

Minutes for GMC meeting Saturday 20th October 2012 Stowupland

Present: Philip Gorrod(Chair), Jed Flatters(Ringing Master), Gordon Slack(Treasurer),Jonathan Stevens(BAC Chairman),Ed Delatte(NE Beccles),Trevor Hughes(NE Hoxne), Julie Rapior(NE Saxmundham),Alan Stanley(NW Hartismere), Brian Hale(NW Ixworth),David Steed(NW Stowmarket),Peter Harper(SE Colneys), Robert Scase(SE Loes),Sally Munnings(SE Ipswich),Derek Rose(SW Sudbury),Sue Freeman(SW Hadleigh), Richard Knight(SW Clare).

Apologies: Maurice Rose(NW Thingoe), Jason Busby(NE Halesworth),Mary Garner(SE Samford), Brian Redgers(SE Bosmere)

Welcome: PJG welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for arriving so promptly.

Minutes of the previous meeting: The acceptance of the minutes of the previous meeting on 17th June 2012 was proposed by PWH, seconded by TDH and signed by the chairman.

Belfry Advisory Committee Report:

We met most recently at Earl Stonham on Sept 27.

As usual, the BAC team has been active around the Guild. Towers receiving help have included Aldeburgh, Pettaugh, Blythburgh, Wetherden and Long Melford.

Woolpit are planning to have their existing tenor welded.

Your Technical Advisor attended a test ring at Thurston and measured the differential movement between tower and foundation beams at 2mm, both horizontal and vertical. The foundation beams were not grouted in but built in using rubble and lime mortar, which mortar now needs to be dug out and replaced with a Portland cement based grout.

The next meeting will be at Kersey on Tuesday 22 January.

Applications for grants:

JJS reported that there had been no application for grants.

Recruitment and Training Committee Report:

R and T have had no further meetings but are pursuing the ITTS which is holding a further module 1 course at Reydon on the 24th November for up to eight new trainers. A module 2 course for change ringing will be held at BSE on 9th February for the existing trainers and mentors. I am expecting several new members after each of the district meetings and I will make contact with them and arrange a meeting to get to know one another early in the New Year.

RAK questioned the date of the next recruitment and training session at Reydon as this is on the SW District ADM day. JF reported that he had been very restricted with dates due to the availability of the national trainers.

Ringling Master's Report:

This summer period has seen some of the social events which I enjoy taking place. First at the Pipes' house there was the wonderful evening with Di's super catering with the surprise sprung on Owen Claxton as he retires as the steeple keeper at SMLT. Next Peta and Brian's BBQ, with a good turn out eating and drinking and putting £360 into the guild BRF.

Then Veterans' Day at Debenham, again well supported and a good afternoon out to meet old friends.

The mini ring at Weston country fair might have been a good chance to show what we do but the weather forced its cancellation, not so at Mildenhall on the August Bank holiday where Rowan and I attended the open tower, hot foot from the cycling rally.

In Sept. the SE district hosted the Barn Dance at Sproughton, a good night was had by all, with many joining in, all beer was sold and a good profit was made for the BRF

Striking Competitions always seem to feature, this time the SW at Polstead where I was pleased to help one of the teams to second place, our own district fun comp at Thornham Magna was unfortunately cancelled due to lack of support. Our Suffolk youngsters entered into the National Youth Striking Comp at Birmingham unfortunately we did not place too well but we did ring method and not revert to call changes unlike one of the stronger bands.

The Olympics seem to have taken up the whole of the summer. As a guild we were pleased to welcome the Olympic torch as it passed through the county, I was able to stand in a peal of Olympic S Major at Felixstowe and also ring at the NT as it stopped right outside the tower drowning us out. As a guild we did not support the Martin Creed project to ring loud and fast but many towers took the advantage of the PR to ring at the revised time of 08.15 or at some more convenient time of day.

I continue to support Peter and Jane in the second Tuesday meetings, and enjoy the social side as much as the ringing, I also organise a last Thursday surprise minor practice to advance from Cambridge, though the summer has seen a temporary blip in these.

As to our future I am heavily committed to the ITTS initiative overseeing this for the guild. So far our first course has brought in 7 new trainers, 3 of whom have done little teaching before. This has also brought in new recruits. A further course is to be held at Reydon on Nov.24th. Despite some initial scepticism all agree that training en masse offers a great deal to pupil and trainer alike and a get together at Debenham ringing only rounds with one learner ringing at a time reinforced this.

Finally thanks to Maggie for her young ringers initiative with the get together at Wenhaston and Southwold, good practice for all .

