

Suffolk Guild of Ringers

Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting held on Saturday 21st October 2006
at 6.00pm in the Methodist Chapel, Old Newton.

Present: Winston Girling (chair), Richard Munnings (Ringing Master), Mary Garner (secretary), Keith Ashton Jones (treasurer), Ian Harris, Trevor Hughes, Jonathan Stevens, Carl Melville, Maurice Rose, Revd Brian Redgers, Robert Scase, John Taylor, Marion Turner, Carol Girling (observing)

Welcome: Winston (WG) welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular Richard Munnings and Marion Turner to their first management meeting.

1. Apologies for absence: Rolie Whiting, David Mulrenan, Stefan Labedski, Richard Knight.

2. Minutes of meeting held on 25th June 2006.

The secretary noted that she had not recorded that the minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed which was duly amended! The minutes of the meeting held on 25th June 2006 were agreed and signed.

3. Matters arising from those minutes not covered by the agenda

(i) Redundant churches or churches to be sold. Correspondence with the Diocesan Secretary had taken place. The only church affected at the moment is Redgrave where there will be six services a year and it is believed things will be kept going.

(ii) Barsham PCC has accepted the resignation of the tower captain. A new vicar is to be appointed at the beginning of December and it hoped that the situation will be resolved then.

4. Correspondence

(i) The secretary read a letter from Brian Whiting expressing his disappointment at the size of grant offered to Ixworth in the light of the Lenny Sharpe bequest.

After a full discussion the meeting decided that their earlier decision on the grant should stand, and that the project would be monitored as it progressed. **Secretary to report back to Brian.**

(ii) MG reported that letters of thanks had been received from each of the projects offered grants at the June meeting and that Simon Cottrell from Parham had written to say that the Guild grant had now been paid.

(iii) Mr Tribe of Bury St Edmunds had written regarding honours for Mr Peter Allen of Long Melford.

Discussion followed reporting that, whilst a local ringer of long standing, he hasn't taken part in Guild events in the recent past and is not known to the committee. It was felt that people who know him better need to initiate the case. **Sec to write to Mr Tribe.**

(iv) An e mail was received by Bruce Wakefield and the secretary from the PR Committee of the CCCBR inviting the Guild to be represented at a Workshop in Derbyshire on Oct 14th. Sadly we could find no one able to attend but look forward to a report of the day.

(v) An invitation to renew SAFE membership had been received. Discussion followed and it was decided not to renew since the issues were dealt with by individual PCCs.

(vi) A letter from Ian Holland had been received regarding the Ridgman Trophy to be held on 16th June 2007 at Rothwell. The letter included a copy of the rules and a request for feedback regarding any changes thought appropriate. WG described the situation at the last competition which involved the incorrect length of a practice resulting in a team being penalised and moved back. The team affected were clearly most upset and threatened to refuse to take part in future years. Until now no one had been placed in the tower to time practices. WG and RM had discussed the situation and felt that essentially no major changes were needed beyond placing someone in the tower to time each practice. **A letter and email have already been sent to this effect.**

(vii) A questionnaire had been received from the CCCBR Tower Stewardship Committee, to be regarded as a consultation document concerning dissemination of information regarding Child Protection, Health & Safety Risk Assessment, Insurance, Tower Management, Fire Protection and Church Law. Response was sent welcoming the idea of a series of leaflets and giving feedback on how this might be achieved.

(viii) A CCCBR Library catalogue had been received with a request to rejoin the scheme. This will be passed to the Guild Librarian. **Secretary to action.**

5. Financial Report

General Fund. The projected income for 2006 is £300-£400 less than 2005, made up from subscriptions and peal fees. Expenditure too is projected to be about £350 less than 2005. Overall the General Fund balance is projected to be between £400 and £500 down on the 1st January 2006 balance of £3486.

Restoration Fund. The income is up £1,700 from last year, as a result of increased interest, donations and affiliation fees. At present £39,000 has been allocated in grants, but not yet paid. The unallocated balance stands at £30,890

The treasurer was asked to reassure the committee that costs could be covered. It was also pointed out that a decrease in subscription income was in part due to a greater percentage of members being over 65 than previously, rather than in reduced membership.

WG thanked KAJ for his report. WG told the GMC that KAJ he wishes to stand down at next AGM and that suitable candidates for Treasurer need to be sought.

6. Ringing Master's Report

“Since my last report not a lot else has happened on an official Guild level, although I have kept myself busy trying to ring with as many people as possible.

We have of course had the Guild Training Day, which took place on the 16th, September. Although this was a success, it was very much against the odds as there was a lot else happening on the day such as outings, weddings and the College Youths peal day. This is to be expected in the middle of September, so with this in mind I would like to move the day to a different date, preferably to sometime between November and March when it is less likely to clash with events. This is something that could perhaps be discussed at today's meeting.

