

# 2020 Annual General Meeting of the Suffolk Guild of Ringers for the Diocese of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich

5:30pm Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2020 via  
Zoom virtual meeting

Minutes by Neal Dodge



## 1) Welcome

- a) The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed members.
- b) Members present (68):  
Stephen Cheek, Neal Dodge, Rowan Wilson, Peter & Jane Harper, Dawn Gillett, Amanda Richmond, Christine Knight, Adrian Beatty, Tom Scase, Jenny & Robert Scase, Chris Munnings, Maurice Rose, Becky Munnings, Mary Dunbavin Kate Gill, Philip Gorrod, Nick Hughes, Chris & Jill Birkby, David Stanford, Sal Jenkinson, Mark Ogden, Simon Rudd, Lynda & David Lee, Colin Salter, Katharine & David Salter, Martin Weaver, Richard Rapor, Dave Goldstone, Sharon Burman, Brian Whiting, John Taylor, Mike Cowling, Richard & Ruth Munnings, Mervyn & Tracey Scase, Pauline Brown, Lesley Barrell, Chris McArthur, Julia Brown, Sarah Plummer, Suzanne Stevens, Margaret Cherry, Ann Buswell, Gordon Ellis, Erika Clarke, Chris & Mary Garner, Maureen Gardiner, Gordon Slack, Cath Colman, Mike BostockSmith, Lesley & David Steed, James Smith, Ralph Earey, Abby Antrobus, Michelle Golding, Nigel Gale, Kate Eagle, Julie Rapor, Jill & Doug Rood, Julian Colman.

## 2) Apologies

Apologies were received from; Sally Munnings, Diana Pipe, Richard Knight, Chris Davies, and Nathan Colman. Rowan passed on the Guild's best wishes to Richard & Chris for their recovery.

## 3) Absent friends

Neal Dodge read out the names of members who had died in 2019 and 2020 and were not mentioned in the 2019 annual report

They were: Colonel Chris Dale, David Jessop (NRLM), Peter Hamilton-Jones, Alan Feaver, David Smith, Howard Nailard, Penelope Glasier (née Davy), Ernie Bishop, Anthony Clayton (former member), Eric Bull, Shelia Franks, Elisabet Lynn, Lilian Caudle, George Pipe, Anne Haywood, Delia Hammerton, Mick Edwards (NRLM), Coral Fry, Barbara Newson, Richard Stannard, E. Frank Gilbert (former member), Alan Munnings, and Richard Pegg.

## 4) Minutes of the last meeting

- a) These were included in the 2019 annual report. Rowan proposed they be accepted as a true record of the meeting; this was passed unanimously.
- b) There were no matters arising.

## 5) Annual Report 2019

- a) There were no comments on the 2019 annual report.
- b) The officers' and trustees' reports were accepted unanimously.
- c) Mark Ogden thanked all those that had contributed to the annual report and encouraged anyone who had corrections or content for the 2020 to send it to him well in advance. Rowan thanked Mark for taking on the role and echoed his wish for corrections to be sent to Mark as soon as possible.

## 6) Central Council Report 2019

- a) Chris Birkby ran through his report for the 2019 meeting which was available on the website. He also gave an overview of the 2020 annual meeting which had been held earlier in the month.
- b) Rowan thanked Chris for continuing in the role of CC rep when he moved to Suffolk from the Southwell and Nottingham Guild. She also commended the Central Council for their work in negotiating with the Church and Government on COVID ringing guidance and then distributing that guidance to ringers.

## 7) Subscriptions and Peal fees for 2021.

Rowan confirmed that there was no proposed change for the fees for 2021 but urged everyone to pay their subscriptions on time and encourage others members who had not paid to do so especially as the opportunity to remind members at face to face meetings and ringing had not been possible this year. On time payment of subscriptions is important as it allows better financial planning and eases the burden on Guild and District officers.

2020

## 8) Election of Officers

- a) Rowan ran through the table below of candidates for the various positions and highlighted that all apart from the technical advisors and Kate Gill as a trustee were either elected at the last AGM or had been appointed by the GMC on an interim basis. The meeting unanimously elected the officers as proposed.
- b) Rowan highlighted that we have one vacant position for Central Council rep as we are entitled to four. She encouraged members to consider filling this position. Neal commented that some useful documents on the role of reps and the Central Council were now on the website.

