

SUFFOLK GUILD OF RINGERS

BELFRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at "Pippins" Brandeston from 8pm Thursday June 10th 1999.

The Convenor, on behalf of those present, thanked Chris and Mrs McArthur for hosting the meeting at their home at short notice.

Present: R Clouston MBE, Dr S Harrison, Dr Bruce Wakefield, C McArthur, A Moulton, D Webb, C Girling, W Girling, M Rolph.

Apologies for absence: J Colman, N Whittell, R Coe, G Pipe, C Nunn and D Salter.

Dr Bruce Wakefield, now that he had retired as Guild Secretary, had expressed an interest in becoming a Belfry Advisor and was warmly welcomed onto the team.

The previous minutes were agreed and signed as a true record of that meeting.

MATTERS ARISING

Apologies from N Whittell should have been entered for the previous meeting. This was rectified.

G Pipe had produced a suitably worded document, (as requested) re. grants. This was read out by the Convenor, and A Moulton suggested the word "normally" be inserted to qualify it. Once done, a copy will be sent to the Chairman in time for the next Management meeting. This document is intended for new applications.

R Clouston pointed out that English Heritage have their own conditions for grants and it was not unusual to cover matters designed to achieve some control.

DISTRICT REPORTS

NE

R Clouston reported on RENDHAM. The 1981 softwood frame is two-tiered and the lower tier "walks". The Sweffling ringers are not allowed to ring because of this. A meeting is proposed for the 12th July to discuss the matter.

BRAMPTON - A possibility of ringing here on a more regular basis, and for special occasions. The wheels need attention, but are "patchable", and ropes are needed. Michael Baldry carried out remedial work and general tightening some two years ago.

M Rolph mentioned FRISTON where the 3 bells are hung dead for chiming. New chiming cord is required, also rubber grips for the apparatus. It is possible at the moment for these bells to be "clocked".

LEISTON needs replacement p/s terylene. S Harrison advised the meeting of an artificial hemp which is soft, non-elastic, the same texture as rope, cheaper than terylene, wears woodwork less, and is available from Chandlers. (Towards the end of the meeting, under AOB, M Rolph said he would be happy to try this material at Leiston.)

The bell at WESTHALL is to be welded.

W Girling has been contacted by Maurice Bloye from BURGATE where the architect is insisting that that frame should be recorded as a drawing before the alterations can go ahead. The price quoted is £500. D. Webb mentioned that the tower at BURGATE is in fact not buttressed.

No action has been taken at BEDFIELD as yet.....M Rolph hopes to visit in the near future.

EYE bells were reported by Harold Cattermole as going very badly. When visited by W Girling, the ground pulleys on 1,3 and 4 were found to be unmovable, the tenor slider run was extremely stiff, a locknut was missing from the tenor clapper suspension, and the stays on 3 and 5 were cracked. Apart from the stays, all the other problems were resolved after several hours work. Mr StJohn Perry from Eye has expressed a willingness to learn how to look after the bells, and the church has since joined the Affiliation scheme. Liasing with the Diss ringers has been suggested.

NW

OLD NEWTON are in the process of having new laminated elm headstocks fitted to 2&3, the brass V blocks have been scraped, and some pulley blocks have been re-sited. A sound chamber has been installed below the

belfry floor, and the new ringing chamber floor is in place. The team are working toward a wedding "deadline" on June 19th. When the bells will be made ready for a short intermediate ring before further work commences. Peter Godden is to supply a carpet for the ringing chamber.

At STOWUPLAND, the "Oliver" bell (which has been found to have had Whitechapel Foundry lettering ground off), has been removed from situ, taken to BT Engineering, and is now at R Coe's workshop. The object is to hang the bell for swing-chiming, after repairs to the frame.

W Girling and A Moulton inspected at ELMSWELL. The incumbent has been informed yet again that his bells are in a shocking state. A Moulton suggested that bells 3, 4 and 5 be removed to the lower solid floor, and 1 and 2 be re-hung in a 6 bell steel frame. The bells are in such a poor condition that even chiming cannot be considered.

At STOWMARKET work continues on the sound flaps. A Moulton is to advise on the viability of two trebles being added.

On Easter Monday, PALGRAVE was inspected by A Moulton prior to the "walk and ring". The double clapping is caused by the bells being "hung out", consequently the clappers are too short.

SE

C McArthur reported on CAMPSEA ASHE. There is now only 6 inches of movement in the tenor clapper instead of full circle. The clapper on the 3rd bell was found to be in danger of falling out because the nuts were missing. The crown-staple of the 2nd bell has been drilled out at "Soundweld". A Moulton pointed out that stainless steel is an unsuitable material to use in the context of bells and fittings, because within a span of 15yrs it can "cold weld" together.....mild steel is preferable.

The ringers at FRAMLINGHAM have agreed to a working party looking over their bells. A date in early August was suggested.

R Clouston mentioned HACHESTON where work is still proceeding and the bells are still away. The structural engineer disapproved the frame supports being grouted in, but has apparently since changed his mind. S Harrison had had to resist the same situation at ORFORD, and is sure that there has been correspondence between structural engineers regarding corrosion in walls. He pointed out that these were at installations that had not been galvanised or properly painted.

At ORFORD builders are due on the 11th to cut pockets in the walls. The west end screen is made, and the wooden spiral staircase constructed. Work should begin on the 28th.

B Wakefield reported that at WOODBRIDGE a visiting band had managed to get the chiming hammer on the wrong side of the tenor bell. Fortunately not a great deal of damage was done.

W Girling had visited NEDGING and found the two bells there hanging on little more than rust, with no floor underneath. R Clouston had sent the church a report 40 yrs ago recommending that the bells be re-hung within ten years, but nothing had been done. Chiming has been stopped and the Parish sent a report on the condition of the bells which is apparently being considered by the P.C.C.

(There here followed a discussion on the liability of the Guild regarding action and reports made to churches by the BAC.)

At ST MARGARET, R Clouston had had a rooftop meeting with the Architect to assess the movement whilst all eight bells were ringing

At IKEN S Harrison reported that the builders are now in. R Clouston is pressing for steel grillage. There is a possibility of the bells being rung at the end of August

At ST MARY LE TOWER Taylor's foundry have the contract to cast the new 9th, 10th and 11th bells. The new "Whitechapel" clapper on the tenor bell is a great improvement.

SW

R Clouston visited LONG MELFORD where the bells had been reported as going badly. When swung through a small arc, 4 bells were acceptable and four were very stiff. It has been 24 years since the bearings were re-greased, and the last time Taylors came was in 1939.

BOXFORD. A Moulton has found a possibility of machining the clappers on a lathe belonging to M Armstrong

There is the same problem at BILDESTON with the tenor clapper which was supplied by Whitechapel foundry.

SHIMPLING church has received a report from R Clouston.

The TOSTOCK "ten" (learners) are reduced to four. The faculty has not yet been applied for and R Clouston has not seen drawings of the frame.

A trial ring is proposed at WYVERSTONE.

The derelict bells at TUDDENHAM ST MARY have twice been reported by P Stannard of Barrow as being in an "up" position. This will be investigated.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING 7th Oct @ 8pm at a venue to be notified - possibly George Pipe's in Landsdowne road, Ipswich

AOB

On the subject of artificial hemp, A Moulton wondered if sallies could be wound into it? S Harrison was asked to look into the viability of using this material—he has already used it for a tailend.

Nothing further has been heard about the proposed augmentation at BUXHALL. A new headstock is needed for the tenor bell at HESSETT.

The meeting closed at 9.45pm.

Winston S. Girling

Convenor.