Something else that would be quite good to discuss is a ten-bell day. My initial idea is to have a fun ten-bell striking competition involving forty selected Guild members randomly teamed together. After this we would have an hour and a half (or something like that) of open ringing and then a social event of some sort. As this would be quite a big event to organise, I would propose holding this event at the start of 2008, in the January - March period perhaps. As well as this I plan to organise ten-bell practices on a quarterly basis. We don't really do enough ten bell ringing in the Guild, which is a shame as it's a good stepping stone to twelve-bell ringing and can also aid advancement on lower numbers.

Talking of twelve-bell ringing, the practices for the National Twelve-Bell Competition are going reasonably well and we are still on course for entering a team for the 2007 competition. The practices have consisted of ringers from all over the county which is a big plus and goes to show that twelve-bell ringing doesn't have to be limited to just the south-eastern corner of the Guild - in fact I would prefer it to be even more widespread.

I have over the course of the last few months been to more practices, from Halesworth to Old Newton and hope to get to more in the next few months. As well as these, I have been continuing to go to the Young Ringers practices at Tostock and I had the pleasure of going on their outing at the beginning of September. They do all range of things at their practices from Rounds and Call Changes to methods like Westminster and Norwich. The more youngsters we can encourage in this way the better.

It would also be good to see more peal and quarter peal-ringing going on across the Guild as this has dropped dramatically from a few years ago. Although peals aren't everyone's cup of tea, they are a very useful tool for progressing a ringer's knowledge and repertoire.

All in all, I have been pleased with the way things have been going, but I still think we could do more to integrate as a Guild and thus push it on by using each others experience and expertise.”

WG thanked RM for his report and asked if there were any questions.

Rev'd Brian Redgers expressed concern about there being enough for Sunday service ringing. He asked for ideas and wondered whether a movable company of ringers could be formed. WG said that we need to recruit more ringers so that we can.

It was asked when recruitment and training meetings would be resuming.

Ian Harris announced an Open Day at Halesworth on 28th October, when there would be ringing on the hour.

7. Sub-committee reports: i. Belfry Advisory Committee

The BAC met at Parham on 6th October. From the NE it was reported that the bells at Gislingham expect to be ringing by Christmas but the proposed restoration at Laxfield had come to a halt since there was no vicar at present. From the NW it was reported that an augmentation to 10 at Stowmarket had been included in the capital programme for the church although it would be sometime before funds are available. English Heritage is happy with the proposed work at Bardwell. In the SE, at Stonham Aspal architects had submitted a plan to stabilise the outer frame supports of 7 and 8. In the meantime the remaining bells could be rung. It is reported that cracks are once more appearing in the tower at Wickham Market. In the SW a trial ring at Assington resulted in local difficulties and the bells are again silent. At Sudbury All Saints' the proposed talks to expedite the project had not yet taken place.

Fressingfield have raised £6500 from a music festival. They have applied for a new faculty and a letter of intent has been issued. Detailed drawings of the bell frame cannot be undertaken until the bells are removed which is expected May 2007.

ii. Recruitment and training

The recruitment and training committee have had no meeting since the last GMC.

8. Applications for grants.

- (i) Felsham: Quotation to take bells out, remove frame for local dispersal as the documentation, and augment to eight coming to £62,792.

BAC suggested a grant of £6000. Maurice Rose proposed that the GMC should award a grant of £6000. This was seconded by John Taylor and carried unanimously.

- (ii) Rattlesden: A Quotation for £36,898 has been received for rehangng the bells with new fittings and to carry out modifications so that the excessive frame movement is eliminated. There was some difficulty envisaged with removing the old frame although none with the refurbishment.

BAC suggested a grant of £4000. Jonathan Stevens proposed that the GMC should award a grant of £4000. This was seconded by Robert Scase and carried unanimously.

9. Ratification of NRLM

Rosemary E Hill from Hursley following a peal at Grundisburgh. Prop Maurice, seconded Richie.

Julian Lees, could he become a non resident life member? Proposed from the chair. Accepted unanimously.

10. Any other business

(i) **Central Council** The current three year term finishes this year and representatives for our Guild will need to be elected at the next AGM. The current reps will be asked whether they wish to stand. **(Secretary to write)**

(ii) Maurice Young Ringers rang a course of Westminster Sarah Monk, Tostock every third Thursday.

(iii) Once a month people Offton 10.30 Nov 1st.

(iv) KAJ received letter from Sally Munnings to pay for Hall at Orford following the SE District Striking Competition. There were too few at tea to cover the costs. £63.75 has been paid.

(v) The situation at All Saints Sudbury was reported on behalf of Richard Knight. There is a new vicar who has expressed interest but things are very slow. It was suggested that we set up another meeting with the vicar and locals to see if middle ground can be found. It was asked whether we could have some quotations to consider doing the job both in the tower and by taking the bell out. **WG said that he make contact with the parish to try and get and get things moving.**

(vi) The committee were asked to consider charging a lower subscription if someone was on benefits. There was some discussion and it was felt that it was not a big problem for only £13.

11. Date of next meeting, 17th February 2007.

The meeting closed at 7.45pm, with thanks to Carol and Carl for providing tea at the beginning of the meeting.