

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD of BELLRINGERS
SONNING DEANERY BRANCH
MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
WHITE WALTHAM, SATURDAY 19th FEBRUARY 2011

1. Apologies

There were 22 members present. Apologies had been received from Aidan Hopkins, Liz Hopkins, Rachel Moss, Andrew Moss, Rob Needham, Pauline Needham, Alison Clayton, Graham Slade, Roy Russell, Peter Kemm, Eric Bowes, Robert Newton, Mary Ede, Chris Grundy, Steve Wells, Barbara Wells, Anne Martin, Eddie Martin, Martin Wheatley.

2. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising were accepted without dispute.

3. Officers' Reports

Officers' Reports as received are attached to these Minutes. The Ringing Master had not produced a report for distribution, preferring to address the meeting. He said that much of his report had been said in the secretaries' report. He expressed disappointment with the poor attendances at many of the branch practices and the Striking Competitions. He thought there was not enough publicity for these events. Feedback was needed from the members as to why there was such poor support for branch events. He thanked Jim and Helen Diserens for judging the 6-bell striking competition.

4. Election of New Members/Honorary Ringing Members:

Nominee	Tower
Stephen Nicholson	Waltham St Lawrence
Natalie Burton	Twyford
Brian O'Callaghan	Sonning
Diana Coulter	Sonning
Jane Abey	Wargrave
Laura Lord	Wargrave
Imogen Lord	Wargrave
Thomas Lord	Wargrave
Andrew Dugdale	Arborfield
Oliver James	All Saints Wokingham
Angus Keddie	Easthampstead

All were proposed by Simon Milford and seconded by John Manley.

5. Election of Officers

Officer	Name	Proposer	Seconder
Chairman	Simon Milford		
Treasurer	Sue Davenport	Joyce Crockford	Thomas Hellyer
Secretary	Pam Elliston & Andrew Elliston	Simon Farrar	Natalie Burton
Ringing Master	John Manley	Thomas Helyer	Simon Farrar
Deputy Ringing Master	Graham Slade	John Harrison	John Manley
Branch representatives	Sue Davenport and Andrew Elliston	Simon Milford	
Newsletter editor	Alison Clayton	Sue Davenport	Thomas Helyer
Bookstall holder	Rob Needham	Simon Farrar	Thomas Helyer
Training officer	John Harrison	Sue Davenport	Thomas Helyer
Webmaster	John Harrison	Simon Farrar	John Manley
Independent Examiner	Steve Wells	Simon Farrar	John Harrison

The Chairman Simon Milford thanked the outgoing officers for their hard work over the previous years: Eric Bowes was retiring as Treasurer, Ken Davenport as Ringing Master and Sarah Boys as Newsletter Editor. Simon also thanked the newly elected officers for taking on the duties.

6. Branch Practices and events

A provisional list had been circulated. The presence of a Ringing Day in March was queried and deleted from the list. It was explained that Alison Clayton had offered to organize a tour around Trowbridge, but had since got a job and now would be unable to do so. It was agreed that an attempt be made to organize a skittles session at the Jack o'Newbury for the evening of the 6-bell striking competition.

7. Striking Competitions

Certificates for the 6-bell Striking competition were presented by Hilarie Rodgers to John Harrison of Wokingham All Saints (1st) and Thomas Helyer of Easthampstead (2nd). No-one from Sandhurst was present to receive the 3rd certificate. There had been insufficient support for the 8-bell competition to take place. It was requested that towers should give notice of their intention to enter teams for the striking competitions at least a week before the competition, so that the judges could be notified in reasonable time if the event was cancelled. Reminders about the competitions are to be sent out early. It was suggested that there might be a rounds competition. The rules for the 8-bell competition are now very flexible and pre-planned joint teams can be entered. Alternatively, if interested members notify the Chairman in good time he might be able arrange a scratch team.

8. Possible grants to Towers

Although it had been discussed at the Committee meeting in November 2010 there was some dispute as to whether we were able to authorise a grant to Arborfield for their repairs. A grant of £500 had been suggested; £250 was then suggested. After much discussion the members present voted to donate £500 to Arborfield. It was decided that any further requests for grants should be made well in advance.

9. Fundraising & social events

A quiz and skittles evening are to be arranged. Car washing was suggested as a possible fundraiser. It was also suggested that we consider donating to Guild funds as we are happy to take money from the Guild funds. We have the worst record of donations of any branch. Last year the only donation from our branch was £5 from one of our PCCs. The next lowest branch had donated £90. We should give more as a branch. It was suggested that a raffle be held before the AGM although the numbers attending were so low that only a small sum would be raised. It was suggested that any profit from the quiz could be split between the Branch and the Guild.

10. AOB

It was noted that the Guild rules state that subscriptions are due on 1st January each year and should reach the Guild treasurer by 31st March. Some of our towers are late sending in their subscriptions. It was also noted that with a change of treasurers this year it might be difficult to get the bank account details changed in time for this.

John Harrison had the last few of Chris Brown's ringing books left to sell.

Hilarie Rodgers reminded us of the Guild Festival. This is held every 5 years and will be held on 9th July 2011 in Oxford. There will be ringing at several towers throughout the day, a service at the cathedral and a lunch.

John Manley drew our attention to the Guild bookstall which he had brought with him.

Joyce Crockford invited people to a WI ringing day in this area on 22nd March 2011. Details are on the Arborfield website.

There is no ringing at Sonning for the next few weeks as scaffolding has been erected in the bell chamber so that repairs can be made to the main roof support beam which has rotted at both ends due to water seeping through the roof.

At the end of the meeting, Simon Milford thanked: Carole Perkins, the reader from White Waltham for officiating at the service. (An entertaining reading about the Bell Men from the book 'Akenfield' took the place of a sermon.) and Jenny Hopper for playing the organ. The meeting closed at 18:35h. There were 22 members present.