

Minutes of the Guild Week Business Meeting, held in the Tiger Inn, Beverley, on Monday 22nd August 2022

Members Present

President: Jonathan A Agg
Master: Katherine P G Jennings
Secretary: Kirsten J Hawkins

Catriona Agg	John Hutchinson	Thomas Hooley
Jadd Virji	Luke Smith	Nicholas Small
Jonathan Nash	Richard Smith	Chris Winkless-Clark
Greg Chu	Brian Meads	Stella Johnson
Jonathan Shanklin	Rod Lebon	Alan Winter
Richard Underwood	Karen Lebon	Marj Winter
Bill Perrins	Alan Griffin	Peter Hill
Ian Vincent	Chris Rogers	Christine Hill
Richard Youdale	Vivian Nutton	Nicholas Smith
Thomas Haslam	Naomi Laredo	Andrew Carlotti

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from:

Dave Richards	Alan Schofield	Mark Ockelton
Claire Barlow	Melissa Nash	
Robin Heppenstall	Christine Nutton	Barbara Le Gallez

2 Matters Arising from the 2022 AGM

Chris Winkless-Clark reported that minor maintenance required on the bicycle bells has since been completed by the Steeple Keeper, and that they are now working and available to use at each tower throughout the week.

3 Current Guild Week

The President invited Alan and Marj Winter to comment on the week in progress. Alan remarked that it was good to see so many people attending, expressing some relief that the week has run smoothly so far. He reminded the meeting of the need to discuss insurance, which is to be addressed later. Marj Winter made clear their appreciation for adjusting to more people than would usually fit into a 6-bell tower, due to the particularly high attendance. She requested that tomorrow's additional challenge, namely simultaneously ringing at a 3-bell and a 5-bell tower, be approached with the same grace and good humour as has been applied so far, and that ringers adjust between both towers to avoid overwhelming either.

Catriona Agg explained that she would be collecting tower donations for the week, either by cash before leaving Yorkshire, or by bank transfer (with bank details to be made available to Guild Week attendees later).

Greg Chu proposed a vote of thanks to Alan and Marj Winter - he commented that the week had been nothing but spectacular, especially for the youngsters for which this was their first Guild Week, as it had been three years since the last proper one. He feels that there could be no better way in which to start their Guild Week experience, a sentiment with which all heartily agreed.

The President mentioned that it would be a good idea to record the week in an article for the Ringing World, appealing for a volunteer to hold the reigns on writing one, and for anyone interested to contact either himself or the week's organisers.

As a final word on the current Guild Week, a request was put out for any methods to be learned for tomorrow. Kate Jennings requested that some attendees learn Undershaft Doubles, and Stedman Singles, Erin Singles, and Shipping Forecast Singles were also requested.

4 Future Guild Weeks

Jonathan Agg opened discussion regarding the next Guild Week by remarking that, while there have been various expressions of enthusiasm, there is still a gap for organising (or helping to organise) next year's event, and that anyone interested should contact him to discuss this. He further remarked that it would be good to continue the enthusiasm demonstrated this year, and that there is a good outlook for future Guild Weeks.

Stella Johnson reminded the meeting that there are lists of locations suggested at previous meetings available, which could be a good place to start when thinking about ideas. Luke Smith enquired whether there were any plans for the years after 2023; the President related that there are no firm plans, however Chris Winkless-Clark put forward that he may be willing to organise something around the Birmingham area, perhaps in the 2026/27 timeframe. Jonathan Shanklin suggested that it may be helpful to know which areas are under consideration at this time, in order to avoid consecutive Guild Weeks being planned in similar areas. Christine Hill suggested the Dorset/Somerset/Wiltshire area as a possible location in 2024.

Richard Underwood raised the topic of accommodation, which has been arranged slightly differently this year compared to previous Guild Weeks. Kate Jennings suggested that, in future, it may be worth offering camping or a hall floor for students once again, as this would be a cheaper option and allow more space. She did however emphasise that this year's arrangements at the Windmill have worked well. Stella Johnson commented that the suitability of either option depends largely on the number of students attending, as a whole hall floor seems excessive for only two or three people (a sentiment with which John Hutchinson concurred). She added that some halls may bring the added benefit of kitchen access.