Treasurers Report: General Fund

Since the last meeting a stock of polyester rope has been ordered at a cost of £600. 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 £1535 compared with last year's figure of £1500 and the 2009 refund of £1100. However, our refund is expected to reduce next year as the transitional arrangements to cover the reduction in the tax rate have now expired. I have also been claiming tax back from previous years but there will be little further scope for that.

The Guild Social made a profit of almost £430. Congratulations to the SE District.

The sum now available for allocation to new projects stands at around £47,000. The amount reserved for grants allocated to projects in progress stands at £11,800.

Jubilee Fund

The Jubilee fund has received a donation of £220.

Investment Strategy

We consulted an Independent Financial Adviser but felt that the potential benefit of his advice would not justify the proposed fees. We have invested £20,000 in a 12 month Charities Aid Foundation bond paying 2.85% and may make a further investment in a similar bond.

Comparison with other Bell Restoration Funds

I was asked by Roger Booth to supply information about our Restoration Fund income. The summary of his findings for all Guilds and Associations shows that we raise slightly above the average amount (per member) for all Guilds and raise 24% more per member than we did 15 years ago (again around the average for all Guilds).

Pipe Fund

We have received two requests for money from the Pipe Fund. One is to pay tower fees and contribute to other expenses for the Young Ringers' visit to towers in the SE District in the next week or two.

We have also been asked to contribute towards expenses of members involved in the 2013 Young Ringers' Striking Competition to be held in York.

Some discussion followed the treasurer's report. AS asked Gordon whether it would be useful to have an article in the Guild Magazine to ensure as many members as possible have registered for gift aid. PJG suggested it would be useful to make people aware that if their subscription is paid by someone who pays income tax then gift aid

can be claimed on this - for example young people paid for by parents or members paid for by partners. RAK said this should also be included in the magazine article. There have also been some problems with members who have not paid for a year or more being taken off the gift aid register in the past and then not reregistering if they start to pay subscriptions again. PJG suggested that returning members should be re-elected and also asked to re register for gift aid.

The applications for grants from the Pipe Fund were supported by the members present.

Ratification of NRLMs: Christopher J Brown, David A Cornwall and June Mckay were ratified as NRLMs of the Guild.

Succession Planning: PJG has planned a meeting next month with a possible successor for him as chairman but encouraged the members present to think of other possible names too.

AS asked JJS if he would be willing to consider the post but Jonathan thanked him for the thought but feels he would be unable to give the post the time it deserves even if he were no longer BAC chairman.

District Committee: Gordon Slack had received feedback from his subcommittee.

Summary of Reps' comments:

Deanery changes within the N.E. District have forced the Guild to consider Deanery boundaries. Two Deaneries have merged and two towers have moved to a Benefice in a different District. It seems that the members in these towers wish to retain their membership and representation as it was at the beginning of 2011.

We haven't received any strong indications of dissatisfaction with District/ Deanery boundaries (as they were until recently). The current system of Deanery representation is uneven, although this partly results from geography, with some Deanery reps. having few towers but a wider area to cover. However, we don't get the sense that there is great concern from our Deanery reps. about this unevenness.

There's no evidence that members feel a need to follow changes to Deaneries which the Diocese adopts. However, there is evidence of ringers within many Benefices working together.

A sub-division of Districts is helpful and should be retained. It gives members some feeling of personal representation. There would be benefits in making this structure flexible rather than rigid.

Proposals

We do need a sub-division below District. The Deanery structure in place at the start of 2011 is a good starting point but this structure need not be linked to Diocesan changes. The structure shouldn't be too rigid. Changes could be proposed and agreed within a District (or between Districts where relevant) for ratification by the GMC.

The Constitution could be worded much less formally to reflect that we have a flexible structure which can be modified by Districts and ratified by the GMC without

rule changes or approval at an AGM. Districts would initially appoint the same number of representatives as at present.

If the GMC is happy with this approach we will propose wording changes to the Constitution and to District Rules. The aim will be to seek agreement from the GMC at its February 2013 meeting with a view to obtaining agreement from the Guild membership at the 2013 AGM.

Some discussion followed.

PJG said that as everyone seems happy with the districts as they are they should be left the same but suggested that if towers wished to swap districts that both District Committees needed to agree and then this could be ratified by the GMC. At present this has to be agreed at an AGM.

He also suggested a constitution change to four districts but with no mention of deaneries and then within the district they can arrange their own affairs, possibly keeping the existing deaneries or change it to more or fewer sub districts

Regarding representation on the GMC he suggested each district has four or five members as now but these could be allocated by the district although it would be recommended not to have more than two from each sub area.

