

THE WINCHESTER AND PORTSMOUTH DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS

Founded 26 June 1879 as the Winchester Diocesan Guild

Presidents: THE RIGHT REVD THE LORD BISHOP OF WINCHESTER
THE RIGHT REVD THE LORD BISHOP OF PORTSMOUTH

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 6 MARCH 2004 AT ST. BARNABAS' CHURCH HALL, LODGE ROAD, SOUTHAMPTON

1. Opening Prayer & Master's Welcome

The Master Canon Barry Fry, supported by the Honorary General Secretary Steve Castle, the Honorary General Treasurer Michael Bubb and Minute Secretary Francis Mitchell, opened the meeting at 10.22 a.m. with a prayer.

He welcomed everybody, especially Steve Castle as Secretary and others attending for the first time.

The others attending were:

Andrew Banks, Andrew Byford, Val Cleaver, Terry Collins, Ben Constant, John Davey, Gilian Davis, Mark Esbester, David Forder, Anne Fraser, Derek Jackson, Theo Johnson, Maureen Kelly, Wendy Ling, Christine McCallion, Brian Oakes, Tony Smith, Barbara Townsend, Jack Walters, Phil Watts.

2. Apologies for absence

Michael Church, Andrew Craddock, Ceri Dodd, Alan Hoar, Mary Tester, Martin Waldron, Val Williams, Mike Winterbourne.

3. Loss of Members from death since the last Meeting

Valerie Brown of Whitwell, Norman Howbrook of Hordle, Mabel F Mitchell of St John Bournemouth, Bill Poulter of Greywell, Harold Reed (brother of Reg) previously at North Stoneham, Myrtle Swain of Overton.

4. Minutes of the last Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2003 were accepted by the meeting and signed by the Master as a true record, together with version 2 of the meeting held on 2 March 2003.

5. Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting.

6. Life Members

No members had been notified by District Secretaries under the '50 year' rule.

Tony Smith's written proposal to confer Honorary Life Membership on Bob and Gail Cater for services to the Guild had been circulated with the Agenda. After some discussion this was agreed. At the AGM the motion would be proposed by Tony Smith on behalf of the Executive Committee and seconded by Gilian Davis

7. Preparation of Guild Report for 2003 and Handbook for 2004

Tony Smith thanked the Guild Officers and Committee Convenors and District Secretaries for their timely returns, which will enable the Report to be produced in good time again this year. The Guild Rules will be included as agreed at the November Executive meeting. Due to a change of management at Sotherans, Tony had obtained an additional quote to check their continuing value for money. The Report is expected to cost less than £1200.

8. Reports of Officers and Sub-committees for 2003

a Guild Secretary

Bob Cater's report had been distributed with the Agenda and was accepted

b Treasurer's Report and Guild Accounts

Mike Bubb commented on the previously distributed report and accounts. Although there was a small loss in 2003, a small surplus had been budgeted for in 2004, so there was no need for a change in Subscription rates. He thanked the District Treasurers for their earlier submission of District accounts. The report and accounts were accepted.

c Belfry Stewardship Committee

Phil Watts showed the meeting part of the Guild's bell lifting apparatus which is available for use by Guild members at their own risk in exchange for a donation.

The report distributed with the Agenda was accepted, together with the Review of Bell Restoration Activity in the Guild in 2003, once it had been updated with more information on restoration activities completed in 2003.

d BRF Trustee's Report and Accounts for 2003

Mike Bubb's report and accounts had been distributed with the Agenda for the information of the Executive Committee. They will be presented to the AGM for acceptance.

e Central Council's Area Complaints Advisor

No action had been taken this year.

f Librarian & Archivist

The report and accounts distributed with the Agenda were accepted.

g Peal Recorder

The report distributed with the Agenda was accepted.

h Public Relations Committee

The report and accounts distributed with the Agenda were accepted,

i Social Committee

The report and accounts had been distributed with the Agenda and were accepted after clarification of the use of bank accounts..

j Striking Competitions Committee

The report and accounts distributed with the Agenda were accepted.

The Guild Master thanked all committees for their reports.

9. Consideration of Bell Restoration Fund Grants.

There were no urgent applications which needed to be considered at this meeting instead of the AGM. It was reported that work was complete on the urgent applications approved at the November Executive meeting.

10. 125th Anniversary Guild Dinner

Christine McCallion reported on the Dinner arrangements for Saturday 24 April at Winchester Refectory. Barry Fry had been unable to book a Bishop. The main speaker will be Beryl Norris of the Guildford Diocesan Guild.

