

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD – SONNING DEANERY BRANCH

Annual General Meeting, Saturday 20th February 2016, Easthampstead

MINUTES

[Text in these minutes that looks like this is for clarification and was not discussed at the meeting.]

The meeting stood in memory of Virginia Coulson, a much loved friend and ringer at Waltham St Lawrence, who died in August, aged 81.

Apologies were received from Stuart Gibson (ODG Treasurer), Alison Clayton, Aidan Hopkins, Liz Hopkins and Bob Packer.

Minutes of previous AGM (Feb. 2015). Approval of the minutes of the previous AGM was proposed by Ken Davenport, seconded by John Harrison, and approved by the meeting without dispute. There were no matters arising.

Minutes of previous Business Meeting (Nov. 2015). Acceptance of the minutes of the Business meeting was proposed by Steve Wells and accepted without dispute. There were no matters arising.

Branch Officers' Reports

Acceptance of the **Secretary's report** was proposed by Andrew Elliston, seconded by Sue Portsmouth, and accepted without dispute. There were no matters arising.

Acceptance of the **Treasurer's accounts** was proposed by Dave Creasey, seconded by Geoff Harvey, and accepted without dispute. The Treasurer, Sue Davenport, pointed out that the accounts had been checked by the independent examiner, Mike Davis.

Acceptance of the **Ringing Master's report** was proposed by John Harrison, seconded by Graham Slade, and accepted without dispute.

The **Branch Representative's report** was verbally presented to the meeting by Sue Davenport. Acceptance was proposed by Jacquie Hazell, seconded by Joyce Goodwin, and accepted without dispute.

The Secretary apologised that he had omitted the **Bookstall Officer's report** from his handout of papers for the AGM but pointed out that it has been on the Branch website. Acceptance of the report was proposed by Steve Wells, seconded by Jacquie Hazell, and accepted without dispute. Rob Needham asked whether we still need a branch bookstall given the ease of ordering and paying for ringing books online. Sue Portsmouth said that it was helpful to be able to see the books before purchase and therefore would like the bookstall to continue. The meeting felt that it would help to have a list and description of the books on the website; John Harrison offered to do this. The meeting decided that the bookstall should continue but should only restock the few popular items such as the 1-per-Learner booklet, Personal Progress Card, and the New Ringer's Book. [*There is also a comprehensive Guild Bookstall available at Guild events.*]

The **Training Officer's report** was presented to the meeting by Jacquie Hazell, both on paper and verbally. Acceptance of the report was proposed by Sue Portsmouth, seconded by Martha Hazell, and accepted without dispute.

Acceptance of the **Webmaster/Postmaster report** was proposed by Ken Davenport, seconded by Martha Hazell and accepted without dispute. A straw poll by the Chairman showed that most members present had used the Branch website in the previous 3 months, so it is clearly a useful facility. Graham Slade asked whether the Diary on the website could be made 'portable' (for example, loaded onto smartphones and tablets). John Harrison said he would be glad to get advice from someone who knew how to do this, and Hilarie suggested that John liaise with EBSB which has recently done this.

Election of New Members. The secretary read out the names of the proposed 13 new Branch members and they were elected as members of the Guild. The new members elected were:

Rob Cannings	Wargrave
Kitty Gingell	Wargrave
Freddie Gingell	Wargrave
Berna Parnell	Wargrave
Carlos Soares	Wargrave
Zoë Lee	Sonning
Matthew Steele	Twyford, Berkshire
Holley Wakeling	Waltham St Lawrence
Stanley Wilson	Waltham St Lawrence
Kirsty Woodman	Waltham St Lawrence
Heather Howarth	Hurst
Christine Barker	St. Paul's, Wokingham
Amanda Witherspoon	Binfield

Election of Officers. All officers except the Deputy Ringing Master had said that they were prepared to continue in post if elected, and no other nomination for any of those officer posts was raised, so the following officers were re-elected:

Chairman – John Harrison	Secretary – Rob & Pauline Needham
Treasurer – Sue Davenport	Ringing Master – Steve Wells
Branch Reps – Sue Davenport & Jacquie Hazell	Newsletter Editor – Alison Clayton
Bookstall Officer – Pam & Andrew Elliston	Training Officer – Jacquie Hazell
Webmaster – John Harrison	Postmaster – John Harrison
Independent Examiner – Mike Davis	

For the post of Deputy Ringing Master, Nigel Mellor was proposed by Jacquie Hazell, seconded by Steve Wells, and elected nem con. The Chairman thanked the previous officer, Graham Slade, for his contribution to Branch practices and events.

