

Meeting of the Management Committee held on Saturday 18 October 1997
at Buxhall Village Hall

Present:- Rev L Pizzey (Chairman), D Salter, P Stannard, Mrs K Salter, Mrs S Girt, J Girt, M Rose, D Barnard, Mrs C Colman, A Smith, W Girling, Mrs C Girling, S Pettman, A Stone, Ms A M Lea, T Hughes, M Rolph, Dr B Wakefield (Secretary).

Apologies for absence:- R Knight, R Whiting, A Mayle,

Minutes:- The minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 1997 had been distributed prior to the meeting. These were taken as read and approved.

Matters arising:- None

Financial Statement:- The Treasurer reported that the Guilds finances were still in a worrying state. As of 30 September 1997 the General Fund was running at a deficit of £206. To date income (after deducting the statutory transfer to the Restoration Fund) totalled £2487 whilst expenditure was £2693. Subscriptions totalling £4117 had so far been received. Peal fees however were considerably down on the corresponding time last year, totalling only £168. After deducting grants approved earlier in the year, the Restoration Fund currently stood at £7673.

Ringing Master's Report. In his report the Master again reminded members of the Code of Conduct with regards to young people, and re emphasised the importance of anyone who teaches ringers to make sure that they are registered with their PCCs if they teach ringers under the age of 18.

He had inspected the restored Boxford bells and had approved payment of the grant. He found the 5th to be somewhat odd struck, but this was being attended to. The dedication service was an enjoyable event.

Tattingstone bells are in a poor state and need work done on them. However they can be rung - just.

Haughley bells however are ringable.

The problems at Stradishall have now been sorted out, and the work on the bells has been completed.

He had represented the Guild at the CC Education Conference.

As always the Veterans' Day was a well attended and happy event, and thanks must once again be extended to Muriel Page for organising it.

The NW District's barbecue had been successful and enjoyable.

The Guild Outing to London had been enjoyed by all who attended.

Suffolk ringers had responded well with regards to ringing following the death of the Princess of Wales. No Guild involvement had been necessary.

Training Day had attracted 38 students. Although there had been plenty of help in the afternoon, more help would have been appreciated in the morning.

Residents have now started moving into Richmond House in Ipswich, and as the bells have not been rung for some time there is concern about what the reaction will be when they are rung. A band is due on 8 November, and the bells are also due to be rung at Christmas.

The 10 bell, Ridgeman Trophy, striking competition is next due to be held on the second Saturday in May at Peterborough Cathedral. There was no support within the Guild for entering a band, so for the 3rd year running Suffolk will not be represented. To date 56 Dinner Tickets had been sold. For the Dinner to be viable at least 70 must be sold.

Ipswich will be celebrating its 800th anniversary on 29 June 2000. It is hoped that the Guild will support Ipswich in its celebrations.

Sub Committee Reports

Restoration and Maintenance.

Mr W Girling presented a report of the meeting held on 18 September. Seven members had attended. Work, inspections etc. had been carried out at about 20 towers since the last meeting. Of special mention was the visit by Ranald Clouston to see the bells at the Royal Hospital School, Holbrook.

The grant towards the welding of the 4th bell at Stradishall had been approved for payment on the successful completion of the work. Also the grant for Boxford, where the restoration was complete, had been approved for payment.

Recruitment and Training.

Mr D Salter presented a detailed report of the most recent meeting of the sub-committee.

Friends of Suffolk Bells.

There was no report.

There followed a discussion about the future of FOSB. Feedback from the Districts had indicated a lack of enthusiasm for FOSB, with both the NW and SE proposing that FOSB be wound up. Currently the SW, NW and NE Districts have 1 elected representative each, whilst the SE has none. Mr S Pettman suggested that the Committee ask for volunteers to help with FOSB, rather than have them elected by Districts. These volunteers would not necessarily have to attend meetings. It was agreed to ask Districts to think about this at their forthcoming AGMs, and for the Districts then to let the Secretary know what they had decided. A final decision about FOSB would be made at the February meeting.

