

Suffolk Guild of Ringers Belfry Advisory Committee

Minutes of Committee Meeting held on Friday, February 8th 2002 at 6, Cavendish Road Stowmarket at 7.30p.m.

Those present: Winston Girling (Convenor) David Greenfield, Dr. Stuart Harrison, Chris McArthur, Alan Moulton (Hon. Technical Advisor) David Moyse, Chris Nunn, Michael Rolph, David Salter and Neville Whittell.

Apologies were received from: John Pereira, George Pipe, Bruce Wakefield and David Webb.

The Chairman thanked the members of the Committee for attending.

Minutes: The Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 21st September 2001 had already been circulated to members and were agreed and signed.

Matters Arising: Neville Whittell had inadvertently been left off the list of members attending and apologies from Alan Moulton had similarly been omitted. Both were added with apologies from the Convenor.

District Reports

North East: M. Rolph reported on **Wissett** (6 - 8cwt) bells ringeable but frame dips and some interest. D. Greenfield mentioned that nothing further to report at **Wrentham** (6 - 10cwt) and D. Moyse said that the Galebreaker Rainguard material fitted over the louvers at **Reydon** (6 - 10cwt) works very well. Plastic sheet (damp course) had been fitted at the bottom to channel water away from the louvers. W. Girling said that he had been to **Fressingfield** (8 - 17cwt) with A. Moulton recently to meet the architect and an engineer as there is interest in restoration. W. Girling read a note from D. Webb who had been to **Barsham** (5 - 6cwt) and had tightened the frame and foundation bolts and carried out other maintenance work on this recently restored installation. The outer frame bolts need freeing and tightening and the wheels on 3 and 5 need packing out and tightening.

North West: W. Girling said that the Church architect had instructed that the tower at **Cotton** (8 - 10cwt) must not be climbed because of the decaying first floor. Because the back six bells are on plain bearings it is necessary to regularly oil them and consequently the bells have had the ropes removed and are to be regarded as unringeable. The Church are taking steps to have repairs carried out as soon as possible. At **Ixworth** (6 - 16 cwt) the bells have been checked and maintained and the first peal rung for 20 years. **Newmarket All Saints** (8 - 10cwt) have been reported on and complete restoration advised together with other work including if possible a lighter ring of bells altogether hung lower in this slender brick tower which will probably need some openings bricked up on the inside. Although there has been a recent attempt by ringers from outside Suffolk to gain permission to ring there our Technical Advisor has stated that the bells are **still regarded as Condition 3 and therefore not ringeable**. W. Girling had been asked to attend a meeting with the Vicar and Churchwardens at **Thurston** (5 - 11cwt) and it now looks as if things are moving towards complete restoration of these bells. W. Girling and A. Moulton recently visited **Wickham Skeith** (6 - 10cwt) and a report has advised restoration but it will be in order to rehang in the existing wooden Day frame, which is solid and in a state of good repair. **Worlington** (5 - 8cwt) have also been reported on and new frame and fittings advised but nothing further heard from the Parish.

South East: A. Moulton reported that **Earl Stonham** (5 - 9cwt) are moving toward restoration and augmentation to 6 in a new 8 bell frame. C. McArthur said that work is proceeding slowly at **Easton** (6 - 9cwt) towards rehang on new fittings, and the tower at **Wickham Market** (6 -

12cwt) is to be the subject of repairs later this year but apparently it may still not be possible to ring the bells! D. Salter reported that his private ring of bells **The Wolery** (8 - 9 1/2lbs) is now in use. David is to be congratulated on his efforts to produce a second private ring in Suffolk and the Committee were invited to hold their next BAC meeting there. Thank you David for the kind invitation, we look forward to seeing the bells. W. Girling has been to **Holbrook** (6 - 8cwt) and advised on pulley and slider problems, and also replacing the tenor crown pad which has started to break up. W. Girling and A. Moulton have visited and reported on **Nedging** (2 - 8cwt) and advised on possible options to restore the bells for chiming. S. Harrison requested clarification re ringing and insurance at **East Bergholt** (5 - 26cwt) and this is to be mentioned at the next GMC.

South West: W. Girling and A. Moulton had recently visited **Elmsett** (2 - 6cwt) where restoration has been postponed for the time being and the possibility of rehanging a single bell is being looked at. An inspection has been requested at **Wickhambrook** (5 - 15cwt) and the possibility of restoration at **Hitcham** (6 - 16cwt) was mentioned by N. Whittell. Nothing has been heard from the Parish for a while and enquiries are to be made to ascertain the present position.

Any other business

Alan Moulton proposed the setting up of a database for the Guild which would list every bell in Suffolk. Similar databases exist in other Guilds and Associations. Paul Cattermole is doing one for the NDA and will be contacted for advice. It would require volunteers to input the information to save time in setting it up (i.e. extracting information from tower reports already held)

W. Girling reported that in the event of being re-elected at this year's AGM, by April 2003 he would have completed 10 years as maintenance officer and chairman of the Belfry Advisory Committee, and would not wish to serve beyond this date. He would also wish to cease as secretary of the Guild Affiliation Scheme at this time. (It was suggested that the Affiliation Scheme should at that time then be made separate from the BAC office.)

Date and place of next meeting

Friday, 31st May 2002 at 7.30p.m. at the Wolery, 76, Rectory Road, Ipswich (maps will be supplied)

The Meeting was closed at 9.30p.m.

Winston S. Girling
Convenor