

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Suffolk Guild of Ringers held at Wenhaston on Saturday 18th April 2009 at 5.15pm

1. **The Chairman**, Philip Gorrod (PJG), opened the meeting by giving a warm welcome to the eighty nine members present and four visitors. He thanked Edward Renard for taking the service and Jason Busby, the organist, Becky Canham for booking the tower and the Village Hall, also Maggie Ross and her helpers from the Blyth Valley Ringers, including Dilys, Tom, Jason and Becky for the tea.

The meeting stood in silence in remembrance Sylvia Morley from Barrow, Douglas Rowland from Bury St Edmunds, Jack Sturgeon from Mildenhall, Bernard Fairhead from Colchester and four non resident members who had died during 2008.

2. **Apologies** were received from 43 members.

3. Election of New Members

The following were elected as members of the Guild

Richard Lawrence, Ixworth (Senior), David Brand, Ixworth (Senior), Graham Mace, Ixworth (Full), Alistair Whybrow, Euston (Full), Maureen Slinger, Palgrave (Senior), proposed by Ruth Suggett, seconded by Maurice Rose; Eileen Russell Roberts, Ixworth (Senior) proposed by Ruth Suggett, seconded by Chris Nunn; James Lucas, Tattingstone (Full), proposed by Richard Hobson, seconded by Richard Beeston; Hilary Stearn, SE Unattached (Full), proposed by Mary Garner, seconded by Kate Eagle; Rupert Bragg, Mendham (Senior), proposed by Trevor Hughes, seconded by Julie Hughes; Christine Pickup, Unattached (Full), proposed by PJG, seconded by Maggie Ross; Pam Davies, John Davies, Richard Treloar, Peter Carter, Campsea Ashe (Full), proposed by Glenys Fear, seconded by Kate Eagle; Andrew Fisk, Woolpit (Full), proposed by Alan Moulton, seconded by Ruth Suggett; John Pallant, Stutton (Full), proposed by John Pereira, seconded by Sandra Pereira; Michelle Williams, Reydon (Full), proposed by Tom Britten, seconded by Jason Busby.

4. Minutes of the 2008 AGM

These had been published in the Annual Report. Their acceptance was proposed by Chris Garner and seconded by Peter Harper and they were signed as a true record.

5. Officers' reports:

Ringling Master: Richard Munnings (RJM) presented the Master's Report as printed in the Annual Report. He added his thanks to everyone who had taken part in the Guild Peal Week in February, congratulating the seven first peelers. The acceptance of his report was proposed by David Mulrenan, seconded by Robert Beavis and agreed by the meeting.

Secretary: Mary Garner proposed the acceptance of the Secretary's report as printed. This was seconded by Diana Pipe and agreed by the meeting.

Treasurer: Keith Ashton Jones explained that his written report was contained in the Trustees Report. Robert Beavis proposed, seconded by Maurice Rose, that the accounts and trustees report should be accepted. This was agreed by the meeting.

Public Relations Officer: Bruce Wakefield reported that TV and Radio had taken a positive attitude to Guild activities during the year especially restoration projects. He asked members to let the media and himself know if their band or tower had done anything which is good news. He is keeping a log of coverage. Most recently Richard Munnings, Kate Eagle and Alan McBurnie have been teaching Lesley Dolphin from BBC Radio Suffolk and her lessons at St Mary-le-Tower have been featured on her Tuesday afternoon programme.

Belfry Advisory Committee: Jonathan Stevens proposed that the report as printed should be accepted. Philip Gorrod said that this was just a brief snapshot of the achievements of the BAC. It has a lot to be proud of. As well as practical work throughout the county their discussions have resulted in the BAC chairman presenting an update of the grant conditions and a protocol for a restoration project, both of which are on the website. George Pipe added that the Guild should congratulate itself having passed the 100 mark for restorations since the war, especially for a Guild between 600 and 700 members.

The proposal was seconded by David Salter and agreed by the meeting.

Librarian: Gillian Wakefield proposed the acceptance of her report as printed. This was seconded by Robert Scase and agreed by the meeting.

Peal secretary: Christine Knight reported that it was noticeable that a wider cross section of our membership is being encouraged into peal ringing as seen in the 120 peals scored last year. It was also very noteworthy for the breadth of achievement: first on 14, Cambridge Maximus and the St Edmunds Day peal ringing with upbeat and extensive coverage on Radio Suffolk. She thanked David Salter for his help with the peal report.

She proposed the acceptance of her report as printed. It was seconded by David Salter and agreed by the meeting.

Handbell Trustee: Brian Whiting reported a dormant year with regard to borrowing. He has two sets at home, a 16 and a 25. There are two sets in the NE district. They are available for tune or method ringing. He proposed the acceptance of his report, which was seconded by Diana Pipe and agreed by the meeting

6. Central Council Report

PJG told the meeting that four members had been elected to represent the Guild interest. Last year's meeting was in Newcastle and full reports are on the website. He invited questions to our representatives or any points they should take to the next meeting. There were none.

