

Minutes of the GMC meeting held on Sunday 19th June at Stowupland

Present-: Philip Gorrod (Chairman), Jed Flatters (Ringing Master), Gordon Slack (Treasurer), Mandy Shedden (Secretary), Jonathan Stevens (BAC Chairman), Trevor Hughes (NE Hoxne), Julie Rapior (NE Saxmundham) Brian Hale (NW Ixworth), Marion Turner (NW Mildenhall) Maurice Rose (NW Thingoe), Peter Harper (SE Colneys), Robert Scase (SE Loes), Sally Munnings (SE Ipswich), Mary Garner (SE Samford/ CPO), Derek Rose (SW Sudbury), Richard Knight (SW Clare), Sue Freeman (SW Hadleigh), Alan Stanley (Magazine Editor)

Apologies Jason Busby (NE Halesworth), Rev. Brian Redgers (SE Bosmere) David Steed (NW Stowmarket)

Minutes of the meeting held on 19th February

With two minor alterations these were agreed

Sub- Committee reports

Belfry Advisory Committee

We held a meeting on 16th of this month at Barrow where Chris Nunn made us welcome with cake as well as biscuits. In March, your Technical Advisor addressed a public meeting in Wissett called in response to a couple of vigorous complaints concerning noise.

Your Technical Advisor also went to the Church Building Council meeting for Bell Advisors at Southwell Minster. Aside from the technical matters discussed we learned that £23m of lead has been stolen from churches in the last five years and that the bells that have been stolen were mostly on display when taken. It seems bells are safe, if they are up the tower.

Winston nominated Chris Davies of Redgrave as a member and we would like this meeting to endorse his membership of the BAC please.

Members continue to be active keeping Suffolk bells ringing.

Hinderclay's cracked bell is now at Soundweld. The headstock from St Peter's Sudbury is at Taylors. At Sudbury All Saints it seems one of the tenor frame heads has dropped a little. At Helmingham the bells are out and at the foundry.

At Eye, Winston has freed and lubricated the pulleys and re-routed the seventh rope. They go a bit better now but the underlying problem is one of frame movement. This is not just at head level but at cill level too. The other major issue is one of the external volume being too high. Both the issues have remained constant since the re-hang in 1962. After nearly fifty years of less than satisfactory ringing we are now having to do what should have been done then to complete the project.

We touched on grant conditions again. This time the question "does the parish get any benefit from the grant process beyond the cash" prompted a resounding yes. The condition relating to use of the bells by Guild Members especially the "four peal attempts per year" was questioned.

In March we had the first "Steeple Keeper's Supper" which went really well despite the paucity of numbers. We wondered if Guild Members who look after bells up and down the County didn't realise we meant them by the title "Steeple Keeper".

Jonathan Stevens BAC Chairman

At Campsea Ashe a post installation report has been produced and problems were identified which the church have refused to carry out thus far. JS is working with the Rector and other parties to move forward. It is a condition of the grant that any problems are rectified when identified at the time of the report. The full amount of the grant has not yet been paid.

The GMC ratified Chris Davies as a member of the BAC.

Recruitment and Training

JF has been in consultation with Alan McBurnie as to the future of training within the Guild. There are many poor handlers within the Guild which needs to be addressed. He will be working towards this and looking at other ways of ensuring people get the training that they need.

Applications for Grants

Helmingham has asked for increase in grant because the cost of the bells has gone up. They have asked for extra £400.

Agreed

Hinderclay have asked for £200 grant towards the cost of mending their bell which is at Soundweld. The cost has been kept down by volunteer labour and local fundraising. The committee have agreed a grant of up to £300 at the discretion of JS.

Thurston have asked for a grant to rehanging cost of £5500 of a bell which has been donated. £500 has been agreed.

Ringling Master's Report.

Since JF has been in post he has only been involved with striking competitions so far. The Guild Striking Competition was a successful event but he felt there could be some minor improvements made to the organisation and entering of teams.

NW District Fun Striking Competition was won by the team from the Norman Tower.

The Ridgeman Trophy was held at SMLT on Saturday 18th June. The team was comprised of members from most areas of the county and was placed 5th. David Potts had agreed to be the master for the Guild team and he did this very well.