### Officers

Post	Elected	Proposed by	Seconded by
Chairman	<b>Rowan Wilson</b>	Philip Gorrod	Mike Cowling
Ringing Master	<b>Tom Scase</b>	John Taylor	Clive Bignell
Secretary	<b>Kate Gill*</b>	Sal Jenkinson	Philip Gorrod
Treasurer	<b>Stephen Cheek</b>	Jonathan Williamson	Sue Williamson
Chair of the BAC	<b>Chris Davies*</b>	Chris McArthur	Winston Girling
Technical Advisor	<b>Alan Moul &amp; Jed Flatters (to hold post jointly)</b>	Chris McArthur	Winston Girling
PRO	<b>Neal Dodge</b>	Ruth Suggett	Simon Veal
Report Editor	<b>Mark Ogden*</b>	Mary Garner	Chris Garner
Magazine Editor	Not required as magazine no longer exists		
Librarian	<b>Abby Antrobus</b>	Tom Scase	Katharine Salter
Peal Secretary	<b>Christine Knight</b>	Maurice Rose	Brian Whiting
Handbell Trustee	<b>Brian Whiting</b>	Janet Sheldrake	Gordon Slack
Mini ring Trustee	<b>Brian Whiting</b>	Gordon Slack	Janet Sheldrake
Webmaster	<b>Chris Garner</b>	Ruth Munnings	Mike Whitby

\* Appointments made at GMC.

### Central Council Reps

Elected	Proposed by	Seconded by

Stephen Pettman	Tom Scase	Rowan Wilson
Neal Dodge	Ruth Suggett	Simon Veal
Chris Birkby	Sue Williamson	Jonathan Williamson

### Trustees

Elected	Proposed by	Seconded by
Rowan Wilson	David Stanford	Brian Whiting
Stephen Cheek		
Tom Scase		
Kate Gill (new)		

## 9) 50 years of membership awards

- a) Rowan thanked Mary Garner and Peter Harper for organising these awards which are given to members who had served 50 years with the Guild. This year there were two recipients; Robert Rolph of Lakenheath and Jenny Scase of Debenham. Rowan thanked them for their service to ringing and the Guild. The certificates prepared for them would be passed on when possible.
- b) Rowan also wished to recognise a number of long serving Guild and District officers including;
- Ruth Young who has been NW District treasurer for 25 years in addition to serving as NW district secretary, and previously NE District Secretary and Treasurer in the 1980s;
  - Brian Whiting for 30 years as the Guild handbell trustee and 10 years as the mini ring trustee since its inception in 2010.
  - Lynda Lee for 16 years as Sudbury deanery rep
  - Julie Rapior for 14 years as NE District Treasurer
- Rowan commended those mentioned and all other officers for their hard work which often goes unnoticed but is vital for the smooth running of the Guild.

## 10) Life Honorary Membership Election

- a) Tom Scase proposed Chris Garner for Life Honorary membership after approval at the GMC. Tom explained that Chris has served as our webmaster for the past 15 years and has done an exemplary job in keeping the site up to date and as a result we have one of the best ringing websites of any Guild/Association. He devotes a significant amount of time to the website and the email system and is always prompt in responding to requests. Rowan added that Chris's quick response to various events especially during this difficult period have been invaluable and thoroughly supported his nomination.
- b) Chris Garner was elected a Life Honorary Member unanimously.

## 11) St Edmund's Clapper competition

- a) Stephen Cheek confirmed that Offton had won the contest for 2019 with £400 raised for the restoration fund. The other entrants were Sproughton and the Millbeck ring.
- b) Rowan said that she had a plan to encourage other groups to enter given both the circumstances of this year and the fact that only a few towers usually enter. It would be District based rather than having individual towers enter and that there would be an additional prize for the most innovative fund-raising method. Full details would be posted on the website.  
<https://www.suffolkbells.org.uk/StEdmundsClapperCompetition.php>

## 12) Appointment of Independent Examiner

Stephen explained that due to a decision by Larking Gowen to start charging for their services the Guild had switched to B A S Accountants last year. He was very happy with their services and proposed that they be reappointed which was seconded by Rowan. The meeting unanimously approved this decision.

