

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD – SONNING DEANERY BRANCH  
Annual General Meeting, Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2015, Twyford

**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 Graham Steele (Sandhurst) and Mary Cole.

The chairman welcomed Hilarie Rogers (Guild Master) James Champion (Guild Sec.) and Katie Lane (Guild Steward for our branch).

**Apologies** from Branch members were received from Alison Clayton, Aidan Hopkins, John Coombes, Hugh Dempster, Derek Titford and Virginia Coulson.

**Minutes of previous AGM** (Feb. 2014). Acceptance of the minutes of the previous AGM was proposed and accepted by the meeting without dispute. There were no matters arising.

**Minutes of previous Business Meeting** (Nov. 2014). Acceptance of the minutes of the Business meeting was proposed by Pauline Needham, seconded by Ken Davenport and accepted without dispute. There were no matters arising.

**Branch Officers' Reports.**

Acceptance of the **Secretary's report** was proposed by Steve Wells, seconded by Graham Slade and accepted without dispute. There were no matters arising.

Acceptance of the **Treasurer's accounts** was proposed by John Harrison, seconded by Lesley Graves and accepted without dispute. The Treasurer, Sue Davenport, pointed out that the accounts had been checked by an accountant, Mike Davis, who was prepared to act as the independent examiner; the meeting was happy with this.

Acceptance of the **Ringling Master's report** was proposed by Graham Slade and accepted by the meeting without dispute.

There was no **Branch Representative's report** presented.

There was no **Newsletter Editor's report** and it was agreed that one was unnecessary; the newsletter 'spoke for itself'. The Chairman mentioned the high standard of the newsletters that Alison produces.

The **Bookstall Officer's report** was accepted.

The **Training Officer's report** was presented. After much discussion it was agreed to remove the phrase "Shottesbrooke and White Waltham" from the first paragraph of the report. With this change, the report was accepted by the meeting.

After explanation of how to interpret the bar chart in the report, and of why some data was missing, acceptance of the **Webmaster/Postmaster report** was proposed by Lesley Graves, seconded by Steve Wells and accepted without dispute.

**Election of New Members.** The secretary read out the names of the proposed 14 new Branch members and they were elected as members of the Guild. *[There will be a delay in the Joining Packs as the membership secretary is on holiday in Australia.]*

**Election of Officers.** All officers indicated that they were prepared to continue in post if elected, and no other nomination for any officer post was raised, so all officers were re-elected:

Chairman – John Harrison

Secretary – Rob & Pauline Needham

Treasurer – Sue Davenport

Ringling Master – Steve Wells

Deputy Ringling Master – Graham Slade

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

**Branch Practices and events.** Rob Needham thanked towers for confirming the booking of the dates and times in the schedule, and said that the schedule would be issued with the next branch newsletter and that the dates would go on the ODG website. John Harrison said that the dates are also on the branch website, together with the provisional dates for the Surprise Major and mid-week practices.

The exact date for the Joint Branch 8-bell Striking Competition will be decided by the end of June.

Pam Elliston said she would organise a Branch Outing in the autumn if a mutually acceptable date could be set. [*Some dates have been proposed by the Sec. and the likely choice is 5<sup>th</sup> September; objections?*]

**Branch Training.** Jacquie Hazell said that she was planning four training sessions during the year based on what members told her they wanted. Members were encouraged to email Jacquie with their requests for specific training. The subject of a training event would be notified in advance, and students would be asked to confirm their attendance.

Jacquie was urged to set some dates before the publication of the Branch events schedule with the next newsletter. Joyce Crockford suggested that a 'Calling' training session would be useful and she was asked to put it in an email to Jacquie.

**Branch 6-bell Striking Competition rules.** Rob Needham explained that the proposed update was to clarify the 6-bell rules and to bring them into line with the recently updated 8-bell competition rules. He said that branch officers and towers had already been circulated with the rules for comment. The meeting approved the new rules.

**Branch Striking Competition results** – the 6-bell and 8-bell Striking Competition certificates were presented by the Guild Master. The 6-bell results: 1<sup>st</sup> Arborfield, 2<sup>nd</sup> All Saints Wokingham, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sonning. The 8-bell results: 1<sup>st</sup> Sonning, 2<sup>nd</sup> All Saints Wokingham, 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading branch (already presented).

**Branch help with recruitment.** The Ringing Master, Steve Wells, gave a presentation, together with slides, about *An Approach to Recruitment and Retention of Bell Ringers*. The talk was based round the '4 P's of Marketing': Product, Place, Price, and Promotion. The theme was that we need to focus on what benefits ringing can offer to recruits in return for the time and commitment that we want them to invest. Every band is different, so towers need to plan and carry out their own recruitment with advice and help from the Branch where needed. Handouts showing all the slides were available at the AGM. Also available was a summary in note form of a useful document about recruiting and retaining ringers originally issued by the ODG:

[http://odg.org.uk/pdf/recruit\\_retain.pdf](http://odg.org.uk/pdf/recruit_retain.pdf)

The chairman reminded the meeting that all towers had recently been circulated with a list of many resources that were available to help with recruitment. It is available on the website at:

<http://odg.org.uk/sdb/documents/other/Recruitment.pdf>

The chairman followed the Ringing Master's talk with an outline of what was involved if the branch was to put on a recruitment drive similar to, but on a smaller scale, to *The Big Ring Pull*. Before the event plenty of time would be needed to train the ringing teachers for the towers, and if a mini-ring was used at a local event it would cost several hundred pounds and would take five men to erect and take down. Possible sites/events mentioned were: Bracknell shopping centre, Hurst Show and Country Fayre (end June), and the Wokingham May Fayre (May Day Bank Holiday). Joyce said she was hiring a mini-ring for her and David's wedding at Brookside church, Earley on 9<sup>th</sup> May.

## AOB

The Guild Master said that the Guild PRO, Verna Wass, wished to establish a contact in each branch of the Guild, and asked us to consider who it should be in our branch. The Master asked everyone in the branch to consider putting themselves forward at the forthcoming Committee Meeting (14<sup>th</sup> March) for a Guild Officer post. The Master mentioned the Young Ringers Award scheme and that registration is required by the end of March (under 18s). Finally she said that she wanted branches to give a short summary of their recruitment activities and 'reasons for ringers leaving' at the forthcoming ODG Committee Meeting. [*Towers have already been asked by the Sec. to provide some input to this initiative.*]

**Fund raising/social events.** None requested at branch level; Steve promoted the quiz for Easthampstead church funds to be held on 14<sup>th</sup> March.

**Thanks.** The Chairman thanked the vicar for the service, and also the Twyford and Hurst bands for organising the whole event and providing such an excellent tea.

The meeting closed at 6.40 p.m., after which further ringing took place.