7. Subscriptions and Peal Fees for 2010

The GMC proposed that the subscriptions should be as follows

Ringing Member	£ 15.00 (£14)	Associate member	£ 7.00 (£7)
Ringing Member 65-74	£ 10.00 (£7)	Non Resident Life Member	£ 7.00 (£7)
Members 75 and over	Free		
Ringing member in full time education	£ 7.00 (£7)	Peal Fee	£ 1.00 (£1)

Animated discussion followed. It included noting a 50% increase for OAPs. Consideration was given to an increased peal fee, or a quarter peal fee, but it was felt that neither would encourage more ringing. Others felt that it was right to keep pace, that it was only the price of a wedding fee and that it was a cheap hobby which gives a lot of pleasure through ringing with friends and visiting lovely churches. Were we not arguing over trivialities when the money is needed for restoration? Shirley Girt seconded the proposal and the vote that followed found all in favour, with three abstentions.

8. Proposed constitution changes

Proposed by GMC

B4: add "of an amount at least equal to a Ringing member (65-74) subscription".

D6: revised as follows:

D6

6.1 The President shall be the Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich.

6.2 A Suffragan Bishop within the Diocese shall be a Vice-President

6.3 A member may be elected as a Vice-President at an AGM.

6.4 A non-member may be elected as a Patron at an AGM.

6.5 Patrons and Vice-Presidents shall hold office without re-election, but may be removed by a resolution at an AGM. Vice-Presidents elected under 6.3 shall cease to hold office if they cease to be a member of the Guild.

D7: delete "Vice-Presidents may be elected. Subscriptions and fees for the year beginning the following January shall be set at the AGM or a SGM". [See H2 below]

D9: delete "to certify the accounts" and add "to act as Independent Examiner in accordance with The Charities Acts"

D10 (3rd line): delete "Certified".

E14: delete "applied to the work of the Guild in the restoration and maintenance of bells" and add "transferred to the Guild Restoration Fund"

F24: add "and the secretary shall maintain an up-to-date inventory of other Guild assets"

G 26.2 Delete "1 Jan following" and insert "the date given in the proposal"

PJG explained to the meeting that these had been drawn up by a sub committee of himself, Mary Garner and Keith Ashton Jones with John Girt overseeing, before presentation to the GMC. They were to be regarded as a tidying up rather than major changes.

Discussion revealed that B4 contained a mistake. It was commented that the constitution as it stood was purposely kept flexible.

The meeting agreed to the changes with the exception of B4, which will be revised and presented at the next AGM.

9. Proposed rule changes

Proposed by GMC

H2 (2nd line after "year"): add "and shall be set at the preceding AGM, or a SGM".

K16 (3rd line): add "(including District)"

Handbell Regulations Delete 8 [duplication of 6]

The proposal was seconded by Chris Garner. The following vote recorded 68 in favour, none against with one abstention.

10. Election of Officers for 2009/2010:

Prior to the elections Maurice Rose thanked the GMC and all the Guild and District Officers for their hard work throughout the year.

	Nominee	Proposer	Secunder
1. Vice-Presidents	En bloc	Philip Gorrod	Mary Garner
2. Chairman	Philip Gorrod	Jason Busby	Suzanne Stevens
3. Ringing Master	Richard Munnings	Tom Britten	Philip Moyse
4. Secretary	Mary Garner	Philip Gorrod	Suzanne Stevens
5. Treasurer & Gift Aid Secretary	Keith Ashton Jones	Philip Gorrod	David Mulrenan
6. Technical Adviser	Jonathan Stevens	Philip Gorrod	Jason Busby
7. Chairman of the Belfry Advisory Committee	Jonathan Stevens	Philip Gorrod	Jason Busby
8. Public Relations Officer	Bruce Wakefield	John Taylor	David Mulrenan
9. Librarian	Gillian Wakefield	Mary Garner	Veronica Downing
10. Report Editor	Ruth Suggett	Suzanne Stevens	Brian Whiting
11. Webmaster	Chris Garner	Veronica Downing	John Taylor
12. Newsletter Editor	Carol Girling	David Mulrenan	Richard Knight
13. Peal Secretary	Christine Knight	Brian Whiting	Richard Knight
14. Handbell Trustee	Brian Whiting	Richard Knight	Maggie Ross

The Vice Presidents were elected en bloc. Philip Gorrod was re elected Chairman to a round of applause. As each of the remaining nominees were re elected, each was met with a round of applause and they were thanked for their work during the year.

