

# Suffolk Guild of Ringers

Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting held on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2008 at 6.00pm in the Methodist Chapel, Old Newton.

**Present:** Winston Girling (Chair), Richard Munnings (Master), Keith Ashton Jones (Treasurer), Mary Garner (Sec), Jason Busby (NE Bc), Philip Gorrod (NE Ha), David Mulrenan (Ne Hart), Trevor Hughes (Ne Ho), Jonathan Stevens (NE Sax), Brian Hale (NW Ix), Marion Turner (NW Mi), Carl Melville (NW St), Maurice Rose (NW Th), Robert Scase (SE Loes), Kate Eagle (SE Wd), John Smith (SW Sud), Sue Freeman (SW Had), Richard Knight (SW Cl), Stefan Labedzki (SW Lav), Bruce Wakefield (PRO) Gillian Wakefield (Librarian).

**Welcome:** Winston warmly welcomed everyone, especially the six new committee members. He was pleased to note that so many had been able to attend the meeting. He thanked Carl for the refreshments.

**Apologies for absence** were received from Rev Brian Redgers (SE/Ips) and Richard Beeston (SE/Sa),

**The Minutes** of meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2007, previously circulated, were agreed and signed, with one amendment, that under AOB the tribute in the RW should have been to the Barnard family not Scase.

## Matters Arising

(i) Peal for John Banks. It was noted that this had been rung on 24<sup>th</sup> November and that George Pipe had agreed to make a certificate to be presented to him. Action RJM to contact GWP

(ii) Hartismere Deanery Philip Gorrod (Chair NE) explained that the towers did want to transfer to the NW. Discussion followed regarding the allocation of deaneries to districts. The deanery boundaries have changed considerably since the constitution was written and the geographical allocation is not always sensible from a Guild point of view. Allocation to districts to be on agenda for June. Action MSG

(iii) Letter to new Bishop. Bishop Nigel has written to the Guild and accepted the position of Preseident.

(iv) Officer for St Peter Sudbury. Alan Mayle, who currently looks after this tower, had written and said that management from the SW seemed the most appropriate and did not require a Guild post.

## Correspondence

MSG reported that she had sent out several reports.

A letter had arrived from the CCCBR requesting details of delegates and payment of fees for 2008. Action MSG to pass fee request to KAJ.

Grant acknowledgements had been received from Campsea Ashe and Elmsett.

## Financial Report

KAJ reported that the 2007 accounts were with the examiner. The General Fund showed a surplus of £400 on the year but he expects this to be needed for the recruitment and training drive. The Restoration Fund continues to benefit from interest from the Lenny Sharpe bequest. £48000 has been allocated for grants but not yet spent, whilst £28500 remains in the account unallocated. Copies of the accounts will be available at the AGM and then put on the website as previously agreed. They will be sent to the Charity Commissioners as required.

He noted that three annual donations, each of £50, were made from the Guild, to Friends of St Peter's Sudbury, St Edmundsbury Cathedral and Suffolk Historic Churches Trust.

WG thanked KAJ for his work and report.

Maurice Rose reminded the committee that Larking Gowen undertake the examination of the accounts for no fee.

## Ringling Master's Report

With one day left of peal week RJM reported that many firsts had been scored during the week, so far 10 successful and 3 lost.

He reported that it was good to see that many quarters were being rung notably those arranged by Louis Suggett, Mary Allum and Josephine Beaver. He reported that Ipswich SMLT had pulled out of the National 12 Bell Competition

He said that he was trying to get to as wide a variety of practices and as many meetings as possible in each of the districts.

WG thanked RJM for his report and MR offered his congratulations for all the encouragement and support being given by RJM.

### **Sub-committee reports:**

#### **i. Belfry Advisory committee**

WG was pleased to report that 10 met for the meeting on Feb 8<sup>th</sup>.

Charsfield had been sent a letter advising them to remove the bell in their porch, but there had been no reply. Maintenance had been carried out at Framlingham and Woodbridge.

NE District: a plan to restore at Cratfield using the current fifth as a tenor of 6. Four people at Sternfield (where there is an unringable 4) wish to learn to ring and arrangements are being made for them elsewhere.

NW District: An eight bell simulator is on order for Stowmarket.

SE District: Repairs had been carried out at Stonham Aspal. The clapper which fell out at Stutton has been replaced.

SW District: A piece of timber has been found for 7<sup>th</sup> headstock at Sudbury, but church has not obtained faculty. WG has written to the churchwarden. Investigations will be carried out regarding the apparent giving away of one of a set of handbells at Monks Eleigh. An inspection is about to take place at the recently restored bells at Stradishall. Feared that go will be 8 or 7 because of the frame.

