

# Minutes of the Meeting of the Guild Management Committee

## Held on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2 pm, Stowupland Village Hall

**Present:** Alan Stanley (Chairman), Jed Flatters (Ringing Master), Carl Melville (Secretary) Owen Claxton (Treasurer), Winston Girling (Chairman BAC), Neal Dodge, Ralph Earey, Sue Freeman, Mary Garner, Philip Gorrod, Trevor Hughes, Derek Rose, Tom Scase, David Smith, Jonathan Stevens and Marion Turner.

### 1. Welcome

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting, pointing out that this was Owen Claxton's first meeting as Treasurer and Carl Melville's as Secretary.

### 2. Apologies

Received from Ed Rolph (NE), Bryan Mills (SW), David Steed (NW), Peter Harper (SE), Sally Munnings (SE).

### 3. Absent Friends

None to remember at this meeting.

### 4. Minutes of the GMC meeting held on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2015 previously circulated were signed as a true record.

### 5. Matters Arising from the GMC minutes from.

SE district were oversubscribed with 6 GMC members. This is now resolved and have 5 members.

Survey for the AGM (discussed at 12. under AGM Review).

### 6. Reports

#### a. Treasurer's Report (Owen Claxton)

Mandate changes with Barclays completed, but CCLA work in progress. Trustee changes were update via Charities Commission website. Owen still has HMRC to do.

Insurance: Ecclesiastical Insurance was renewed at £416.05 (public liability) and Howe Maxted at £706.67 (personal

accident). GMC decided to review the cover provided of this before renewal 2016. See item 11 below.

Barclays Current a/c £5769 – Owen to confer with Gordon re amount to transfer into investment a/c.

Running totals for income and expenditure for period 1st Jan to May 31st - comparing 2015 against 2014 figures.

Income general Fund 2015 £8900 91.69% of 2014 £9706

Report Ads £120 60% of £200

Peal fees £185 130% of £143

Subscriptions paid into general fund so far as % of previous year in same period

NE £1241 94.30%

NW £1597 91.62%

SE £2108 125.03%

SW £330 27.78%

Surprise was expressed at the low level for the South West. Derek Rose and David Smith will follow up.

£390 was received from George Pipe's exhibition. A discussion was had about where the money should be placed. It was decided to put the money in the General Fund, so it wasn't restricted.

Expenditure General Fund 2015 £4997 76.5% of 2014 £6532

Minor variations of various accounts, as expected.

**b. Ringing Master's Report (Jed Flatters)**

At the AGM held at Felixstowe I was reelected to serve a final year as master, thank you all for your support in me.

The striking competitions were held in the SW district, the six bell competition was held at Rattlesden . 12 teams had pre

entered and so the draw was held at 10.00 Our judges for the day were Phillip Wilding, from Fordham and David, Alfie and Henry Pipe from Cambridge who were settled in the sunshine. A cooked lunch was provided by Derek Rose and helpers from Rattlesden tower. St Mary le Tower won the Mitson Shield in good style whilst Rendham and Sweffling combined team did the business in the Lester Brett competition for call change bands.

A brisk run over to Lavenham saw us pulling teams out of the hat for the eight bell competition.

Six teams had entered and I was pleased to see the SW district entering, I thought home advantage would help them but sadly it was not to be. The difficult bells meant all teams stuck to Grandsire for their test pieces making the judges task a little easier. St Mary le tower ran out winners of the Rose Trophy which Maurice presented to their captain, David Potts.

It was Alfie and Henry's first time helping to judge, and I noticed that their figures were consistent with their fathers, good effort on their behalf, 12 bell next!

On 6<sup>th</sup> June we took a 10 bell band over for the Ridgman Trophy, held at Wisbech, for a full report please see the guild web site. Pleased to say we placed second to the Ely guild with a good example of 10 bell ringing.

I have become more involved with teaching of late, helping Ruth Suggett at Bardwell with a returning ringer and starting two new ringers from scratch at the Norman Tower, this has restricted the number of other towers I get to in the evenings though I have still got over to each of my own districts practices and recent qp week.

I continue to support the second Tuesday practices organised by Peter and Jane Harper, if you are free give them a try as they are usually a good day out and will only carry on if supported.

c. **Belfry Advisory Committee** (Winston Girling)

The BAC met on 3<sup>rd</sup> June at Elmsett with 12 members present. Penny Rose was elected to the group, which the GMC approved.