AS thought it would be good to maintain the existing district structure to help communications within the Guild for example the Guild Magazine but GS thought this could be cascaded through perhaps a single district representative.

PWH suggested that the District Chairman should be ex-officio on the GMC; PJG suggested they could take one of the districts places.

RAK asked why we actually need districts, could we not go back to the old system of branches around towers then maybe only one branch official would be required and events could be organised from Guild level, perhaps with a Central Ringing Master and deputies around the Guild. TDH reported that this system was in place from the 1920s to the 1960s but was changed as people were not supporting events such as the AGM. SM has experience of a branch system in the Peterborough Guild and said there did not appear to be any more people at events such as branch practices but they had less distance to travel. JJS thought that several branches would make lots of travel for Guild Officials such as the chairman visiting all the different areas.

PJG suggested that a multibranch structure was a very radical overhaul and perhaps a job for the new Guild Chairman which could be carried forward by Gordon's committee.

RAK proposed that the GMC accepts Gordon's proposal to leave the districts as they are and look for wording to change the constitution and bring this to the next meeting. This was seconded by AS. All the members were in favour.

TDH suggested that we could just have said the NE District could have had one extra member on the GMC when the Halesworth and Beccles deaneries merge within the church structure and leave the rules as they are. PJG said each district would have the same number of members as now, JF suggested numbers on GMC could be allocated due to number of members but TDH reported that this had happened in the past and made it very difficult to have a balanced discussion.

Annual Report:

Ruth Suggett the current report editor was unable to attend the meeting today.

It was suggested at the previous meeting that the report had some more information for reference purposes to fulfil the title handbook and also possibly a small report from each tower. Each of these would make the report thicker and the current stapled report would need to be bound instead. A quote of £1500 had been obtained for different binding vs. £1300 for stapled reports as now.

Ruth was not keen on individual tower reports as she thought this would be a lot of work to collect in time. She had spoken to Alan Stanley about some technical help and maybe transferring some information from the report to the magazine.

PJG and SF felt that the tower reports would all be very similar (as are the District Secretaries reports each year.).

TDH thought the rules should be included every issue as new members all get a copy, otherwise there would need to be a separate copy of the rules for them if they were not in the current report. JF thought the Guild's child protection policy should also be included.

RAK asked whether all the peal compositions should be included in every report.

There followed a lengthy discussion. GES thought it was encouraging for young composers to have their compositions published. PJG suggested that maybe we could be selective about which ones are published, RAK suggested there could be a section on the website where people could print them off if required. JJS suggested that David Salter is working on bringing up to date all the compositions that have been called for the Guild and he could probably analyse easily which have been called before and hence maybe don't need publishing again.

There seemed to be a small majority in favour of removing the peal compositions but PJG suggested this is probably the wrong time of year to be tackling a major overhaul of the report so it was agreed to leave it as it is this year and put it on the agenda for the AGM.

Guild Dinner 16.3.13

PJG said that Richy had received correspondence from Mark Murphy at Radio Suffolk who was unable to be a speaker at the dinner. He (PJG) had approached Drew Craddock (author of Towerbase and Pealbase and a former director of the Ringing World) and he will be the speaker. PG has also arranged musical entertainment, handbells and there will be a pianist.

MS and MR had spoken to the suggested caterers and received a quote of about £15 per head. The hall at Woolpit was booked. PJG is concerned the dinner is a good occasion and the menu is good quality. RAK thought it should be 3 courses with a choice of pre ordered starters and desserts and a vegetarian option. PJG will start to look at the planning for this in the next month and liaise with GES over costs. It is suggested that tickets will be available in the New Year.

Mini Ring; Nothing to report.

Matters arising from the previous minutes:

PJG asked if the descriptions of what the treasurer or other officers require from the district secretaries/treasurers are in progress - GES has it in hand.

PJG said the Guild Social in September was very good and passed his thanks to the SE District.

Correspondence: None

AOB: AS thought the outputs from the last meeting (minutes/agenda for today/times) had been poorly managed where previously they had been good. He felt the organisation should be kept as open as possible.

JJS reported that Alan Rogers from the SE district and a previous District Ringing Master had died: a minute's silence was held.

SF requested material for the next copy of the magazine as soon as possible; it should be out before Christmas. PJG said the last issue of the magazine was very good. RAK commented on the lack of advertisements in the last issue as these must help with funding. Richard Munnings had offered to help out with finding advertisers-AS will ask him again.

Dates of next meetings:

16th February 2013 at 2pm

15th June 2013 at 6pm

19th October 2013 at 10am