

Minutes of GMC Meeting 19th October 2013 Stowupland

Present: Alan Stanley (Chair), Mandy Shedden (Secretary) Gordon Slack (Treasurer), Jonathan Stevens (Technical Advisor), Trevor Hughes, Maurice Rose, Peter Harper, David Steed Revd. Brian Redgers, Sally Munnings, Mary Garner, Neal Dodge.

Apologies received from: Brian Hale, Sue Freeman Peter Harper, David Smith, Marion Turner Kate Eagle, Jason Busby, Julie Rapior, and Jed Flatters

The meeting stood in silence to remember the late Alan Smith of Coddenham

1. Welcome

Alan Stanley welcomed everyone to the meeting and especially Neil Dodge representing the NW District and Michelle and Ambrin Williams as guests, who were attending to speak about Young Ringers.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 16th June 2013 circulated previously, were agreed subject to the correction of wording about NRLM's who had been notified to Christine Knights but had not yet paid. MR. proposed and GS seconded their adoption

3. Matters arising from the minutes.

Bishop Nigel is leaving Suffolk to take up a post in Lambeth and MG has produced a certificate commemorating his presidency which will be presented to him by AS at the farewell service to be held at St Edmundsbury Cathedral on 20th October.

The updates to the "Towards better Striking" leaflets were reported as being in progress.

Jonathan confirmed that offer letters for grants previously agreed had been sent and signed acceptances had been received.

4. Belfry Advisory Committee Report – Jonathan Stevens

We went to Redgrave for our September meeting where Chris Davies proved an excellent host. Following our usual ring and tea and munchies, we departed from the usual format by having a talk; this time a brief but useful talk by Jed, on bell hanging. This provoked a few questions which were competently answered. This idea of opening with a talk was well received by the members.

As usual there has been a lot of work done by the BAC team to keep our towers working and to prompt silent towers into action.

The most interesting news is that Sibton are in the first stages of enthusiasm for a restoration, as part of a larger project and that Ipswich St Margaret are going to apply for a faculty to install a ringing floor and rehang the bells. Tattingstone are edging nearer a full restoration and Halesworth are considering sound management. Beccles are moving towards getting their sound management in memory of Barry Pickup in.

The Guild Grant Inspection at Clopton was held on 6 October where the Guild Strike Meter had its first outing; on the whole this is satisfactory restoration, following the usual hard graft on the part of

a few in the parish. There are some things to finish which are underway. The grant payment has been approved.

The next meeting will be in Ipswich on 6th February. These are open meetings in that any Guild Member is welcome to attend.

MR asked Jonathan about the situation at Thurston- Alan Moult and JS had a meeting with the architect following failure of the grouting and it was decided that ringing should only be done on special occasions but apparently this is not being adhered to. The architect seems unwilling to consider regrouting.

5. Applications for grants

No further applications for grants have been received.

5b. R&T Committee

There has not been a meeting since the last GMC meeting.

6. Ringing Master's Report Jed Flatters

With the Guild striking competitions out of the way for another year things have not been too hectic for me though I have been kept busy by various events in and out of Suffolk.

I had hoped to go up to York for the Ringing World national Youth Striking Comp. but could not justify the expense especially as I was not needed for transport, well done to our young ringers who again did not take the easy option and rang method, the young ringers practices in Suffolk should help to strengthen them and increase their numbers so giving them a better chance for next year. Note those bands doing well were strongly supported by well-established ringers.

I was pleased to be able to support Winston who as our NW ringing master organised our striking comp at Rickinghall, I helped to time the practice pieces, good judging and comments by Jeremy Spiller were much appreciated as was the barbecue afterwards at Redgrave though the weather could have been better, many thanks to Bryony and Chris Davies for their hospitality.

Whilst I could not make the Clopton dedication I did go over there with Jonathan to look over the job for the purpose of offering our grant, as usual Jonathan was thorough ensuring that our monies are properly used (I am sure he will fill in more detail in his report).

I also carried out a second visit to Elmsett to check the new treble clappering, all is now correct and Gordon has paid over this element of our grant, soon they will be a ring of five.

