: Ruth Suggett proposed, seconded by Richard Munnings, that Carl Melville be re-elected as Newsletter Editor. Carl was elected

Peal Secretary: Mary Garner proposed, seconded by James Smith, that Christine Knight be re-elected as Peal Secretary. Christine said she would be delighted to stand and thanked various people for helping with proof reading her section of the report and Ruth Suggett for allowing her enough time to complete her report. Christine was elected.

Auditor: Keith Ashton-Jones proposed, seconded by Maurice Rose, that Larking Gowen should be appointed to certify the accounts. This was agreed by the meeting.

Handbell Trustee: Adrian Knights proposed, seconded by Robert Scase, that Brian Whiting be re-elected as Handbell Trustee. Brian was elected.

All the officers were thanked for all their work throughout the year. John Taylor, What's On coordinator, said that great thanks should be made to Chris Garner for his work on the Guild website

8. Election of Life Honorary Members

Maurice Rose, on behalf of the NW District proposed Jack Banks for Life Honorary Membership. He spoke his many years as a ringer at St Mary's in Bury. The proposal was seconded by Paul Stannard and Mr Banks was elected by the meeting. It was noted that he will be 100 on 31st October 2007.

9. Election of New Members

The following were proposed, seconded and elected as members of the Guild:

John Wolff from Parham, proposed by Simon Cottrell and seconded by Jon James; Honor Dines from Felixstowe proposed by Sally Munnings and seconded by Alan Munnings; Jonathan Hardy, Alan Balcomb, Gillian Wiseman, Joan Lonsdale, John Round-Turner, Ben Boss, David Andrews, Edmund Black, Margaret Bright, Sheila Price, and Sarah Johnson from Exning, all proposed by Ruth Suggett and seconded by Marion Turner; Ronald Wright from Wickham Skeith, Denise and John Robinson from Stowmarket, proposed from the chair and seconded by Maurice Rose.

Peter Harper's membership was ratified, proposed by Alan Mcburnie and seconded by Sally Munnings

The chairman extended a warm welcome to the new members on behalf of the Guild

10. The St Edmunds Clapper Competition

The results of fund raising for the Bell Restoration Fund in 2006 were as follows: £50 from the Folly, £146 from Sproughton and £300 from Offton.

Brian Whiting collected the trophy on behalf of Offton. Thanks were expressed to everyone for helping to raise money for the Bell Restoration Fund.

11. Date and Venue for 2008 AGM – SW district

The next AGM will take place on Saturday March 29th 2008.* Richard Knight invited the Guild to Lavenham. on behalf of SW district.

12. Any Other Business

Sally Munnings announced that she had two fleeces for sale, to suit either children or small adult. She will be sending a new order in the Autumn. Quiz sheets are available at £1 each. Both raising funds for St Edmund's Clapper Competition on behalf of Sproughton.

After tea in Debenham, everyone was invited to go and support evening ringing at Henley.

The Master invited the members to view a small display about ringing centres at the back of the hall.

The St Edmund's Clapper Competition was commended to the members.

It was announced that Winnie Lockwood went into hospital

Brian Whiting sought the views of the meeting regarding the GMC grant offer of £14000 to the Ixworth Project. He felt this to be rather disappointing since Ixworth was Lenny Sharpe's church. A lively and full discussion followed both supporting the idea for the grant to be larger and voicing opposition to any further award. Eventually a proposal was tabled that the grant for the Ixworth restoration project should be referred back to the GMC for reconsideration. The vote that followed recorded 42 for, 3 against and 2 abstentions

John Girt was disappointed at the relatively poor attendance at meeting, about 8% of the membership, last year about 9%. Should this be a wake up call to what we do in the Guild? He commented on the time taken for consultation, through districts and the GMC. Should the meeting structure be changed to allow more general meetings? Discussion followed raising the question of whether more meetings were the answer and the effect on the General Management Committee, or whether there were already too many meetings.

Susan Schurr said she had heard that Essex were going to use the Olympics for recruitment. Could the Suffolk Guild do the same for young people particularly?

Robert Beevis pointed out that ringing does have an image problem among young people. Unlike Support the Olympics it's often referred to as a pensioner's hobby.

Gillian Wakefield said that the GMC already awards £50 per annum to the library, but there are some paintings for sale for library funds too.

The members were encouraged to read the recent article in The Ringing World about Gift Aided phobia.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 4.08pm

*nb The 2008 AGM on **5th April 2008** at Lavenham and Long Melford.

Mary Garner
Hon Secretary