

# Minutes of the Lent Term Business Meeting, held in St Bene't's Church, Cambridge, on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2023

## Members Present

President: J A Agg  
Master: K P G Jennings  
Secretary: K J Hawkins

Jadd Virji	Alex Hackett	Alessandra Learmount *
Ben Willetts	Greg Chu	Amy Dunn
Jonathan Nash	Catriona Agg	Oliver Richards
Michael D'Avanzo	Sam Johnson	Andrew Cooke
Oliver Winkless-Clark	Thomas Haslam	Kevin Ashmore
Sam Spencer	Melissa Nash	Chris Winkless-Clark †

\* Elected during the meeting

† Arrived during the meeting

The President opened the meeting at 21:03

## 1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from:

Chris Winkless-Clark	Andrew Roberts
Stella Johnson	James Ellison
Georgia Denham	Dave Richards
Jonathan Shanklin	Ben Gladwyn
Claire Barlow	Luke Smith

## 2 Minutes of the Michaelmas Term Business Meeting 2022

The secretary thanked Chris for submitting two corrections, which have now been made. The minutes were proposed as a true and correct copy of the meeting by Greg Chu, seconded by Alex Hackett, and were accepted unanimously. The minutes were then signed by the president.

## 3 Matters Arising

### Update on the clapper at St Andrew the Great

The steeplekeeper gave an update to the meeting on the situation regarding the clapper at StAG, explaining that arrangements have been made to get the clapper replaced. The main aim had been to preserve the sound quality of the bell, to avoid making it odd-struck, and to keep the cost to a minimum, to which end Andrew Mills, Andrew Johnson, and others, had been consulted. All involved in the effort were thanked for their help, and their efforts have resulted in a suitable wrought iron clapper being found, at a cost of around £300-350. While applying for a grant from the Societies Syndicate to cover this was

considered, it was decided that maintenance costs are an integral financial responsibility of the Guild, and as such it would reflect poorly on the Guild if we were unable to cover these costs without outside assistance. The broken and new clappers are currently with Andrew Mills, so that the new clapper can be adjusted to fit - the only remaining stages in the process are carrying out the adjustment, delivery, and installation. At the time of installation an inspection of the rest of the bells will also be carried out.

Jonathan Agg added that the possibility of repairing the old clapper had been looked at, however a repair was deemed not to be viable due to damage caused by the previous clapper repair. He suggested that if similar repairs are needed in the future, the repairs should be carried out by experienced wrought-iron welders. Alex Hackett noted that there is a very long backlog of wrought-iron welding work, so we should keep on top of any potential repairs required and address them in plenty of time.

## 4 Election of New Members

The following were proposed for membership by Greg Chu, seconded by Sam Johnson, and accepted unanimously.

Samuel Thompson (Ridley Hall)  
Georgia Denham (Christ's)

Alessandra Learmount (Gonville & Caius)  
Jaren Yaming (Churchill)

## 5 Cambridge Towers

### St Andrew the Great

The steeplekeeper reported that the sound control problems reported at the last meeting had been worsened by the trapdoor between the void and the belfry being left open - Sam Johnson added that at StAG this is not really a proper trapdoor, but instead a sheet of wood which needs to be moved and aligned properly to completely cover the opening. He suggested that replacing the sheet with a larger piece of material could make this easier. Alex Hackett responded that this is only ever an issue when the belfry is being visited.

Melissa Nash reported that the noise of the bells is still louder than previously, even after the opening was properly closed, and suggested that the carpets proposed at the last meeting could be a cheap solution. Alex Hackett mentioned that he has spoken to Andrew Johnson about the noise problem, and that he believed carpets would reduce reverb rather than actually reducing the noise. Greg Chu queried where the carpet would be added, and Alex responded that it would be in the level above the void, and would make the bells seem quieter due to reduced reverb, even if the volume is not greatly reduced. He added that the greatest improvement would likely be observed by covering the aforementioned hole as well as possible. Jonathan Agg suggested that it would be worth exploring whether there are any other small holes in the floor (other than the mandatory eight), and that it would be well worth understanding the underlying cause of the change in volume in the ringing chamber (though he mentioned that StAG have always been a little loud).

### St Bene't's

Sam Johnson began by stating that Bene't's is still here, and that the six bells go as well as they have ever gone. Some of the ropes are beginning to be a little worn, so new ones are being looking into as Bene't's is running low on spares (and the only current spares are stretchier than the ropes in use). A good relationship with the church is being maintained, and there is some wedding ringing coming up in June - anyone who would be able to help out should get in touch with Sam. Melissa Nash asked how we will know that the new ropes will not also be stretchy, to which Sam Johnson answered that we don't, and he intends to buy the same ropes as have been good before. Greg Chu fielded Avon Ropes as a possible supplier, with Jonathan Agg adding that they are a popular choice.

Alex Hackett asked whether there had been any changes to the fifth, and Sam Johnson explained that the block of wood preventing the fifth from being deep-set had fallen out, but has now been restored. The bell is not so light set that it's an issue and is therefore a bit challenging to stand, but nothing to worry about.