Diana Pipe organised the refreshments with the help of the Suffolk ringers and members who supported the event.

Essex Trophy is being held at St Albans. Test piece is plain course of London Royal Suffolk will be entering a team.

22nd October 100th Anniversary of Bailey Brothers Peal at Leiston. It will be a good opportunity for PR and there is a hope to repeat the peal that they rung.

Treasurer's Report

General Fund

No unusual expenditure or income items since the last meeting. Thanks are due to District Treasurers for collecting a high proportion of subscriptions before the end of March (some £700 more than last year) and also for getting more Gift Aid forms completed.

Restoration Fund

Donations to the Bell Restoration Fund of £309.50 were received in memory of Geoff Pulford of Otley. The Guild transferred a further £25 from the General Fund to follow normal practice of making a donation in lieu of a wreath, and the Pulford family were thanked for their generosity.

No grants approved so far this year prior to this meeting. Allocated balance in the BRF is £12,600. Unallocated balance is £38,200.

St Peter's Sudbury Fund

The Executive agreed to fund the repair of the headstock on the 4th at St Peter's from the Fund. The quoted cost is £966 and it is expected that the Friends of St Peter's will contribute about £400. The GMC is invited to confirm that this expenditure comes within the terms of para. 16 of the Constitution which refers to minor repairs and refurbishments. The Fund currently stands at £2,014.

Insurance

Insurance cover for the mini-ring has been increased to cover the Vestey Ring at an additional premium of £49.03.

St Edmunds Clapper competition.

There is an understanding that contributions to the St Edmunds Clapper competition should be made between April and September although this does not appear in the Constitution or the Rules. I should like to propose to the GMC that this restriction be removed and that contributions made throughout the financial year (January to December) will be entered in the Competition.

The meeting agreed the change of rule for the St Edmund's Clapper competition.

AGM Feedback

Both speakers at the Fringe event gave a good presentation but unfortunately it was not well attended.

PH suggested that in future any fringe events should have more focus on bell ringing subjects. Everyone was happy with how the day went in general. The only negative comment was that too much was discussed in AOB.

Mini Ring at Suffolk Show –Feedback

Most people think that it was a very useful event and that it should be done every year. Stickers would be a good idea in the future. The Guild has been asked to take the mini ring to Henham again this year. PJG proposed that we should accept the invitation to go to Henham and that we should attend the Suffolk Show next year if re invited by the Diocese.

Ratification of NRLM's

Janet E Archibald, Emma L Pym, Matthew D Dawson were all ratified

Election of LHMs

TH is concerned that people who were being elected were not necessarily known by a lot of people and what they had done to deserve it. He suggested that nominated members could have small write up in the magazine before the AGM. Some discussion ensued. RK proposed that GMC ratified all applicants at February meeting before being elected at AGM. MR seconded this. There will have to be a change in the constitution.

Handbell Insurance

A second quote needs to be obtained from Ecclesiastical Insurance for insuring the handbells to compare the quote from Mayola before proceeding. MS to investigate insuring other assets including the RM badge.

Christchurch Donation

GWP has sent a letter to PJG requesting that the Guild send a cheque to help towards the refurbishment of the cathedral and bells lost in the recent earthquake. After some discussion it was felt the Guild raise some money by having a draw at the Guild Social and then committee members make a decision at the next GMC meeting as to whether the Guild send a cheque direct or alternatively support the CCCBR initiative to buy a mini ring and have that sent to New Zealand.

Striking Competitions

There was a long discussion about the number of teams entering and difficulties this presented to judges who were faced with judging method ringing and call changes within the same competition. Too many teams entered on the day but without being exclusive it would be difficult to police this. A suggestion was made that two sets of judges could be appointed, one for the call change competition and another for the method ringing. JS asked for the rules governing

striking competitions to be made simpler and less prescriptive. PJG and JF to get together and rewrite the rules and discuss the format of future striking competitions.

Any Other Matters arising

None

Correspondence

None

Any other Business

None

Date of Next Meeting Saturday 15th October 2.30pm