Although I have not been able to organise any further ITTS ring in days yet I am planning to do so.

Also I am hoping that interest in the SW will mean a further training course being held there sometime soon.

Not directly Guild related I enjoyed our Cathedral pilgrimage from St. Pauls' to Bury in August, as our Bishop Nigel said several times we as ringers rang in the villages the pilgrims passed through much as would have happened in 1013 when St Edmunds' relics returned to Bury.

2014 sees the 100th anniversary of the diocese, I am planning on taking a week in the summer to cycle around the border at all of the towers I pass through, I hope ringers will join (If not by bike cars will do) More detail to follow.

On a sad note, I attended the memorial service of Alan Smith at Coddenham, Alan was our first Treasurer from 1978 to 88 and set the guild on a good financial standing. I also attended the funeral of Rosemary Palmer at Fordham, Rosemary was known to many of us and had been our first female district secretary on the early 60's

7. Treasurers Report

General Fund

Since the last meeting a stock of hardy hemp rope has been ordered at a cost of £300. It is expected this will be sold to towers for a small profit. There were no other unusual items.

Restoration Fund

The Gift Aid refund this year was £1450 compared with last year's figure of £1535. This was as forecast as the transitional arrangements to cover the reduction in the tax rate have now expired. The amount of donations on which we claimed was actually higher than ever before. The amount recovered should increase again next year as we get the benefit from the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme which was introduced earlier this year.

At Barry Pickup's funeral, donations were invited to the Beccles sound control project, to be donated via the Suffolk Guild. These totalled £1050, which will be equivalent to £1137 when the qualifying gift aid is taken into account. At the time of writing, we are yet to receive a formal request for a grant to the project.

Since the last meeting, grants have been paid to Woolpit (£1,000), Norman Tower (£4,000), Elmsett £700. The grant agreed for Clopton (£6500) will be paid this month.

The sum now available for allocation to new projects stands at around £58,200. The amount reserved for grants allocated to projects in progress stands at £1,685.

Pipe Fund

As agreed we contributed £320 towards the travelling and accommodation expenses of members involved in the 2013 Young Ringers' Striking Competition held in York. A donation of £50 was received via Michelle Williams as a contribution to the youngsters' expenses and this was added to the Guild's own contribution giving a total of £370.

MS read out the contents of an email from George Salter thanking the GMC for their contribution to costs for York.

GS added to his report that as from 5th April 2013, any collections at events including cash up to the value of £20 may now qualify for gift aid. MG asked if this meant that HMRC will now allow gift aid to be claimed on cash donations subscriptions from non-tax payers.

8. Ratification of NRLM's

Michael G Purday and Catherine M A Lane were ratified as NRLM's DS proposed and GS seconded their election.

9. Report Editor Vacancy

George Reynolds, a ringer at Bury has agreed to take on the Report Editor position. He will be meeting with Ruth Suggett on the 9th of November. His election was approved by the GMC. AS is to write to all contributors to ensure that information is received in time.

10. Changes to dates of Guild Striking Competitions

This was deferred until JF is able to attend the GMC meeting.

11. Trial of Payment of Subs by Direct Bank Transfer

Payment of subs can now be made by direct bank transfer as long as payment is accompanied by a traceable reference to the payer. District Treasurers need to be kept informed so that the annual reporting of members is accurate.

12. Suffolk Young Ringers

Michelle and Ambrin Williams had been invited to the GMC to talk about the work being done with young ringers in the Guild, following on from a letter sent to the GMC (previously circulated) asking for support for the arrangements that have been put in place.

Michelle explained that the people involved in teaching young ringers would benefit from some structured support in the process of teaching because it was felt that the preparation of the young ringers involved in the striking competition was left to the people who are involved on a week to week basis. Some people had been identified and asked but it was proving difficult to get regular commitment.

JS commented that perhaps possible helpers could be approached to help at a particular practice or for a specific event so that they did not feel tied to turning up all the time. There is a programme of young ringer's events on the website and TH suggested that a direct approach probably works best.