Winston told the meeting to publicize and support the BAC event on Bell Maintenance on 4<sup>th</sup> July at Long Melford Church. Minutes of the BAC attached.

Mary Garner reported that Wickham Market bells were being returned tomorrow (Monday 22<sup>nd</sup>) at 10am.

Ralph Earey questioned what the situation was at St Mary Quay, Ipswich. He reported that there was huge excitement about the bells being rehung, but he had now heard that MIND had spent the money on other things.

A discussion followed this about redundant churches, English Heritage and conservation groups. It was acknowledged how little influence the BAC, Guild groups or Diocesan groups had once a church was made redundant, and that we needed to be more proactive in making our voice heard. It was therefore felt that the Chairman should write a letter to the Central Council to make our concerns heard, particularly focusing on St Mary Quay, Ipswich. Winston will follow up with Stephen Pettman.

The meeting heard that the 5<sup>th</sup> at Hartest was currently being 'replaced'.

Neal Dodge asked about progress from Redgrave, another redundant church. Winston reported that there was nothing to report on. The Churches Conservation Trust had not

responded to the plans to rehang/augment the bells. Winston reminded the meeting that this tower would be both beneficial to Norfolk and Suffolk ringers if used as a training tower as well.

d. **Recruitment and Training** (Jed Flatters)

Jed reported that the R&T group had not met, but plan to meet on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> June. He reminded members to encourage their district reps to be present and in future to nominate people who are keen on representing their district on this group.

e. **Young Ringers** (Neal Dodge)

In March we held a 12 bell workshop at the Norman Tower which was run by Amanda Richmond. It was very well attended and I think everyone got a lot of out of the experience of ringing on higher numbers.

To try and give ownership in organising YR events we decided at our April practice at Offton to elect a Young Ringers' Secretary and Ringing Master. They will be responsible for amongst other things organising and running our monthly practices. They are elected for 6 month terms and all our practice have been booked up till then and are on What's On. The Ringing Master is George Salter and Secretary is Ambrin Williams.

We are not entering a team into the Ringing World National Youth Contest as not enough of our young ringers are available on the day. This is very disappointing but some of us will be attending the day in Oxford as the competition is only a small part of what is a very exciting day out. We will of course aim to enter a method team into next year's contest.

We also want more Young Ringers to join our group so if you have any learners in their early twenties or younger please do get in touch and they will be made most welcome.

- f. A report from Peter Harper had been distributed and discussed.  
Thanks were given to Peter Harper for the report.

Jed questioned why there was no report from the Central Council reps. It was agreed to keep the report on the Agenda for GMC meetings and to invite a CC rep along to report to GMC once or twice a year.

## **7. Applications for Grants**

All Saints', Stoke Ash, 5 bells, asked for advice and inspection by Winston Girling revealed that water entering via a leak in the roof had rotted support beams. Because of a lack of local funds, Remedial work will undertaken by Winston and others on the BAC as a Guild project with a cost in the region of £300. The GMC agreed a grant to be paid to Winston Girling for the full amount so long as this was in the region of £300 and subject to a record of costs supported by receipts.

## **8. Welcome Pack**

The Chairman had received correspondence from David Stanford, asking if the Guild could put together a Welcome Pack for new members. See 9. under Membership Secretary.

## **9. Membership Secretary**

A proposal from Mary Garner to firm up current membership and welcoming practices within the Guild was circulated to members. See attached for proposal.

Alan Stanley proposed that the meeting adopt Mary's proposal, in light of David Stanford's request for a Welcome Pack. Adopted.

Mary highlighted the need for the role and offered to take it on, as long as no more tasks were added to the list. Mary said that the role is important because of the need to know who the members of the Guild are, especially for insurance, protection of children and communications purposes, and that the post will only firm up ongoing practices of welcoming and recording new members.

Jed Flatters asked for simplicity in case new members are put off. The meeting then heard that the process is simple as long as district secretaries cooperated.

Philip Gorrod asked for a watertight procedure when new members are elected, asking that districts take a more proactive stance before nominating, to ensure new ringers are safe and can safely ring a bell.

Mary Garner said she will liaise with Owen Claxton about Gift Aid declarations for new members.

It was agreed that a Welcome Pack, after a new member had been elected and a membership form received from the districts, would consist of a letter from the Chairman, a Ringing Leaflet and a Certificate, sent out by the Membership Secretary.

A Handbook and Guild Badge would then be given out at district meetings.

