

PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELLRINGERS

RUTLAND BRANCH

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at 6.00pm on 11th January 2020

in Whissendine church.

1. VOTE OF THANKS

The Chairman thanked Rev'd Deborah Marsh for leading the service and for a stimulating address. Thanks were given to Tony Tullett for playing the organ and Janet Underwood and Peter Furness for the organisation of the day. Also thanked were the team who served tea and to all who donated food.

2. WELCOME

All were welcomed, 25 members were present. Especially welcomed were Guild representatives Chris Fitzgerald, Richard and Helen Allton and Simon and Cathy Dixon.

3. APOLOGIES were received from

Judy Lea, Mary Davidson, Bob and Hilary Williams, Richard and Hilary Moore, Hui-yen Bloodworth, Jane Peach, Glenys Murcott, Harry and Mary Poyner, David Brown, Araminta Mathias, Louis and Helen Totaro, Andrew Tinsley, Pat Munro, Peggy Jennings, Joshua and Caleb Tomalin.

4. MINUTES OF THE LAST AGM

The previous minutes had been circulated to all members prior to the meeting. These were accepted and signed as a true record. Proposed Brian Newman, seconded Ted Phillips.

5. MATTERS ARISING none

6. TREASURER'S REPORT

The Branch is in a good position financially, with a final bank balance of £2,235 to take into 2020. This figure results from a surplus in 2019 of £112, improving the 2018 bank balance of £2,123. The largest expense was the display boards, costing £200. Subs and donations totalled £847 with £447 going to the guild. The raffle at the branch dinner raised £100. John Tomalin confirmed that the grant for the simulator – based at Oakham- was arranged through Oakham PCC.

The figures have been examined by Nic Hart, a qualified accountant.

Adoption of the annual accounts was proposed by Simon Foster and seconded by John Tomalin, with all in favour.

7. MASTER'S REPORT

First quarter peal certificates were prepared for Jean Tinsley and Peter Furness, with Joshua and Caleb Tomalin to receive theirs at the next opportunity.

Alan Ellis gave the report. The branch now has two simulators to aid teaching: the new one based in Oakham will be mobile and will be demonstrated at a guild meeting. There are 104 ringers in the branch – a healthy position, with 14 learners attending at Uppingham just prior to this meeting. Alan would like to assist towers whose bands are presently working in isolation, by inviting experienced ringers along to some practices and encouraging ringers to try other towers.

The draft 2020 programme was discussed and approved. It was circulated at the meeting and will also be posted on the branch website and included in the newsletter. Alan intends to add an informal get-together: three towers and a lunch (date tbc.) He hopes to arrange as much ringing as possible for both VE and VJ day. Helen Allton drew attention to the guild striking competition – hoping to encourage a Rutland team to enter.

8. STEWARD'S REPORT

Ted Phillips visited 11 Towers within the Branch for various reasons during the year. He reported the following detail:

'Stays: survey, repair etc at Caldecott, Lyddington and Hambleton. These are a recurring maintenance item and will always break when most inconvenient. I did learn a valuable lesson this year – I missed a cut-out in the tip of the failed stay, which was there to clear the frame – so my replacement failed immediately, and had to be re-replaced ...

Ropes: survey, check or replace etc at Caldecott, Empingham and North Luffenham. Whilst stays are a regular item, we have had a few ropes break this year – so check for any fraying etc that might become a problem. Splices are also a good thing to monitor, especially if they pass over a pulley, or run alongside a wall/masonry. If you know the lengths of your ropes, and when they were installed, it can help a lot when planning repairs or replacements.

Inspections and maintenance at Oakham, Tickencote, Market Overton and Hambleton; this was to help in planning future maintenance work, verify a potential issue or establish a baseline of the conditions. Guidelines for checking the Bells are published on the Guild website, and in various publications. Let me know if you need help to find these. Other work at Belton, Uppingham and Wing– these were for various purposes such as 'rumbling' pulleys, clapper painting, etc.'

He attended the Guild Stewards' meeting in February.

Around the branch, he has been logging as much as he can about the conditions for each Tower and trying to ensure that there is some record of work done, or impending jobs that are required. He says 'please feel free to let me know if there is anything for which you might need help. I would advise keeping a local Tower Log of issues as they arise, as it is common for things to be forgotten! This is invaluable

when chasing up issues, as (usually) no-one can remember what was done, when or by whom. Check stays, ropes and bearings regularly, and keep a record of the sizes of your stays, including spares I do now have some spare wood for stays, but it is always best to have a plan for when they break – they will! Finally - keep an eye open for odd bits of debris lying on the floor. I have found grease nipples, grease cups, parts of the wheel, old stays, tools, nuts, bolts etc amongst the cobwebs, dead birds and other detritus. If you can keep the floor clear, it is easier to see anything that has fallen off – and thus much quicker to get them back in place!