BAC recommended grant awards for St Lawrence Ipswich and Dennington. At Long Melford WG said there were doubts about the stability of the high diagonal frame and that the Guild would need to have a test ring before considering grant aid. Wissett are also working towards restoration, but there are problems at present with an ancient bell frame and floor.

Insurance: WG expressed concern that Guild members over 65 had reduced cover and that many people over 65 were working on the bells and it important that cover was in place.

Discussion followed re Insurance. The renewal comes up shortly and particular attention will be paid to cover for members of the BAC aged 65 and over.

**Action: MSG to discuss with DGS**

The question was raised as to whether the Guild should try to compile a list of handbells in the Diocese since some sets are held away from the church. Concern was expressed as to what might happen when a holder dies. It was felt that whilst this was a good idea in principle it was not really practical.

#### **ii. Recruitment and training**

RJM reported that the BBC Inside Out programme are planning to record a training day at Hollesley with a view to putting an eight minute feature together to be broadcast at the end of April. RJM, Alan McBurnie and Bruce Wakefield have been in consultation with the programme makers. It is hope to follow a couple of people through the day to see how they progress. To this end they are hoping to find some “learners and progressers” for that day.

RJM is planning to sort out a Recruitment and Training meeting, once he has an up to date list of representatives. Jason Busby, Richard Knight and Carl Melville said that they would be on the committee.

MSG will sort out the list.

**Action RJM**

### **Applications for grants**

#### **1. St Lawrence, Ipswich.**

This is a redundant church, which is currently undergoing much work to make it into a centre for the arts. It was noted that this ia a remarkable ring, the oldest five still rung, three bells dating from the 1440s with two added later. In 1553 an inventory shows that only SMLT had as many and none of these have survived. It is planned to rehang the bells lower in the tower. Whitechapel have been chosen to carry out the bell work at an estimated cost of £51 065. The additional tower work brings the total to £76 094.

Concern had been expressed by the BAC, and was highlighted at GMC, about safe access to the bells and sound control.

After much discussion a grant of £6000 was proposed and seconded by RK and RS. An amendment of £5400 was proposed by JJS and seconded by PJG. The following vote recorded 12 votes for, 3 against and 3 abstentions.

**Action: MSG to write highlighting concerns re access and sound control.**

#### **2. Long Melford**

Long Melford have already spent £20000 on strengthening a diagonally placed frame. These has been carried out by a local builder. WG has written and suggested a test ring. A question was raised about sound insulation and this will be addressed at the test ring.

### 3. Dennington

Dennington has a heavy ring of six in a metal frame. It is intended the present steel frame is replaced with one which enables the bells to swing so that they create less stress. Whitechapel have quoted £50 449 (with £10000 bell related work to be done). A grant of £6000 was proposed and seconded. This was agreed by all with one abstention.

**Action: MSG to write**

### **Ratification of NRLM**

The following were ratified by the meeting as NRLM: Christina D A Brewster, Peter J Williamson, Imogen G K Brooke and Leonard A England.

### **Guild Report and Handbook 2008**

The meeting was informed that the report had gone to the printer on 8<sup>th</sup> February. It is to contain 80 pages. The revenue raised from the advertising is about £140, which more than pays for the 4 extra pages. The printer has been very helpful and plans to keep to the timescale within a few days. This means that it is possible that the report will be with us by 15<sup>th</sup> March, but certainly well in advance of the AGM.

Total cost £1131 for 950.

The Report Editor asked that thanks should go to everyone for keeping to deadlines, but particular to Brian Whiting and Gordon Slack for their work on the peal compositions and quarter peals, both of which have increased in number this year. Thanks to David Salter for his help too.

Ruth Suggett has put a checklist for district secretaries on the website to help in future years and wonders whether existing district officers might like to do the same for their jobs to help make tasks more straightforward when there are changes in personnel.

WG wished to record, on behalf of himself and the Guild, very grateful thanks to Ruth for all her hard work.

### **Guild Dinner 15th March 2008**

The secretary reported that all the arrangements were well advanced with 135 tickets sold. Bishop Nigel and his wife are guests. Charlie Haylock is the Guest Speaker.

The meeting was asked whether each district could manage to provide two prizes for the draw. The profits from this will go to the Bell Restoration Fund.

WG thanked MG and RJM for organising the event.