Chairman expressed his thanks to Mary for putting together this proposal and for taking it on. The GMC will review if this should become a Guild Office.

## **10. Ratification of NRLMs**

None received.

## **11. Guild Insurance**

Levels of insurance were discussed and it was felt that the Guild should consider increasing the level of cover in line with modern practice. Alan Stanley and Owen Claxton would talk to David Salter who has expertise in this area and discuss a way forward.

## 12. AGM Review

The Chairman gave his thanks to Ralph Earey for organising a great AGM at St John's, Felixstowe. He commented that the exhibition worked well in drawing people together as a fringe activity.

The Table Top survey results were sent out by email and thanks given to Ralph for getting this organised.

It was noted that George Reynolds was not thanked by the AGM for his year's work on the Annual Report. The Chairman acknowledged the oversight and stated that he had personally apologised to George at the Striking Competition. The meeting agreed that the Secretary write to George to give the Guild's thanks. George was thanked.

## 13. AOB

### a. The Guild Magazine

A discussion was held as to the magazine's purpose, cost, readership and circulation, as asked at the AGM. All aspects were seen as appropriate. It was acknowledged that although the magazine was aimed primarily at Guild members it was also of some interest and served to promote the Guild to other churchgoers and visitors, and that in view of this it would always be difficult to get the balance right. Sue Freeman said she had received lower quotes for its publication and had switched to a cheaper printer.

### b. GMC dates

Carl Melville asked that meetings of the GMC not be held on Sundays in the future. Mary Garner reported that this had not been necessary in recent years as it did not clash with the Ridgeman Trophy. Jed Flatters pointed out that the Ridgeman Trophy would fall on the third Saturday in 2017.

### c. Owen Claxton received a letter from Sal Burrows who organises the Parish Affiliation Scheme, asking if it could be taken over by someone else. Carl Melville said he can take this on as Secretary. Winston offered to help him.

- d. Trevor Hughes asked that the GMC look more carefully at the Guild's constitution and to clarify what a 'quorum' of the AGM would be. He suggested using 'Robert's Rules'. The Secretary and Chairman would look into this.
  
- e. Carl Melville reported that the new bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich was yesterday enthroned at the Cathedral. The Secretary will write to him on behalf of the GMC to formally invite him to be our President.

#### 14. Date of Next Meeting

Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> October, 2 pm, Stowupland Church Hall.

**(Discussed at Item 9)**

**Suffolk Guild Membership**

### **(Proposal to firm up current practice)**

When a potential new member is identified:

1. Ensure an **Application Form** is filled in (responsibility of proposer and seconder)
2. Take the completed form to a **District Meeting** or equivalent, together with the relevant **subscription** and if possible the person to be elected. (This gives opportunity for the person to exhibit their skills and to meet others from the district.)

**If the person to be elected is not able to be present at the election contact the district ringing master well in advance of the election date.** It is essential that any new member is seen as safe and competent because they will be part of the Guild Insurance in case of accident.

3. Once elected the form should be passed to the **District Treasurer/Secretary** to take the relevant details and bank the subscription
4. **District Treasurer/Secretary** sends completed application forms to **Membership Secretary**

Final Outcome for new member is to receive:  
handbook, welcome letter\*, ringing leaflet, badge and certificate

#### **Role of Membership Secretary**

- (i) Record details, store membership forms
- (ii) Pass email details to Web Master for inclusion on contact list
- (iii) Issue **Certificate**, welcome letter etc

On receipt of Application Form **Membership Secretary** will

#### **Option A** (Almost what happens now...or not!)

1. Send Welcome Letter and up to date Ringing Leaflet. (Change from present)
2. Send certificate asap to District Secretary for presentation.
3. Handbook & badge presented at election ie at District meeting.

Advantage: New members receive something at election, sending Ringing Leaflet centrally should ensure it's kept up to date.

Disadvantage: Registration system may stall and new members never receive letter, certificate etc

#### **Option B**

- a. Send Welcome Letter, Handbook, badge, Ringing Leaflet
- b. Send Certificate to new member / District Secretary for presentation

Advantage: If new member receives nothing after election they will follow it up having paid!

#### **Main points for discussion:**

Who sends/gives out Handbook, Ringing Leaflet, Badge?

Distribution of Certificates. (Currently they go to districts as quickly as possible). Should they be presented, eg at District Meetings or AGM, or be sent directly to new members?

\*nb Welcome letter (from Chairman) is new.