Ongoing projects: Preston repairs are still in progress – fund raising is going ahead, and new ringers are being trained to form a new band. Taylors have not been very responsive during this project, and I am keeping an eye on this for the Tower as there is as yet no band.

The next Guild Stewards' meeting is on the 23rd February. I am planning to attend, and will be happy to pass on any questions, comments or requests as appropriate; there is a huge reservoir of experience and expertise amongst this team of Stewards, and they are always happy to help.

Whenever anyone ventures up the Tower, please remember to be safe – guidelines and help are always available, on the web, or verbally.'

The report was proposed by Ted Phillips and seconded by Sue Webster.

9 ADMITTANCE OF NEW MEMBERS

There are nine new members who learned to ring during 2019.

	Tower	Proposed	Seconded
Richard Sells-Hurwood	Lyddington	Brian Newman	Sue Webster
Anne Fox	Uppingham	Brian Newman	Sue Webster
Irene James	Gt Casterton	Brian Newman	Sue Webster
Lauren Wade	Ketton/wing	Alan Marks	Peter Light
Jill Eston	Langham	Janet Underwood	Richard Beadman
Bianca Daly	Market Overton	Alan Ellis	Alan Wordie
Celia Hughes	Market Overton	Alan Ellis	Alan Wordie
Lynn Lane	Market Overton	Alan Ellis	Alan Wordie
Sally Hunt	Market Overton	Alan Ellis	Alan Wordie

10. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

The chairman thanked Louis Totaro for his enthusiastic contribution as ringing master over the last three years. Aware that Louis leads a very busy life, with many responsibilities elsewhere, Alan was grateful for the time he has devoted to the branch. The chairman thanked Alan Ellis, who has spent a great deal of time in teaching learners at Market Overton where the villagers are very complimentary about their new band. Also thanked was Monica Spence for continuing to find and encourage large numbers of learners.

Hui-yen Bloodworth has been supportive and helpful in her role as social secretary, and now steps down. An advert will appear in the newsletter. Finally, the chairman thanked all members for continuing to ring for routine Sunday services; a sign that the branch is in good shape.

Jean Tinsley added her support to the vote of thanks to Louis Totaro by stressing his caring approach and willingness to devote time to both Oakham tower and the branch.

11. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman Alan Wordie, proposed Richard Beadman seconded John Tomalin
Ringing Master Alan Ellis, proposed Alan Wordie, seconded Simon Forster.
Deputy Ringing Masters,
Roger Scholes & Brian Newman proposed Richard Beadman seconded Jean Tinsley

Other members of the committee willing to continue were proposed by Alan Ellis and seconded by David Rippin:

Secretary	Helen Pollard
Treasurer	Simon Forster
Membership Secretary	Sue Baker
Steward	Ted Phillips

Additionally, these posts were proposed by Brian Newman and seconded by Ted Phillips:

Website manager	Peter Furness
Press Correspondent & Newsletter editor	Sue Webster
Guild Management	John Tomalin
Committee members	Tim Holt, David Rippin.

The Chairman invited volunteers to approach him in regards joining the committee if interested.

12. GUILD OFFICERS' COMMENTS

Helen Allton encouraged the branch to offer nominations for guild officers and central council representatives, naming those already in post, and pointing out that Geoff Pullin will stand down as President, whilst continuing as web master. The chairman offered to follow up this request at the next committee meeting.

Cathy Dixon recommended the 100 club to members: £12 subscription; 50% returned in prizes; forms from Sue Webster.

Simon Dixon emphasised the call from the central council to ring for VE day, if possible at 7pm on the Friday, or later in the weekend.

13. AOB

Janet Underwood requested a closer look at the way teaching is done in the branch. She would like to avoid potentially intimidating practices and encourage a positive

approach with constructive comments. She asked if this could be formalised. Sue Baker reminded the meeting about courses already available- 'teaching to teach;' Peter Furness offered an observation about generational differences where older teachers may not be aware of the effects of their approach on more sensitive, possibly less resilient, younger learners. Alan Wordie suggested the possibility of repeating the course for ringing teachers in the branch, of the type previously run at Uppingham. Ted Phillips suggested employing a buddy system. The chairman offered to follow this up in committee.

Monica Spence reminded members of the requirement to obtain permission from ringers before a photo is taken and to delete it after use. If minors are involved, parental permission must be sought, and Brian Newman emphasised that this last must be in writing.

Jean Tinsley would like to remind members to use blind copy, BCC, when sending emails to ensure that email addresses are not available more widely.

The meeting closed at 18.59.