

The Annual General Meeting of the Suffolk Guild of Ringers Saturday 27th April 2019, Ipswich (St Matthew's)

Minutes taken by Revd Carl Melville

1) Welcome, thanks and apologies

The chairman opened the meeting by thanking The Revd Nick Atkins, St Matthew's, Stephen Cheek for playing the organ and Jordan for manning the PA system. Thanks were given to the SE district members for organising the AGM day, car parking, ringing towers, teas, service etc. The meeting thanked Chris Garner for promoting the AGM really well on behalf of the Guild and to Mary Garner for organising the C2 Safeguarding morning. The meeting showed their appreciation.

2) Absent Friends

The meeting stood in silence to remember those mentioned in the report, plus Hubert Mitson, Graham Morrey, Douglas Pope, John Newson and Janet Stannard (who died last week). The chairman invited Chris McArthur to say a few words about John Newson.

3) Election of New Members

The following were elected as new members
David Baldwin, Cretingham; Leonie Smith, SMLT; Karina Wiseman, SMLT; Peter Hayward, Cretingham. All in favour.

4) Minutes of the 2018 AGM

Annual Report page 76

These were signed as a true record of the meeting. Proposed David Steed Seconded John Girt.

5) Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

6) Trustees' Report

Annual Report page 9

The Trustees' report was adopted by the meeting. Proposed Ed Rolph, Seconded Mark Ogden.

7) Officers' reports: (within the Annual report)

	Page		Page
Ringing Master	13	Librarian	17
Secretary	15	Peal Secretary	49
Guild Accounts	18	Guild Handbells & Mini-ring Trustee	14
Belfry Advisory Committee	11	Webmaster	17
Public Relations Officer	16	Membership Secretary	15

The Officers' reports were adopted by the meeting. Proposed Ed Rolph, Seconded Mark Ogden.

8) Annual Report - Editor's report

The chairman thanked Michelle for the excellent report and thanked all who helped with its production. Michelle Rolph said the GDPR management had had an impact on the production on the report this year as people now have to give permission for their details to be published. Michelle thanked everyone who contributed in any way to the report. Thanks go to David Salter who contributed despite sickness. Michelle is stepping down from the post this year and the post will be vacant, however Michelle will support her successor through their first report. The meeting showed their appreciation to Michelle for her hard work.

9) Central Council Report

This report has only just appeared on the Guild website. The meeting was asked to read and make comment directly to the chairman.

10) Subscriptions and Peal Fees for 2020

The chairman explained that the Guild is a charity that gives back directly to its members in many ways. She said that for the Guild to succeed it would be necessary to increase Guild subs for 2020 and that this increase has the full backing of the GMC.

The treasurer explained the situation we are in financially and why we needed to find a larger income. For the last few years the Guild has been running into the negative. Subs need to go up or our expenditure needs to decrease dramatically.

Peter Harper was surprised that there are concessions within our Guild. He is familiar with many Guilds paying a flat rate for all members. He would like to see everyone paying the same rate of £15.

David Salter said he had no objections to the increases. However, he questioned the value for money. He said that the Guild fundraising efforts were poor compared to other Guilds.

The proposal is to raise the subscriptions as follows

	Current	Proposed
Full adult member	£15	£20
Member over 65	£10	£15
Member over 75	FREE	-
Member in FT Education	£7	£10
Associates and NRLM	£7	£10

Proposed Richard Knight, Seconded Cath Colman. 4 against, 6 abstentions.
Proposal carried.

11) Election of Officers for 2019

Post	Elected	Proposed by	Seconded by
Chairman	Rowan Wilson	Philip Gorrod	Mike Cowling
Ringling Master	Tom Scase	Malcolm Westrup	Abby Antrobus
Secretary	VACANT		
Treasurer	Stephen Cheek	Richard Munnings	Amanda Richmond
Chair of the BAC	Winston Girling	Cath Colman	Chris McArthur
Technical Advisor	Winston Girling	Cath Colman	Chris McArthur
PRO	Neal Dodge	Veronica Downing	David Salter
Report Editor	VACANT		
Librarian	Abby Antrobus	Tom Scase	Amanda Richmond
Peal Secretary	Christine Knight	Brian Whiting	Maurice Rose
Handbell Trustee	Brian Whiting	Gordon Slack	Janet Sheldrake
Mini ring Trustee	Brian Whiting	Janet Sheldrake	Gordon Slack
Webmaster	Chris Garner	Ruth Munnings	Mike Whitby

The chairman thanked all the officers who put so much hidden hard work into their roles. She also explained that she is in the process of writing job guidelines for each of the posts to give a bit more detail re the specific tasks and responsibilities required.

12) Election of Central Council reps

Elected	Proposed by	Seconded by
Stephen Pettman	Rowan Wilson	Carl Melville
Neal Dodge	Carl Melville	Rowan Wilson
Chris Birkby	Neal Dodge	Jed Flatters
VACANT		

13) Election of Trustees

The following were elected as Trustees to the Guild: Rowan Wilson, Stephen Cheek, Tom Scase
Proposed Julian Colman, Seconded Cath Colman. All in favour.

14) Rule change

14.1 To amend rule H 2.3. *Pupils in fulltime education and members over 70 years of age shall pay a reduced rate of subscription. Members over 80 years of age shall pay no subscription.*

14.2 To amend constitution B 4. *Churches within the Diocese may be affiliated to the Guild on payment of an annual donation of an amount at least equal to the subscription payable by a Ringing Member aged between 70 & 79.*

Jacky Savage asked if the increase of £10 for a few people is fair.

Mary Dunbavin said we should raise the fees more often rather than sitting on them for a long time as we have done recently.