### 13) Guild events for 2021

Rowan explained that cancelled events for 2020 would be rolled over into next year. Therefore the AGM, if possible to be held in person would be in the SW district, the six bell striking contest in the NE district, and the eight bell striking contest and social in the NW district.

### 14) Updates from the GMC

a) Rowan ran through some items the GMC had working on during the year

- **Officer roles and responsibilities**

Rowan explained that often people are reluctant to take on roles within the Guild because they are unsure of the responsibilities that come with it, so together with the existing role holders and the GMC she's put together a matrix of responsibilities. This was approved by the GMC and is now on the website.

[www.suffolkbells.org.uk/pdfs/GuildOfficerPostsTasksAndResponsibilities\\_Final.pdf](http://www.suffolkbells.org.uk/pdfs/GuildOfficerPostsTasksAndResponsibilities_Final.pdf)

[www.suffolkbells.org.uk/pdfs/DistrictOfficerPostsTasksAndResponsibilities\\_Final.pdf](http://www.suffolkbells.org.uk/pdfs/DistrictOfficerPostsTasksAndResponsibilities_Final.pdf)

- **Guild Policies**

There's been a small team led by Philip Gorrod looking at developing guidance and policies on topics which aren't covered by the Guild rules. These are in draft and will be presented to the GMC meeting in October.

- **Grant Terms and Conditions**

This year the GMC along with the R&T committee and BAC have reviewed the Grant Terms and Conditions to better ensure the sustainability of projects to which we award grants. This includes requiring applicants to demonstrate to the R&T committee a feasible plan to recruit and retain ringers so when bells are restored they are regularly rung and our money is well spent.

- **Virtual Ringing**

Rowan highlighted some of the virtual/COVID safe activities that ringers could do to remain connected including Ringing Room, Handbells, quizzes, and talks. There is a page on the website with various resources. [www.suffolkbells.org.uk/VirtualRingingResources.php](http://www.suffolkbells.org.uk/VirtualRingingResources.php)

### 15) 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary dinner

Rowan ran through plans for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary dinner. She had appointed a small committee of the district secretaries and the Guild secretary to organise the event. We have been offered Ashlar House in Bury St Edmunds as the venue and have made a provisional booking for Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

### 16) George Pipe's biography

Christine Knight spoke about George Pipe's biography written by John Loveless. She gave an overview of the content and the extensive work that had gone into writing the book. This would be advertised for sale in the Ringing World at £18.50 with a discount for bulk orders. She encouraged those present to spread the word about the book and its wide appeal to ringers in Suffolk.

### 17) Book on the History of the Suffolk Guild

a) Philip Gorrod explained the background to the project that George Pipe had started to put together a history of the guild a number of years ago but had been unable to finish it. The notes and documents had been passed to Philip with a view to find a future for it. Several members have worked with Philip to type up George's notes and through this exercise it's been discovered that the project is a long way off being complete and a large amount of work would be required to produce a publication.

b) Philip has made a recommendation to the GMC that the project be paused and the typed up material along with George's papers be stored in the Guild library ready for someone to take this on in future. He asked members to consider taking this on. *Later in the meeting the Salter family volunteered to take on the project which was gladly accepted.*

### 18) AOB

a) **Women in ringing**

Rowan reminded members that Kate Gill has sent out an email requesting information from tower captains and officers as part of the nationwide 'Women in Ringing' project.

**b) Memorial service**

As there hasn't been an opportunity for normal funeral services to go ahead Rowan explained that it's planned to have a memorial service hopefully sometime next year to remember all those members who have passed away.

**c) Laxfield restoration project**

Neal Dodge shared the news that Laxfield had been awarded £66k in Heritage Lottery funding which completes their fundraising target with work starting on Monday. He had arranged for some upcoming coverage of this project on Radio Suffolk and commended their project's website. Stephen Cheek commented that when he visited the church recently the information boards mentioned many of the project's donors but disappointingly not the Guild. Neal replied that a permanent exhibition on the bells and ringing would be installed at Laxfield & District museum.

Rowan brought the meeting to a close and thanked members for attending. She encouraged people to donate to the restoration fund via internet banking in lieu of a normal collection.