

From the Guild Committee Meeting held at Shipton-under-Wychwood, Saturday 13 March 2010

Before the meeting, members stood for the opening prayer and to reflect on the life of Peter Davies, who had died in office as Public Relations Officer.

The main meeting was preceded by the AGM of the ODG Bell Fund. Treasurer Brian Gatward explained the state of capital resources and where income came from.

The annual Ringing Day brought over £1260; branch fundraising raised £4500, of which over £2000 was raised by the EBSB; over £900 came from Gift Aid and tax refunds. After redistribution of investments with advice from the Diocesan Financial Adviser, it had been possible to obtain interest of around £18,000 in 2009, despite interest rate on bank account falling from around 3.5% to 0.6%.

In 2010, one grant had been paid - to Shiplake. It was clarified that grants to a tower could extend over more than one year. High Wycombe will soon require £200,000 of work; the Guild usually makes a grant of 10%, but may impose a limit of £9,000 to any one transaction.

Committee Meeting

The fate of the bells of St Cross in Oxford were discussed at length. This church has been leased to Balliol College for 999 years as a storage space for their archives. The church is being converted by contractors for this storage, and when this is complete, not only will the bells be unavailable for ringing, it will be very difficult to remove them for rehousing in another tower – they would have to go out via the roof. Various permissions are needed before this can happen, and the contractors will not be delayed. The City authorities are unwilling for the bells to be removed.

There had been special ringing to mark the centenary of the death of Revd FE Robinson: 8 peals, 14 quarters and 21 other pieces of ringing had been dedicated to this.

We have been asked to make the effort to ring on St George's Day – Friday 23 April 2010. Next year, St George's Day will coincide with Holy Saturday; Bishop John had said there should be a cautious approach to ringing, and it should be checked with the priest in charge.

The Bishop has registered his disapproval of ringing on Good Friday, as it should be a Silent Christian Day.

Reports from the various committees were perused and approved; certain officers and committee members resigned, but only some of the vacant posts were filled by nomination and election. Some important posts remain empty, notably Webmaster, Public Relations Officer and 3 Stewards.

The Treasurer was pleased to have had no insurance claims so far in 2010, and had received a communication from Essex ringers who were interested in obtaining insurance on favourable terms similar to ours.

The 123rd Guild Report had run to 708 copies (710 last year) and was one page shorter, owing to fewer peals. As all copies are produced by photocopying rather than direct printing, any decrease in numbers corresponds to a direct decrease in cost. It would obviously save costs if some members would accept or prefer the report as a

pdf rather than as hard copy. [This could make it searchable].

The Accounts showed a deficit of £285 compared with the forecast £620. An unexpected £1000 legacy had been received from the estate of Oxford City Branch ex-ringer Miss Edith Mary Clift, who was remembered for an appearance on Radio Oxford with Hedley Feast.

The Guild Bookstall had been well supported, with sales up from £539.10 to £741.67.

The most popular titles were One Per Learner, Ringing Circles and Diagrams.

With regard to the Diary of Events:

- (1) the Radley course was oversubscribed,
- (2) the AGM on 15 May would NOT be held at Hungerford. Speen had been suggested as an alternative, but the hall is small and parking is limited.
- (3) to replace the Laying the Right Foundation course previously run by John & June Wells, it was proposed to hold an Integrated Teacher Training Scheme for 9 students in a virtual learning environment at Steeple Aston on 16 October, to be led by Kit Penney from South Wales. Known for her enthusiasm and dynamism while teaching ringers around the country, she is very keen to attract younger students (aged 16-21) who should have good style and be able to ring up to Plain Bob Minor at least. Details will be sent to branch secretaries in the near future.

- (4) The 10-bell striking competition will be held at Amersham on 27 November.

Some proposed changes in branch rules were discussed, particularly those relating to holding more than one office at once and being a member of more than one branch.

Padbury and Hillesden wish to transfer from the Central Bucks branch to North Bucks branch, and have submitted the appropriate paperwork.

In AOB: the Towers & Belfries Committee appealed for people to co-opt.

There would be a Tower Maintenance Day soon – would anyone else like one?

The main Guild display boards are stored at Whites of Appleton, but the small ones are there also at present and risk getting dirty or damaged. They require a new home – perhaps when a new PR officer is elected?