John Girt asked if we should dispose of all concessions as was proposed earlier in the meeting.

Many members said their subscriptions to other Guilds, choirs etc were considerably higher and many of them have no concessions.

Ralph Earey asked the meeting to focus more on recruiting new members which would help solve our financial situation.

The Rule Change was Proposed by Brian Whiting, Seconded John Girt. Against 5, Abstentions 3.

15) Resolution to adopt the Objects of the Guild Annual report page 80

Stephen Cheek asked the meeting to vote that the Objects of the Guild be:

The Guild shall promote ringing for Divine Service within the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich by:

1 Promoting and encouraging the practice of bellringing.

2 Supporting the recruitment and training of bellringers.

3 Cultivating the art of scientific ringing.

4 Promoting an appreciation of the ringing chamber as part of God's house and encouraging care and attention to its cleanliness and proper equipment.

5 Promoting the preservation of bells in an efficient condition, recommending necessary repairs and renovations and providing reliable information and practical advice on the condition of the bells and their fittings.

6 Supporting restoration and/or augmentation

Proposed Jed Flatters, Seconded Gordon Slack. All in favour.

16) 50 Year Membership Awards

The chairman congratulated the following who had achieved 50 years of membership: Stephen Pettman, Amanda Richmond, Elizabeth Tydeman, Richard Knight, Michael Parker, Sheila Franks, Christopher Nunn, Brian Wells. She then gave a brief summary of their achievements for the Guild:

Rather than talking about their achievements as individuals (as ringing is always a team effort), between them they have 400 years of membership (which equates to a lot of cash for the Guild fund) and have rung over 2500 peals for the Guild. Amongst them there have been two Guild Ringing Masters (one being the first female GRM in 1990) and a district Chairman but three of them are still working for the Guild as CC rep, GMC member and BAC member.

I appreciate that these members may not have all joined in 1969 but in the Annual Report for that year, Ringing Master (Howard Egglestone) asked members to "Support your local tower captain and back up your district officers, but above all

always give of your best whilst in the tower". Wise words indeed and still very relevant today and these 8 members have certainly supported the Guild with their 50 years of membership. Subs were a bit different in 1969 though – 5s membership fee (juniors 2 ½ s) and 6d peal fee.

17) St Edmund's Clapper competition

There were two entries this year, with the winner being Sproughton, who raised £250.00. The runners up were The Millbeck Ring who raised £50.00.

18) Appointment of Independent Examiner

Stephen Cheek proposed that we change our Independent Examiner to BAS Accountants, who will charge half of what we are paying now. Proposed Stephen Cheek, Seconded Gordon Slack. All in favour. A letter of thanks to be sent to Larking Gowen.

19) Guild Magazine Team

The GMC discussed the various options in October 2018 and decided that an enthusiastic team of people would be required to restart the magazine. Sadly, as no one had come forward to take this on, the chairman suggested that this format of communication had perhaps had its day and that new and existing ways of communicating news should be pursued.

20) Guild Social Event 2019 – NE District Saturday 21st Sept

Kate Gill said that the social will be in the NE in the form of a treasure hunt around four towers. This will be followed by a sausage supper. It will be £10 a head. Members were asked to spread the word and look for the flyer on the website and email in the coming weeks.

21) Golden Bottle applications

The chairman explained that the Guild had received a generous donation which needs to be spent on training so the Recruitment and Training committee have proposed that the funds be used to install a simulator in each District of the Guild.

How to apply - Each District (through the District Secretary &/or Ringing Master) will invite expressions of interest from towers and then advise the Recruitment & Training committee.

Guidelines for applications

Members were asked to contact the R&T cmte for a full set of guidelines but ideally the towers will: -

- 1) Have the backing of the PCC
- 2) Agree to install and maintain the simulator (technical advice will be available)
- 3) Agree to make the simulator and bells (silenced) available to Guild members at all reasonable times

4) Have appropriate facilities for groups of learners, including kitchen & toilet facilities

The maximum grant payable will be £1250.

Jacky Savage explained the history of the Golden Bottle Trust, which was set up by her family's bank. She thanked C Hoare & Co for their generous donation.

John Girt congratulated the R & T cmte but suggested that the key to training and retaining new ringers was the appropriate training of the teachers.

22) Any Other Business - (discussion only)

a) Jonathan Williamson explained how the SE District had used the training facilities at MRDC, Norwich and encouraged all members to go and visit the centre. Simon Rudd also encouraged us to visit and make use of the excellent facilities.

b) The GMC have discussed the possibility of holding taster days to promote bellringing and recruit new members. This could be linked to Suffolk Day (21st June), but this is probably too soon for 2019. Maybe a more realistic target would be Open Churches/Heritage Open Days in Sept 2019. Ideas so far include a demonstration of bellringing + have a go using the mini ring.

Ideally these taster days would be held at key locations in each District and would be held regularly in the future.

c) The chairman thanked everyone who rang for Notre Dame Cathedral at the request of the Archbishops. So far 66 Suffolk towers had recorded their performance on Bellboard, and she encouraged everyone to do so.

d) The chairman congratulated Jimmy Yeoman of Exning who received the ART Learning the Ropes Achievement award in March 2019. Jimmy learnt to ring in October 2016 and rang his first quarter peal on 16th September 2017, his first tower bell peal on 16th February 2018, followed by his first handbell peal on 11th July 2018. Shortly after this he celebrated his birthday by ringing a peal!

e) Veterans Day is on 10th July at Debenham at 2pm. All welcome.

23) Date of next AGM: Saturday 18th April 2020 in the SW District