### **Guild Library**

WG received a letter received from the Guild Librarian following a question about the possibility of re housing the library. She outlined the current situation saying that all the data was held at her house and anyone was welcome to come and browse over a cup of coffee. She understood that it wasn't central in the county but felt that a Record Office might not be prepared to take all the items, neither might they lend them out. She feels the best option would be to find another librarian more centrally located who had space for all the items, 22 new ones during 2007. As well as a grant from the guild further funds are raised by selling her paintings and from quizzes and video sales. She feels strongly that the librarian needs to be on hand to research following enquiries and to monitor loans closely.

She drew the GMC's attention to the library catalogue on the website which is updated each January.

Discussion followed, including compliments on how well it works, keep it ringer based, perhaps store it at Diocesan House. It was agreed that it sounds a fantastic resource and the thanks of the committee were made. It was felt that we should not lose sight of the fact that it is an imposition in her house and that one day there will need to be a change. The librarian said that she was willing to carry on at present.

The librarian expressed one particular concern re insurance. A few years ago the collection was valued at £7000 but some books alone are worth a great deal whilst other things are irreplaceable. At present the collection is not insured. The question was raised about restoring books. The secretary will investigate the possibilities open.

**Action MSG**

### **Guild Obituary Co ordinator**

The report editor feels that it would be useful if one person in the Guild could look after this. After some discussion the GMC felt that, if he were willing, John Girt would be ideal, especially since he knows so much about long standing members and the Guild itself.

**Action: MSG to write to John Girt.**

## **Guild AGM**

### **(i) Arrangements for day**

The chairman for the SW put forward the following itinerary:

3pm Ringing at Lavenham

4pm Service

5pm Tea in Long Melford Church followed by

Annual General Meeting followed by

Evening Ringing until 9pm.

### **(ii) Constitution Change: a) Trustees A1.3**

The following wording for A1.3 was proposed, seconded and passed by the meeting:

“The Trustees of the Guild shall be at least three members of the Guild Executive as defined in rule J 13, and shall be elected at the AGM.”

**b) Division of districts.** After some discussion the following was proposed by Maurice Rose and seconded by Philip Gorrod.

C5 shall be amended by moving Hartismere from 1 North East to 2 North West.

### **(iii) Rule Change a) Guild 6 Bell Striking competition to include rounds and call changes**

The Lester Brett Trophy would be awarded for the best placed rounds and call change band in the six bell competition. Wording to be finalised using NE rules for Guidance. **Action: MSG**

**b) Web master** to be added to D8.

WG expressed thanks on behalf of the Guild to CRG for creating and maintaining the website.

**(iv) Subscriptions** After some discussed it was proposed and seconded that the GMC should put the following to the AGM: Ordinary Ringing Members £14, 75 and over free, all the rest £7. There were 14 votes in favour, 1 against and two abstentions.

Simplifying the subs by levelling by everyone paying the same was discussed, but rejected because to raise the same amount everyone would need to pay about £13 and it would present a very different structure to all other guilds.

**(v) Election of Officers:** Posts to be filled

a) Guild Chairman. MR thanked WG for all his work. The committee was urged to find at least one person to be proposed at the AGM.

b) Guild Newsletter Editor. Thanks were made to Carl for all his hard work. Carl explained that he would be standing down since he was moving to Yorkshire for twelve months from the middle of March. It was reported that Carol Girling and Mandy Shedden had both expressed an interest in standing for the post.

### **(vi) Life Honorary Members**

MR suggested that Alan Smith, who had served as a CC representative should be made an Life Honorary Member for his services to the Guild.

Albert Driver of the NE had been a faithful servant for many many years and should be considered for Life Honorary Membership at the AGM.

## **AOB**

- (i) Concern was expressed from the SW particularly regarding fixing events for a Saturday each month. Discussion followed and it was decided that the policy would change to the following for 2009: 1<sup>st</sup> SE, 2<sup>nd</sup> NW, 3<sup>rd</sup> Guild, 4<sup>th</sup> SW and NE. It is hoped that this would prevent some of the clashes experienced in recent years.
- (ii) A plea for pre 1970 reports was put forward on behalf of the Peal Secretary
- (iii) MR offered congratulations to Christine Knight on ringing a second peal.
- (iv) PJG informed the meeting that Fressingfield bells were to be dedicated on Sun 24<sup>th</sup> Feb at 10.30, everyone welcome. On Saturday there would be a talk to the villagers about ringing and a quarter peal.

**Date of next meeting;** Sat June 21st 2008 at 6pm. (or Sun Jun 22<sup>nd</sup> at 3pm, Mary will confirm soon)  
There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.55pm.

Mary Garner, Hon. Secretary