

Suffolk Guild of Ringers

Minutes of the General Management Committee Meeting Held on Sunday 15th August 2010 at 2.30pm in Stowupland Church Hall

Present:- Philip Gorrod (Chairman), Richard Munnings (Ringing Master), Gordon Slack (Treasurer), Mandy Shedden (Secretary), Jonathan Stevens (BAC Chairman), Jason Busby (NE Halesworth), Trevor Hughes (NE Hoxne), Alan Stanley (NW Hartismere), Brian Hale (NW Ixworth), Maurice Rose (NW Thingoe), Revd Brian Redgers (SE Bosmere), Peter Harper (SE Colneys), Sally Munnings (SE Ipswich), Derek Rose (SW Sudbury), Sue Freeman (SW Hadleigh), Richard Knight (SW Clare),

Apologies: Marion Turner (NW Mildenhall), Stefan Labedzki (SW Lavenham), Julie Rapior (NE Saxmundham), Robert Scase (SE Loes), David Steed (NW Stowmarket), Kate Eagle (SE Woodbridge)

1. Welcome

PJG welcomed the new committee members MS and GS & SM to their first meeting.

He apologised to the members for the change of dates, which had been necessary because a large contingent of the committee were away on holiday together.

2. Minutes of meeting held on Saturday 20th February 2010-previously circulated.

There being no changes or amendments the minutes were accepted and signed.

3. Sub-committee reports:

i. Belfry Advisory Committee

Report from JS reads as follows:-

“The BAC team has been working hard as usual. Our most recent meeting was at Barking on July 1st. Apart from the usual catalogue of jobs done or planned by BAC members, the most fun we’ve had has been running a couple of Belfry Training Days. The first was at Rougham, where we were made most welcome. The format was a theory session in the morning followed by tower and rope work in the afternoon. Following the feedback from this session, we made some changes to the course which we ran at Laxfield where the locals provided hospitality and Fressingfield, yesterday. I would like to record my thanks to the towers concerned and to those of the BAC who helped at these training days; Alan Moulton, Winston Girling, Bruce Wakefield and Michael Rolph. Not only were we able to share skills, but we had time to sort out some worries that the students had about particular tower problems.

As Technical Advisor, I made a presentation on bells and bell frames and their maintenance and restoration to a group of Norfolk Architects as part of their CPD in March and at the end of June talked to Loes deanery Synod on Bells, Heritage, Restoration and Funding.

Of most interest restoration wise, Wissett is nearing completion of the finishing touches, Chediston is having sound control fitted, Dennington has had the remedial works completed by the Bell-hanger and Hopton are nearly ready for the Guild Inspection. “

ii Recruitment and Training

A meeting has been scheduled for 4th September at Stowmarket. District Representatives and other interested parties need to be made aware of this.

4. Applications for Grants

No complete applications have been received recently. A signed copy of the Terms and Conditions of the grant offered to the Norman Tower in Bury St Edmunds has been received.

5. Ringing Master’s Report

The Guild AGM had a very good turnout: over 100 people attended the meeting. The Ixworth dedication was well attended. The striking competition had a very good turnout.

St Edmunds day ringing coincides with the Cumberland’s peal weekend but RM wants a peal rung in each district if possible. Due to the late half term 19th Feb till 27th February are the dates for the 2011 Guild Peal Week.

RK asked if instead of several peals, one could be rung at the Cathedral to mark St Edmunds day: this was seen as a possibility.

PJG referred to an article to be published in the Ringing World showing that, in 2009, the Suffolk Guild had the highest number of first pealers per 100 members of all the English territorial societies.

6. Treasurer's Report

Overall

No major surprises – income and expenditure largely as expected.

General Fund

Income: Subscriptions – our main source of income – slightly up on last year. Either people have paid more promptly or number of payments has increased.

Similarly, peal fees are slightly up on this time last year.

Expenditure

So far this year we're underspent on Hall Hire for meetings and the £400 spent on lapel badges last year was a one-off. We're currently underspent on the Magazine of last year's Newsletter (one edition this year) but another issue has now been produced.

General Fund break even will very much depend on expenditure in the remaining part of the year.

Restoration Fund

Income: We're currently down on the St Edmunds Clapper of last year. Donations look broadly similar to last year. Of major concern is the interest paid on our deposit account:

In 2008 Restoration Fund Interest was £4700

In 2009 Restoration Fund Interest was £1100

In 2010 projected Interest is £300.

The interest element was once the largest component of our income and is now a minor one.

Expenditure

We've paid the grant to Dennington and are in the process of paying the balance to Wissett. So we will have paid out £11,500 so far this year. JS will be inspecting Hopton soon so we can expect a further payment this year.

Allocated balance in the BRF is £26,000

Unallocated balance is £35,500

Strategy

We are investigating the costs and benefits of collecting subscriptions by Direct Debit in a bid to reduce the number of members whose membership lapses because they have not paid.

7. AGM review and feedback

RM thought it was a very successful day. RK said that it was good social event, nice food and a good meeting.

At the HRL fund meeting Stuart Hobley gave a good presentation, and the information was considered valuable. The fringe meeting was seen as a good tool for getting people to attend the AGM and for next year JS would like to have a debate of renewal versus preservation including all bodies that normally have a say in the matter, eg English Heritage and Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings. This might be a possibility to improve relations between bell hangers, ringing societies and any such bodies who are involved in restorations and other work in the belfry. TH referred to recent dialogue in the Ringing World that stated that EH were an advisory body and as such should not over rule any faculty decisions. After reading a copy of the article JS said that what should happen in theory was not always what happened in practice and such bodies had to be consulted before faculties were approved in almost all cases, and if propositions were put forward without prior vetting they were unlikely to be considered, simply because the bodies had not been consulted so it was advisable to approach them first.