The Chairman was asked whether a minute secretary to the GMC might be considered. He agreed that it would be desirable but as a position delegated by the GMC rather than an officer.

11. Appointment of Independent Examiner

David Mulrenan proposed, seconded by John Taylor, that Larking Gowen be appointed as Independent Examiners of the Guild Accounts. This was carried by the meeting.

12. Election of Life Honorary Members

On behalf of the NW district Maurice Rose proposed Chris Nunn as a Life Honorary Member. Maurice described his long friendship with Chris, Chris's long hours and his commitment to the BAC. Jonathan Stevens endorsed the proposal saying that he had known Chris for 12 years on the committee as someone who always worked hard and never missed meetings. Brian Whiting added that he had known Chris since 1966 when he was taken round by him to other towers. Trevor Hughes added that he had known him since 1969, both as peal ringer and serving together on the maintenance committee. Chris Nunn was elected unanimously.

Chris Nunn thanked everyone for their endorsement, and said that it was most enjoyable and uplifting having to use basic principles.

John Girt explained that in the past Vice Presidents had been elected and their remit was to serve on the GMC enabling continuity through the years. Since they no longer sit on the GMC he questions the value of awarding Vice President but rather to award Life Honorary Membership since this represents a greater acknowledgement of what people do. PJG thanked him for his comments and said that the matter would be taken to the GMC.

13. Mini-Ring

PJG explained that he and RJM had discussed whether or not the Guild should own a portable mini-ring. PJG had been given first refusal on one for £2100. He took this to the GMC who agreed

in principle but felt that there was no money to finance this, even with the Pipe Trust Fund. Discussion followed regarding the uses of a the mini-ring, ie publicity, to raise the profile of the Guild, an aid to recruiting, demonstrations, targeted teaching, possibly to help people into method ringing, ringing for service at a church without bells, ringing for weddings in secular places etc. The point was made that although the technique doesn't relate directly with tower bell ringing it does connect people and bells. Further, a trustee for a mini-ring would need to be appointed. Questions were raised about storage, transport and insurance. PJG thanked people for their comments and said that he was pleased to announce that our Patron, George Vestey, along with his brothers Timothy, James and Robin, has offered to buy a new ring to be cast in memory of their father, at a cost of about £5000. When the new ring is ready the current ring will be handed back in part exchange. PJG reported that the ring would have Bowditch bells and that a provisional order had been placed with Matthew Higby. This news was very well received and PJG was asked to write and say thankyou to Mr Vestey. Furthermore the view was expressed that the new ring should be dedicated in the Cathedral by the Bishop.

14. Child Protection - new legislation October 2009

PJG advised that the Guild was alert to recently published CCCBR notes. The changes include the appointment of a Vulnerable Persons Officer for the Guild.

15. Guild History

PJG told the meeting that following an approach from a member of the Guild the GMC agreed that it would be good to have a history of the Guild. George Pipe(GWP) was approached and agreed. GWP reported that he has started and that it is great fun to do. He said that he feels that the Guild is worthy of history and that he hope to do it justice. He will be pleased to accept input for this. GWP related the story about Bailey brothers of Leiston. There were 11 of them, 10 of whom rang. 8 rang more than 20 peals together, in some very advanced methods. In 1926 six of them rang a peal of Stedman cinquies in hand, repeating it the following month. Adrian Knight added that he was taught to handle by one of the brothers.

16. Guild Social Event – Hadleigh, 27th June 2009

Richard Knight said that the arrangements were well in hand. There is ringing planned for the afternoon in unusual towers including All Saints' Sudbury. The new mini-ring will be at the evening barbecue which starts at 6pm at Hadleigh Guildhall. Tickets available at £10 each.

17 St Edmund's Clapper Competition

The results of the competition for the tower which raises most money for the Bell Restoration Fund were announced as follows: 3rd The Folly, Sproughton £260, Offton £325. Offton won the trophy and it was noted that £635 is the highest amount raised so far in any year. Brian Whiting urged more towers to take part.

18. There were no further matters arising from the minutes of the 2008 AGM not already covered

19. The **2010 AGM** will be held in the NW District. It is hoped it will be at Ixworth, probably on April 10th.

20. Any Other Business

1. Please forward your current e-mail address to the webmaster if you would like receive information this way.
2. GWP spoke about the Essex recruitment weekend at Coggleshall and asked whether some of our young people could go there. He and Rod are very keen for the Pipe Family Trust Fund to be used for this purpose, that is, to target beginners. He is pleased that it is still going after 19 years. (PJG reported that it had been used recently to make grant for training at Worcester)
3. With regard to the AGM date, Alan Moulton said that it was difficult to get the report done in time. PJG said that the GMC will consider the date.
4. Muriel Page reminded the meeting that the Veteran's Day will be on July 8th at Debenham.

Mary Garner
Hon Secretary