Applications for grants.

The Secretary had received details of an application on behalf of Hacheston. The total cost of the bell restoration part of the project had been estimated at £43000.

Mr A Smith, seconded by Mr M Rolph proposed that the Guild offer a grant of £4600 to Hacheston. This was agreed by all present.

Proposal for a Review of the Rules

Mr M Rose reminded the meeting that he had raised the matter at the previous meeting, and that the committee had asked that it be deferred until this meeting. He said that he believed that the time had come for a review of the Rules. He suggested that a chosen group could meet at Dove House in Debenham and spend a day talking it over.

Mr J Girt took the matter a step further by offering to be a convenor of a Steering Committee to handle it. He sought approval to select and appoint appropriate people to this Steering Committee. This committee would seek to establish the perceived reasons for the existence of the Guild and the changes which might be necessary for these to be achieved, and would propose the manner in which the opinions of all Guild members would be canvassed. It would then submit a draft working document to the Management Committee.

The meeting thanked Mr Girt for his offer, but felt on the whole that such a move was a little premature. It believed that before such a working group be set up the Guild as a whole should be asked whether such a move was needed, and if so what were the issues that it felt needed addressing.

Mrs S Girt proposed, seconded by Mr D Salter, that an open meeting be called at which Suffolk ringers would be invited to put forward ideas. Following this meeting it would then be possible to decide whether there was benefit to be gained from a review of the Rules. The time to set up a working group would be after, and not before, this open meeting. This was agreed, and Saturday 7 February 1998 was chosen as the date for the open meeting. All Suffolk ringers, whether Guild Members or not, would be invited to present their ideas at the meeting. Stowupland Village Hall was chosen as the most appropriate venue, and Mr W Girling offered to try to book it. The time of the meeting would be 9.30am for a 10.00am start.

Publicity for the meeting would be via the Newsletter and What's On. The Secretary agreed to produce a suitable advertisement for the Newsletter.

The Ringing Master thought that such a meeting should be controlled by a neutral facilitator, preferably a non-ringer, and offered to try to find a volunteer.

Proposal for a Rule Change concerning payment of subscriptions

Proposals for changes to Rule 1 and Rule 5 were discussed. The proposed changes are as follows.

Rule A1. **Delete** last two sentences and **replace with**: "Membership shall cease if subscriptions are not paid by 31 March of the year in which they become due. The subscriptions of ringing members elected on or after 1 July, but before 1 October, shall be one half of the current level for that category of membership while those ringing members elected on or after 1 October shall be one quarter of the current level for that category of membership."

Rule A5 After the first sentence **insert**: "The appropriate subscription is payable immediately upon election. In the case of a ringing member the amount due is as set out in Guild Rule A1 while in the case of a Non-Resident Life Member the full current subscription is due."

Mr M Rose proposed, seconded by Dr B Wakefield, that these changes be submitted to the AGM for endorsement. This was agreed.

Ratification of NRLMs.

The election of Mr Godfrey Croughton of Kemsing, Kent, as a NRLM was ratified.

Officers' Job descriptions

The Committee decided not to proceed with this ^{for the time being} ~~as it could be potentially divisive, and was unnecessary.~~

Events for 1998/99

Management Committee	21 February 1998 20 June 1998 17 October 1998 20 February 1999
AGM	18 April 1998 10 April 1999
Striking Competitions	16 May 1998
Training Day	19 September 1998
Seminar	17 October 1998
Outing	25 July 1998

Any other business

Mr W Girling presented the names of those who have agreed to serve on the Belfry Advisory Committee. They were the current maintenance team plus R Clouston, J Colman, R French, C Nunn, S Pettman, G Pipe, D Salter and N Whittel.

Mr Girling also reported that the Affiliation Scheme now had 50 tower members. He was going to write to tower captains to try to get more members.

Mr Girling also offered to investigate the possibility of producing a Guild calendar for 1999.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.10pm.

