

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD – SONNING DEANERY BRANCH
**Annual General Meeting, Saturday 17th February 2024,
at St Paul Wokingham**

MINUTES

Present: 26 branch members from 12 towers were welcomed to the AGM by the Chairman, who also welcomed the ODG Deputy Master, Chris Mundy and ODG Steward, Steve Rossiter.

1. **Apologies:** Mary Ede, Keith Milner, Peter Needham, Claire, Becki, Emily Shuttleworth, Graham Slade, Katie Lane (Guild Master)
2. **Death of members:** The meeting held a minute's silence in memory of Hugh Dempster, Finchampstead and past ringer Roy Russell, formerly Wargrave.
3. **Approval of minutes of previous AGM:** The minutes of the February 2023 AGM were approved.
4. **Acceptance of minutes of previous Business Meeting:** The minutes of the November 2023 Business meeting were accepted.
5. **Matters arising from the minutes:** None.
6. **Branch Officers' Reports:**

All reports had been on the website for members to read prior to the meeting. As such they were taken as read, with the meeting confined to any additional points plus questions and discussions about them.

 - a. **Secretary** (Jan Glen) Nothing further to add.
 - b. **Treasurer** (Sue Davenport). The Treasurer commented that she had just received the last outstanding subs payment. Clarification was provided regarding non-resident members not being required to pay subs. The Chairman added that a Guild member ceasing to be resident ringing member (ie living in and/or regularly ringing in) the Guild area, automatically becomes a non-resident life member (and doesn't pay a subscription). The Guild has an 'Associate' class of membership for those not eligible to be a ringing member who is interested in the Guild and pays the same subscription as a ringing member. Anyone wanting to be in touch with the Branch can be on the email list without needing to be a Guild member. Anyone whose interest is mainly in a particular tower can be given whatever status the tower decides. The Treasurer thanked Simon Smith for examining the accounts. The accounts as published were accepted having been proposed by Lesley Graves, seconded by Geoff Harvey.
 - c. **Ringing Master** (Nigel Mellor). Nigel reported that attendance at the advanced practice has tailed off and do we want to carry on with it? The elementary practices are well attended, and learners have progressed well. Nigel congratulated the three young ringers who rang their first peal last year. Jennifer Moynihan commented that, having just got to being able to treble to advanced methods, it was important that members had that opportunity.
 - d. **Training Officer** (Jane Mellor). Jane reported that there are more elementary ringers now ready to ring their first quarter peal and she planned to continue running quarter peal mornings. Jane would like to see an increase in the number of teachers in the branch and is looking to run an ART M1 course to get new people started on their teaching journey. The Chairman commented that any recruitment drive would need to be headed by a teaching drive. Ideally each tower should have a couple of people who can teach. The training survey can be issued again, and courses run if there is demand.
 - e. **Branch Reps** (Sue Davenport & Vikki Bulbeck) Sue said the main updates were

the increase in subs to £10 and work being done to roll out a membership database.

Chris Mundy (ODG Deputy Master) commented that the database would enable the Guild to be more efficient and have better communications with members and be GDPR compliant.

Steve Rossiter (ODG Steward) added that people would receive more information such as course details. Where a member doesn't have an email address, this would be known by the tower and the information passed on. Members would not be bombarded by emails.

The Treasurer queried how the member information would be provided to the Treasurer. Jan Glen clarified that reports would be downloaded by branch/tower.

Alison Clayton asked if membership subs would be paid via the system. It was clarified that this was not part of phase one of the system.

Chris Mundy reminded members about the sponsored quarter peal week 24th February and encouraged people to take part to help raise money for the Guild Bell Fund, of which all branches can benefit.

Ken Davenport clarified that the sponsored ringing time was not restricted to just that week but would be valid any time around that time.

Chris Mundy also highlighted the Guild 8-bell ringing competition on 8th May at Stoke Poges and the 6-bell ringing competition on 5th October, being hosted by SDB at Shottesbrooke, plus the raising and lowering competition on the same day.

The Guild new members day is being held on 6th July, hosted by Stuart Gibson. New quarterly higher number practices are being run for anybody who can ring a touch of Stedman Triples and want to ring on 10 and 12 bells. The first practice is at Amersham (12) bells) on 17th March, 3-5pm. Let Chris know if planning to attend. The other dates are:

Sunday 9th June – Abingdon (10) – 3-5pm

Sunday 15th September – High Wycombe (12)- 3-5pm

Sunday 17th November Bicester (10) – 3-5pm

Also mentioned were the three courses that the Guild run each year – Radley – April, Michaelmas – September, Steeple Aston – October. See Guild website.

Chris Mundy reported that the Guild urgently need a new ODD Bob editor as Rob Needham was standing down. Chris thanked Rob for his years of producing it.