Branch Practices and events. Rob Needham thanked those towers that had confirmed the booking of their date and time, and apologised that he had not updated the schedule with confirmation from Wargrave and All Saints, Wokingham. Rob Needham asked remaining towers on the schedule to try and confirm their date soon. It was pointed out that the time of the Branch Practice proposed in the schedule can be changed if a different time is possible on that day.

When the date for the Joint Branch 8-bell Striking Competition is set (by the end of June), a date will be set for the Branch Outing in October that Pam & Andrew Elliston have offered to organise.

Branch Training. Jacquie Hazell said that she has scheduled a training session every first Friday of the month; *Basic* at Waltham St Lawrence alternating with *Advanced* at Twyford. The next session is *Advanced* (Cambridge Surprise Major) on the 4th March. The dates are on the Branch website diary and students must book a place with the Training Officer in advance.

Lesley Graves asked why the training sessions were on a Friday evening because that clashed with White Waltham and Shottesbrooke's practice night. It was pointed out that any evening chosen for the training would clash with some towers' practice evenings, and that if White Waltham and Shottesbrooke ringers wanted to attend a training session, a session could be arranged specifically for them.

John Harrison offered to put a definition of *Basic* and *Advanced* on the website; Jacquie said that in her view up to Plain Bob Minor is *Basic* and above is *Advanced*.

Jacquie Hazell thanked Nigel Mellor for running the monthly Wednesday evening Surprise Major practices.

Branch Striking Competition results. The 6-bell and 8-bell striking competition certificates were presented by the Guild Master, Hilarie Rogers.

The 6-bell results: 1st All Saints Wokingham, 2nd Easthampstead, 3rd Sonning.

The 8-bell results: 3rd Sonning (1st & 2nd Reading branch).

Branch publicity/recruitment event. The Chairman presented his paper about what was involved if the branch was to put on a publicity and recruitment drive similar, but on a smaller scale, to *The Big Ring Pull*. He covered the likely cost (£300 – £600), the manpower needed (around 90 person hours), the venue (Hurst Show weekend, 25/26 June) and the skills needed by the ringers helping at the event. John pointed out that it would need active support from quite a few members of the branch.

Jane Mellor asked how the recruits identified by the event would be trained. John Harrison said that, depending on numbers, it would be done like North Bucks branch – group training first and then recruits farmed out to local towers depending on where they live. Sue Davenport stressed that we must have a detailed training plan agreed before the event takes place. Tricia Amos asked if the cost of this event would rule out some other branch activity taking place; she was assured that this was not the case.

The meeting voted on whether we go ahead with the publicity/recruitment event and a large majority voted Yes, nobody voted No, and there were 4 Abstentions.

Our Chairman was urged to check that the Charmborough Ring has been allocated for the Hurst Show dates.

St George's Day Rolling Ring. Our Ringing Master, Steve Wells, outlined his email that gives proposed times for towers in our branch to ring during the day of Saturday 23rd April. Towers were urged to establish whether and over what time period their band could ring that day and let Steve know soon, because publicity depends on having firm plans in place. Steve stressed that any tower that needed extra ringers should let him know and he could organise other ringers to help out.

Fund raising/social events. Joyce Goodwin suggested a skittles evening and there seemed to be a reasonable number of members present who would support such an evening event. Joyce agreed to organise it.

AOB

Sue Davenport said that she had received subs from only 6 out of 16 ringing towers and she urged the other towers to pay soon [*which must include subs of any new members elected at the AGM*].

Ken Davenport mentioned the handbell ringing performance during the tea, and asked anybody who was interested in ringing methods on handbells to get in touch with him.

The Guild Master promoted the Guild Festival on the 9th July and said there would be much to entertain: an impressive handbell demonstration, towers open that are not usually available, a place for tea, and so on.

Thanks

The Chairman thanked Hilarie Rogers (Guild Master), and Mary Friskney (our Guild Steward) for attending the meeting.

Dave Creasey thanked the vicar for the service, and the Easthampstead ringers for organising the whole event and providing such an excellent tea.

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