MG suggested that we should formalise the consent form for young ringers, perhaps a general form for bell-ringing activities and a separate one for a particular arranged event such as the striking competition for example. Didn't we hear that Michelle Williams had a version, and would liaise with MG to resolve? Michelle and MG will liaise over the format of consent forms.

JS asked if there was a record of towers where youngsters are being taught. MW replied that there may be some youngsters who are being taught in other towers but because they are not members of the Guild, the group would be unaware of them.

AS suggested that Young Ringers events should always be on the GMC agenda and ND undertook to follow that through.

MW asked if support could be put in place now to prepare the young ringers for the Striking Competition at Worcester on 6th July 2014 in particular fund raising to cover costs. Didn't GS mention the Pipe Fund as a possible source of some funding for this? GS suggested that there may be some funds available from the Pipe Family fund.

TH suggested that a page in the newsletter could be dedicated to the Young Ringers activities. Magazine editor to consider this and action as appropriate

13. Henham Steam Rally

The mini ring was not taken to Henham steam rally because of the lack of volunteers. This cost the Guild £20 in lost fees.

14. Magazine Distribution

AS produced circulated an email from the magazine editor that she had asked be presented in her absence a document which showed the breakdown of how the magazine is distributed and asked for comments from the meeting. It was agreed that the current distribution arrangements are fair. AS urged district secretaries to assist Sue Freeman in making sure that the magazine is distributed as speedily as possible, because it is one of the Guild's most important PR tools and also that if District Secretaries wished to change distribution within the district by re-balancing numbers of copies between towers they should contact Sue Freeman..

15. Early Publication on Website of AGM Minutes

AS stated that AGM minutes should be published as soon as possible in draft to the website. GS agreed but he had comments to make about the content. MG said that rigorous checks need to be in place before the minutes are published. SM proposed that the secretary writes the minutes and asks for checking before they go onto the website this is what happens with GMC minutes.

JS proposed that the AGM minutes be published in draft on the website having been checked by the GMC executive and a clause needs to be added to the effect that the minutes are a draft version which is awaiting approval. BR seconded this proposal and it was agreed by the meeting.

GS will email MS with the amended wording for constitution and rule changes that were proposed by the GMC so that these can be corrected in the current version of the 2013 minutes and then published on the website.

16. AGM Donations to BRF

The donation amount has now been added to the minutes.

17. CC Report by D.Salter

This has now been published on the website.

18. Update of Constitution and Rules –fees payable cessation of membership if fees not paid (ref. email from Mary Dunbavin in which she drew attention to an apparent change in the rules, withdrawing this cessation clause, without a record of AGM amendment)

It has been established that the wording was changed at a special meeting. which took place when Sandra Pereira stepped up as Guild Secretary. MS reported that she could not find any trace of the minutes of this meeting in any of the folders in her possession which cover meetings over the last 20 years . The gap in the record is assumed to coincide with a period when the office of Guild Secretary was vacant. TH said that he will look through his records to see if he has any reference to the changes and AS will reply to Mary Dunbavin.

Note: subsequent to this meeting reference to material held by TH has confirmed that a Special General Meeting was held on 31 October 1999 which approved Rules changes.

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19. Guild Social Arrangements

Not available as DR was not at the meeting.

20. AGM Arrangements

Winston Girling is currently making arrangements for the Guild AGM in 2014 to be held at Stowmarket.

21. Correspondence

No further correspondence has been received other than the email from George Salter

22. AOB

BR reminded the meeting that on 21st of December all the ringing towers in Ipswich will be open at the same time and 58 people will be required between 11.30 and 1,15pm.

As AS suggested that a Guild wide email be sent asking for support.

PH had seen certificates of people serving Guilds for 50 years in other organisations and wondered if this is something Suffolk could do. The meeting thought that is was a good idea and that District Secretaries should be asked to consider who might be eligible.

MR advertised the NDA Ringing Towers in Norfolk Calendar now available to purchase from him.

The meeting closed at 11.50am.

Date of next meeting Saturday 15th February 2014 at 2pm.