JS reported that EH have been successful in convincing the HLF not to support projects that they (EH) do not support. A debate might be useful in getting EH more on side.

AS thought that the fringe meeting was well received.

8. Child Protection

i Appointment of Child Protection Officer.

John Girt had been appointed as a caretaker in the position. PJG proposed that Mary Garner be appointed. This was unanimously approved. MG will be invited to the next meeting to update us on the changes in Child Protection.

Action: PJG

ii Essex Association

The Essex Association has prohibited anyone who is on the Sex Offenders' Register from being a member. The situation was discussed at length. Without exception, members felt that Essex had been unnecessarily heavy-handed and that it was preferable to try to reintegrate an offender rather than exclude them, provided of course that all necessary safeguards were in place and that Child Protection procedures were properly carried out. Subject to this it was agreed that no further action was appropriate.

9. Ratification of NRLMs

Robert P Wood, Steven E Clarke, Cecile Cross, Thomas F Lawrance were all approved

10. Library Update (Written Report from Abby Antrobus)

"Location of library

At the AGM, it was reported that the library had been deposited with the Suffolk Records Office. Since then, Victoria Goodwin of the Bury branch has been in contact to say that they can't take the *Ringing Worlds* and some other parts of the archive that are not exclusively Suffolk related.

The RO is not in a hurry for us to re-claim the items, but we do need to consider where they will be kept. I could keep the material in my house, but it might be better if it was in a more public and permanent place - perhaps a tower with an intermediate floor? Ruth Suggett has suggested that provision for storage *could* be built into a future restoration project?

There are considerations for any potential location of the archive:

- Fire risk, and would the Guild perhaps cover extra insurance?
- Are conditions appropriate for paper storage?
- Would it create unwanted sound control?
- Would faculties be needed for installation of bookshelves?

Before finding potential locations, we need to know how much material will be returned: I will visit Victoria Goodwin this week to find out whether she has an idea of the volume, the timescale that they are working to, and how it should be packed and stored. There may be some expenses involved.

Library catalogue

The catalogue is a vital linking element now that the library is dispersed. I plan to turn the library list into a database, adding in a field that gives the physical location of each item and, ultimately, any catalogue numbers it has been assigned. The database could be added to or advertised on the website – I briefly spoke with Chris Garner about this yesterday.

Collecting material.

I fear I have not been as effective as Gillian in collecting material, and would like to put out a general plea, perhaps through the website, for orders of service, newspaper cuttings and photographs. I have accepted but not since confirmed John Girt's offer to donate *Ringing Worlds*. Mandy Shedden and Gordon Slack have also offered."

Abby asked whether she should purchase a DVD collection of *Ringing Worlds* 1911 to 1940 at a cost of £37.

The meeting agreed that the library catalogue should be uploaded to the website.

MR asked if the librarian could investigate the possibility of St Mary's in Bury St Edmunds storing items in their now redundant tower as it was so close to the Suffolk Records Office. Action **MS/AA**

It was noted that the cost of the CD was within the librarian's discretionary budget and she could decide whether to purchase it. Action **MS /AA**

11 .Guild Magazine

AS asked for help in selling advertising space. He had received good feedback on the current production. RK suggested that too many copies are being produced. PJG to write to District Secretaries for feedback from their local knowledge as to how many copies are needed by each tower. The same incumbent looks after several towers in many cases so they do not need a copy from each tower, but it was felt that a copy should be left with each church especially for visitors. Action: PJG

12. Mini Ring Update

The new mini ring should be available week ending Friday 3rd September. Dedication due for Sunday 10th October at 3.30pm part of Evensong service at Bury St Edmunds.

13. Qualification for Ringing Membership

TH had been concerned that ineligible members were being elected. Prospective members should have their ability independently assessed. They should be able to ring rounds competently. PJG referred to a letter that he had sent out recently to all District Chairmen regarding the procedure for electing new members, and that no one should be elected until their ringing ability had been verified.

14. Any other matters arising

No matters arising

15. Correspondence

i) NE District Young Ringers Events (letter from Maggie Ross)

There are a number of new young ringers coming forward in the NE District who do not have access to transport. Maggie had asked for a grant towards a minibus for an outing in the summer, from the Pipe Family Fund but, in the event, private transport had been arranged. TH proposed £30 grant be given to cover tower donations. Seconded by SM. All agreed

ii) Other

Apart from a few requests for Annual Report from outside organisations the only other correspondence received was a request for a claim form from the Guild Insurers for a broken leg sustained by Glenys Fear on her way down from ringing at Hacheston Church. The Guild Insurance brokers have been notified and this will be dealt with in due course.

16. Guild Social

This will be held 20th November: tickets are available now and teams are needed for the quiz. Ringing at Beccles, Bungay, Barsham and Ringsfield. PJG encouraged members to advertise this to their districts. There is a poster on the Guild website.

17. AOB

MR queried why the June meeting had been moved to July. This was due to a clash with the Ridgman trophy. MR proposed that the GMC meetings take place on the third Sunday of June if Saturday is not available and that next year meetings should take place on: February 19th 10.00am, June 19th 2.30pm October 16th (Sunday) 6pm This was seconded BH and agreed nem con.

RK proposed that all sets of handbells in the county that belong to individual churches should be recorded as he was concerned that sometimes they were removed from the church for safekeeping and forgotten about, becoming de facto property of the "safekeeper". PJG said he would write to Brian Whiting for his view on this.

Action: PJG

18. Date of Next Meeting: Saturday October 16th at 6pm.