11. 125th Anniversary AGM

Terry Collins presented the timetable of events for 26 June at Privett, plus details of the evening Barbecue.

12. 125th Anniversary Year Celebrations

a William Rayner's Grave

The restoration of William Rayner's tomb at Arreton had been suggested as an anniversary project. He was a leading ringer of his time who died in 1823. The tomb was previously restored at Guild members' expense in 1925.

This was thought to be a good idea. Though no action has been taken yet, the Isle of Wight District is progressing a proposal. It is understood the PCC secretary is the sole direct descendant.

b Tower Postcards

Derek Jackson had suggested that an anniversary collection of picture postcards of Guild Towers be compiled in the Guild Archives for holding at Winchester Record Office.

After some discussion regarding postcards versus digital images, particularly the Tower photographs already available via Towerbase and confidentiality aspects of collecting Ringers' signatures for public display, a postcard of each tower with the Ringers' names was thought to be a suitable way of marking the anniversary.

The executive agreed that in the pre-AGM mailing, all towers would be asked to send two copies of a dated postcard of their church, with the names of their ringers on the back, to the Guild Librarian and Archivist Jack Walters. Where a postcard was not available, a photograph of Church and Tower could be used instead.

c Ringing History page on Website

An account of the Guild's history, such as that in the 1979 Guild Centenary edition of the Ringing World, will be made accessible via the Website. Spare copies of that Ringing World will be sold.

A suggested exhibition of Guild Records at the AGM is not feasible because the most interesting items are in the Hampshire Records Office at Winchester.

d Other 125 Anniversary Plans and Ideas

An email had been distributed for information of Peal attempts and other initiatives.

13. Progress on Bell Stock Survey

Following the renewal of efforts to progress the Survey, as described at the AGM, Phil Watts thanked David Forder for making the Bell Stock Survey forms available on the Website. About 60 of the Guild's towers with ringing peals and bands had completed the survey so far. Those still to do so had been named on the Internet Group and were being reminded through the Districts.

John Davey distributed for comment an example of a prototype database for holding some of the collected data. This could be made available for research purposes but the meeting had concerns about the confidentiality aspects of making all the information freely accessible on the Worldwide Web.

14. Education Committee Events in 2004

Dates had been distributed with the Agenda and the minutes of the previous Executive meeting.

15. Striking Competitions in 2004

Dates had been distributed with the Agenda, Andy Byford outlined plans for a Junior competition on alternate years with the 10 bell competition.

16. Other Future Guild events,

a The guild has been asked for volunteers to assist at the 2005 Ringing Roadshow at Newbury Racecourse. The Guild will have a presence at future meetings of the organising committee.

b Death Watch beetle has been discovered in the Town Church St Peter Port, which may affect arrangements for the 2005 AGM and Channel Island Festival.

17. Any other business

- a** In response to a question from the Hon. Gen. Sec., Tony Smith said that one Guild member had expressed an interest in standing as Report Editor at the AGM".
- b** Colin Cook, Winchester Cathedral Ringer's PRO, had submitted a written proposal that the Earl of Wessex be invited to become a patron of the Guild. The executive preferred to retain the current system of ex-officio patrons as it avoided disagreement.
Tony Smith proposed that no action be taken on this proposal, seconded by Anne Fraser and passed unopposed.
- c** Comments were requested from the Executive, especially District Secretaries and Convenors, on Steve Castle's paper which attempted to define current regular communications between various parts of the Guild, and raised possibilities on how Guild business could be conducted in future.
- d** Mike Bubb's paper pointing out the Guild's Public Liability Insurance no longer automatically covered Bell Maintenance work had been distributed to all towers. He requested Belfry Stewardship Committee Members to notify him before carrying out any tower inspections, preferably by Fax.
- e** Winchester Cathedral was due to be visited by up to 2,000 children aged from 10 to 11 on 22-24 June. The local band are planning workshops on bell ringing and will be requesting assistance from Guild members. Selected Guild Towers will be invited to be involved in ongoing teaching
- f** Ben Constant asked for more information on the 125th anniversary peal attempts.
- g** John Davies requested District Secretaries ensure a copy of the Guild rules is available at all meetings.
- h** The Guild Master thanked Gilian Davis, the Immediate Past Master for her service to the Guild over many years as she is shortly to move to Devon.

18. Date and place of next Meeting

This was confirmed as Saturday 13 November 2004 at St Barnabas Church Hall, at 10.15 am.
The Spring 2005 Executive meeting was provisionally set for 12 March 2005.

The Master closed the meeting with The Grace at 12.17 pm.