Alan Winter felt that it was a pity for junior members to go by themselves to sleep on a church floor away from the rest of the Guild, and was therefore very glad to have obtained accommodation for most at the Windmill. Although the week was originally planned for 20 people, he and Marj Winter have done their best to accommodate 40, and were keen to keep everyone together without the need to resort to separate places. Greg Chu commented that the Windmill arrangement worked really well, and that interactions such as seeing other participants at breakfast have contributed to a sense of community that tied the week together nicely. He added that the main issue for students was cost, but that this year's accommodation has worked out very reasonably (at about £15 per night) - he hopes that it would remain this affordable in the future.

Rod Lebon supposed that, in order to find an appropriate location, the organisers had needed to take a flying guess at the numbers attending, and that this is not an ideal situation. Alan Winter commented that, had the actual numbers attending been known in advance, it would have been much more difficult to find a location. The issue was raised that it may be difficult to ask younger members to sign up in advance, due to greater uncertainty over their summer plans - however, Alan emphasised that, while the situation may not be exactly as planned, everything is working so far.

Marj Winter commented that the Windmill has worked well because it is not necessarily the standard of accommodation that some of the more senior youngsters would be used to, or may have expected, but that their willingness to cope with this has been a good thing. She added that she would be very happy

to share her experiences and gained knowledge from organising this Guild Week with anyone interested in organising one in the future. Brian Meads felt it should be mentioned that Guild members sleeping in the same rooms on Guild Weeks is not new, and that he could recall a week on which there was dormitory accommodation even for the senior members attending!

Stella Johnson suggested that it may be helpful to set up shared notes or spreadsheets to help in the organisation of future Guild Weeks, similar to those used in the student Guild for planning events such as Guild New Year and Guild Holiday. Thomas Hooley also suggested pulling from the experience of contemporary clubs and societies when considering how best to plan things in the future.

Richard Underwood opined that he is very happy with the dates and length of the week - the schedule is full on, but that's great, a feeling which was echoed by most attendees. Vivian Nutton reminisced about a Guild Week in the 1960s on which undergraduates shared rooms, with two sharing a double bed - all expressed relief that this situation had not been repeated, and Chris Rogers added that, as the most senior youngster, he was very happy with the standard of accommodation.

The President concluded the discussion by voicing his belief that we will continue to hold many successful Guild Weeks in the future, and that the organisation of 2023's event is the most pressing issue at this time.

5 Obituaries

The President invited attendees to share memories of several Guild members who have sadly passed: Hugh Neill, Terry Gooch, John Beardwell, Jane Shaw, and Roger Bugler. He reflected that it was good to hear so many fond memories, and that there is a great Guild community.

6 Insurance

The President began the discussion by emphasising that, while this is an important issue which will undoubtedly continue to come up in the future, this meeting is not the right forum for an in-depth debate, and that the Guild will develop a plan to address it in due course.

Alan Winter explained the challenges faced when planning this Guild Week due to insurance concerns - he relayed that back in February, many towers were clear that the ringers are on their own if anything should go wrong at a tower, and Marj Winter added that no towers mentioned anything about requiring insurance until booking confirmations later on in the process. One tower in particular had requested that the organisers sign a statement declaring that all ringers are insured for personal public liability, but that as this was not certain, the organisers refused to sign and so we could not ring at that tower. Alan relayed that, at the time, Nicholas Small had suggested that requiring us to sign such a statement was just bluster, and in the end it probably was, as the church in question wrote back to say that in 10 years nobody else had cancelled ringing there on the grounds of not being willing to sign.

As an interim solution for this Guild Week, a Guild insurance policy has been taken out, as this was decided upon as the best course of action due to several towers preferring for ringers to be insured. There had been a suggestion to use the existing insurance afforded to some Guild members by their membership of the Ely Diocesan Association, with others covered as guests of the EDA members. This was, however, decided against, as if a claim needed to be made questions may be raised as to whether Guild ringing in Yorkshire is the business of the EDA - additionally, the Guild would be divided into two groups, namely members and non-members of the EDA, which it was felt should be avoided.