- f. **Bookstall Officer** (Jennifer Moynihan). Jennifer apologised that the bookstall was not at many practices as it's impractical at some towers, and asked if members still want it. Steve Wells suggested a sale of anything that had been held for over 5 years (this was successfully done at the end of the meeting). Members to let Jennifer know if there is anything they would like her to get. Simon Farrar proposed that Jennifer be given a free rein to reinvent the bookstall as she felt appropriate. The Chairman reminded members that the original aim of the bookstall was so that people know what books were available, and would be more likely to buy them if they were able to see what was in them.
- g. **Youth Officer** (Jennifer Moynihan) Jennifer reported that things are going well, but not getting to the young ringers at all towers. Jennifer offered to come along to tower practice evenings and brings some young ringers to meet theirs.
- h. **Webmaster/Postmaster** (John Harrison) John reported that the usual updates were being done, such as diary and document updates. The members and towers email lists were working well, but there had been little call on the wedding and quarter peal volunteer lists.

Nigel advised that the branch was now using a WhatsApp group and to let him know if people wished to be added to it.

- i. **Safeguarding** (Jane Mellor) Jane encouraged TCs to liaise with their Parish safeguarding officer and reported that the Guild policy had been updated and it was worth taking a look. Jane reminded that all young ringers from age 16 upwards should complete the Basic Awareness course.

Chris Mundy advised that an updated CCCBR code of conduct would be available soon.

Jennifer raised a question regarding young ringer permission to ring forms; was it necessary to have a separate form for towers, and different branches. Chris Mundy said he would look into it.

The Chairman commented that the branch has a responsibility to ensure practices are safe but there is no requirement for a form.

Steve Rossiter added that there was no uniformity around the country as it is parish led.

Ken Davenport commented that it was important to keep up to date as things changed often.

7. **Election of new members:** The following new members were all elected, proposed by Simon Farrar, and seconded by John Coombes with all in favour.

Maria Rosenquist	Binfield
Andy Bailey	Arborfield
Tim Sims	Hurst
Karen Lintell-Smith	Sandhurst
Katherine Holland	Shottesbrooke
Nicholas Holland	Shottesbrooke
Olivia Bennett	Twyford
Eira Roberts	Waltham St Lawrence
Vincent O'Horo	Waltham St Lawrence
Penny Kunzig	Wargrave
Alice Tong	Wargrave

The following new members had been elected at a previous branch event and were now subject to ratification at this AGM. The members ratified were:

Brian Fisher	Arborfield
Emily Shuttleworth	Sonning
Suzie Steady	White Waltham

8. **Election of Officers:**

John Harrison thanked the Officers on behalf of the members.

Chris Mundy took the chair. John Harrison was proposed as Chairman by Jennifer Moynihan and seconded by Simon Farrar with all in favour and duly elected.

The following Officers were elected with all in favour:

		<u>Proposed by:</u>	<u>Seconded by:</u>
Secretary	Jan Glen	Jane Mellor	Simon Farrar
Treasurer	Sue Davenport	Simon Farrar	Stephen Smith
Ringling Master	Nigel Mellor	Alan Barsby	Steve Wells
Branch	Sue Davenport	John Harrison	Jane Mellor
Representative			
Branch	Vikki Bulbeck	Jennifer	Steve Wells

Representative		Moynihan	
Newsletter Editor	Jennifer Moynihan	Nicola Lee	Rob Needham
Bookstall Officer	Jennifer Moynihan	John Coombes	Simon Farrar
Training Officer	Jane Mellor	Jennifer Moynihan	Trish Amos
Youth Officer	Claire Shuttleworth	Jennifer Moynihan	Nicola Lee
Webmaster/ Postmaster	John Harrison	Nigel Mellor	James Moynihan
Independent Examiner	Simon Smith	Sue Davenport	Rob Needham

Deputy Ringing Master

James Moynihan was proposed by Nigel Mellor and seconded by Simon Farrar.

Lesley Graves was proposed by Jan Glen and seconded by Judith Newman.

The nominated candidates left the room, and a vote was held. James Moynihan was voted in with a large majority. There were three abstentions.

The Chairman thanked Rob Needham for all his services as outgoing Newsletter Editor.

Ken Davenport commented that many posts were held in a certain area of the branch, and it would be good to spread around more towers. Others commented that there is a problem everywhere with volunteers and it all depends on who is willing to take roles on.

9. **Branch practices and events schedule.** Jan Glen advised that the calendar for the next year was pretty much in place with just a couple of events to be finalised. Jan asked if White Waltham and Waltham St Lawrence would consider being the towers for the Guild 6-bell competition, should heats be required.

10. **Any Other Business.**

Chris Mundy advised that the Guild Secretary was standing down in May and to let him know of anyone who would be willing to take on the role.

The Chairman thanked Sue Davenport and the St Paul's team for the tea and for hosting, and thanked everyone for attending.

A certificate was presented to Wokingham All Saints as the winners of the branch 6-bell competition.

The meeting closed at 18.30.

Actions from the Meeting

Chris Mundy to look into the requirements for young ringers' permission to ring forms.