## Great St Mary's

Jonathan Agg reported that the Guild teaching at GSM is very welcome, and that the effort put into reducing the number of broken stays is much appreciated. The simulator on the second now works, and there is a plan to fix the eighth (where the cabling and LED work, but the contrast with the wheel needs to be improved). Kate Jennings thanked Jonathan for showing the Guild how to use the simulator, and Greg Chu suggested that it might be useful to put together a document detailing how to use it (including troubleshooting steps). Kate agreed that such a checklist could be helpful.

## OLEM

Jonathan Agg explained that the Guild had contributed to the cost of the stay broken at the SUA.

## St Clement's

Kate Jennings reported that she has received an email from Barry Johnson, concerning the possibility of reducing the cost of ringing at St Clement's for the Guild. He has been considering whether external funding could be found to make the bells available to students free of charge, for example for a couple of hours per week during term time, or whether funding could be found to provide lessons to children and students with St Clement's teachers. Kate appealed to the meeting for any thoughts or ideas for how the Guild could use St Clement's.

Sam Johnson opined that although there is already quite a lot of ringing happening, it could be nice to use St Clement's as a lighter six than Bene't's. Catriona Agg mentioned that Clement's are very good teaching bells, and easy to set up. Greg Chu suggested that others could also benefit, and that a booking system could be set up to make use of the Guild's hours on the bells. Sam Johnson added that given the issues sourcing teachers, Clement's could be used to offer more flexible teaching than can currently take place, rather than increasing the amount of teaching the Guild is doing. Melissa Nash said that the bells could be used for quarters, as they are an easier option than Bene't's, with Kate Jennings adding that it could be beneficial for allowing more people conducting opportunities. She also mentioned that the simulator would enable the bells to be rung during Quiet Period, with Sam Johnson adding that learners' practices at Clement's are also a possibility. Kate Jennings suggested that in time for the next meeting, we should let Barry know if the Guild is interested in an arrangement like this, and have an idea of how the Guild would use the bells.

During the discussion, Chris Winkless-Clark joined the meeting.

## 6 Diary Dates

*GSM Surprise Major Practice, Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2023* - Experienced ringers would be very welcome at this practice, with requested touches so far including London and spliced Core 7 methods. Those wanting to improve their treble bobbing are also very welcome to attend.

*Joint Outing with the OUS, Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2023* - Chris Winkless-Clark reported that some cars are still needed for the outing with the numbers attending, so any volunteers with cars who could drive would be very appreciated. Jonathan Agg commented that 17 attendees is a very good number, and that outnumbering Oxford 2:1 is a very good ratio.

*Pancake Day, Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2023* - To be held at Ben's in a similar format to Christmas Dinner, with topping contributions very welcome.

*University Sermon, Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2023* - Providing ringing for these services is part of the Guild's agreement with the SCY and the Church, so attendance is very much encouraged.

*Commonwealth Day, Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023* - The Central Council has requested ringing for this occasion.

*Annual Dinner (Wolfson College), Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2023* - The deadline for signups is Sunday 12<sup>th</sup>, so anyone still wanting a ticket should sign up as soon as possible. Any changes to dietary requirements

etc should be communicated to the Master or Secretary, or to Chris Winkless-Clark for changes to ringing preferences.

*Boat Race Ringing, Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2023* - Depending on numbers a quarter peal will be rung, followed by open ringing. There will likely be a trip to the pub and socialising with the OUS after the races.

*Rounders Match vs the Cambridge Youths, Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2023* - Kate Jennings reminded the meeting that although the Youths have thrashed the Guild in recent years, this is a very fun and well-attended event. Greg Chu asked whether the Guild will submit another cardboard boat, with Kate answering that if there is sufficient interest and enthusiasm something could potentially be arranged.

*Guild Week (Essex), Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> to Wednesday 23<sup>th</sup> August 2023*

Kate Jennings noted that she plans on organising Guild Holiday sometime between the start of July and mid-August, with likely locations including Somerset and the Peak District.

## 7 Any Other Business

Melissa Nash turned the discussion back to Guild Week, asking whether there had been any update on accommodation for students. Jonathan Agg reported that there has so far been no further information from Brian Meads, but that anyone with suggestions should get in touch with either himself or Brian. Kate Jennings commented that it would be ideal to find some nice but cheap accommodation, with Jonathan adding that the organiser is keen to make the event attractive for the whole Guild, and that while organising a church floor or similar takes a lot of effort it could be done. Chris Winkless-Clark commented that in the past churches have been popular due to the low cost, but they do require sufficient numbers, and for enough students to commit in advance to attending. Melissa Nash mentioned that, if student attendance is similar to last year, a church floor would be a cheaper and more flexible option than a B&B or similar. Jonathan Agg summarised by commenting that some more organisation is needed, and that while there is lots of goodwill student input would be helpful.

With no further business, the President closed the meeting at 21:37

K J Hawkins