Jonathan Agg commented that a subcommittee needs to be appointed to properly consider this issue, and that Dave Richards has already begun looking at some options. This could involve talking to the Central Council (as insurance is not an issue isolated to the Guild, and may also be affecting other groups of ringers), as well as the Junior Proctors of the University.

Nicholas Smith asked for clarity on what exactly any insurance would be covering for, to which the President replied that we don't know at this stage what would be covered. Vivian Nutton suggested that

this may depend on which insurance companies individual churches may be dealing with - for example, churches insured with Ecclesiastical have been told in the past that their insurance covers people ringing the bells legitimately, but excludes people over 80. Stella Johnson added that while the age issue may seem humorous, it is definitely an issue which needs to be properly considered.

The President emphasised again that this is not the appropriate forum for seriously discussing this issue, and directed anyone interested in helping to coordinate a response to get in touch with either himself or Dave Richards, with the aim of bringing a proposal for a longer term solution to the 2023 AGM.

7 Diary Dates

The Master thanked Alan and Marj Winter again for organising a lovely week so far, and noted the following dates:

Freshers' Fair, October 4th-5th 2022 - as usual, the Guild will be using the Charmborough Ring for demonstrations at the fair, however some help may be required from the resident Guild to make this a success. Anyone available and happy to assist on either day should get in touch with the Master.

London Outing, November 19th 2022 - this year's outing is to be organised by Jadd Virji, so any enquiries should be addressed to him. Please note that the date is one week earlier than usual, to avoid a clash with the UL society dinner.

Annual Guild Dinner, March 18th 2023 - to be held at Wolfson College, with John Hughes-D'Aeth giving the Past Master's speech.

8 Minutes of the 2019 Guild Week Business Meeting

The President mentioned that there had been one comment on the minutes of the 2019 Guild Week meeting, from Nicholas Small, and that this would be clarified and resolved. Stella Johnson queried whether we still need to sign off the 2019 minutes, to which the consensus is that we do. Richard Smith commented that we need to clarify something we haven't been told about on a document we don't have; this was felt to be an accurate description of the situation.

9 Any Other Business

Vivian Nutton pointed out that Phillip Saddleton's records pertaining to Guild peals (and some past Guild Weeks) had disappeared, but the meeting was informed that these have now been restored. Jonathan Agg suggested that these should be linked to from the Guild website for improved accessibility. Richard Smith also provided an update on a project by himself and Dave Richards to upload all Guild peals to BellBoard, to ensure that a permanent record of them is always available. The President thanked Richard for their efforts, agreeing that it is a very valuable undertaking.

The meeting was reminded that anyone wishing to contribute further to the Guild's historical records should contact the Webmaster, who will be able to place relevant material on the Guild website. Kate Jennings added that the Webmaster and Address List Keeper's official emails are currently experiencing some issues, so any messages to them should be copied to the Master just in case (and anyone emailing them should not be alarmed if their message bounces).

Peter Hill commented that, while the WhatsApp group set up for this year's Guild Week has proved a valuable method of communicating, particularly when there is no shared central location during the day, it may be useful to set one up in advance in the future. He suggested that details could, for example, be placed on the Guild Website, or on a shared spreadsheet. The President agreed that this should be considered in future years.

A round of applause was held for Nicholas Small, who has once again expertly organised transport during the week, shortly followed by another to commend him on 40 years of service.

Chris Winkless-Clark returned the discussion to the Guild's history, remarking that the Guild's 150th anniversary will be in only 7 years' time. He expressed that it may be nice to write addenda to the centenary history records, perhaps an additional chapter for each decade of the last 50 years. An appeal was made for any particular memories, such as notable Guild Weeks or peals, to be sent to Jonathan Agg, so that these can be collated and the history updated in the future.

Richard Smith also made an appeal for any copies of Guild Week itineraries since 1997 (or before about 1960) to be forwarded to him, as June Johnson had passed on to him a folder of past itineraries complete from the 1950s through to the early 2000s, and he intends to collect a complete record for the Guild library. Stella Johnson reported that the old Guild photo album (the discovery of which was mentioned at the AGM) will be digitised and go to the Guild archives. Jadd Virji added that the book is currently safe in London, has not been lost again, and that a plan for digitising the volume will be effected soon.

The President thanked those attending, and with no further business the meeting was declared closed.