

Minutes of the Michaelmas Term Business Meeting held in St Bene't's church, Cambridge on Friday 28th October 2016

Members Present

President: R A Smith

Master: O P Bardsley

Secretary: J H J Ellison

Joe Wakeling

Jonathan Shanklin

Stephen Burr

James Dann

Samuel Johnson

Benedict M'Caw

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Frank King and David Richards

James Dann and Harriet Armitage arrive

2. Minutes of the 2015 Lent term business meeting

The minutes were proposed as a true account by the master seconded by the president. They were accepted unopposed.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising

4. New Members

The following people were elected to membership of the Guild. They were proposed by the master and seconded by S D Johnson:

James Hodgson (Kings)

Simon Cooper (Queens)

Martha Radbourne (Pembroke)

Carol Germane (Queens)

Ruiti Zhu (St. Edmunds)

Hope Whithead (Queens)

Benedict M'Caw (Pembroke)

Shirui Lu (Kings)

Amy McCormick (Murray Edwards)

Vicky Gray (Jesus)

Ben Johnson (Trinity)

Natalya Kahn (Magdalene)

Kitty Chevalhier (Emmanuel)

Andrew Browne (Wolfson)

Imogen Smith (Girton)

Jon Wright (Magdalene)

Alistair Benford (Emmanuel)

Jennifer Chambers (Jesus)

Louisa Peacre (Dept. Zoology)

In addition, Phil Gorman (Homerton) was proposed by Stephen Burr seconded by Jonathan Shanklin.

Also Sarah Tasker (St. Johns) was proposed by Alan Winter (via letter) and seconded by Jonathan Shanklin.

Harriet Armitage was proposed as an associate member by the master seconded by James Dann.

All were elected unopposed

5. Cambridge Towers

Sam Johnson (acting steeple keeper) reported that St. Andrew the great's (StAG) bells were still there. He noted that the slider on the 4th was stiff due to it having the wrong curvature however Jonathan Shanklin assured him this was nothing to worry about. It was mentioned that StAG's bells had not broken a stay for 2 years now. The president stated GSM hadn't needed new stays for a week.

Jonathan Shanklin thanked the master for his work on both the Charmborough ring; which was generally agreed to have been an excellent idea, and his work on the simulator at GSM. It was suggested that a simulator at Benet's may be possible in the coming years.

The President thanked David Richards for covering the cost of the Charmborough ring.

Jonathan Shanklin asked if there was any news on St Celement's bells. Sam Johnson reported that things were moving slowly and the church's priority currently was getting a new roof.

The present noted that the clappers, pulley blocks and ropes at "the Catholic" were rather old now and little else had changed there.

Jonathan Shanklin stated Benet's stretchy ropes had been replaced at the request of the master also new boxes were promised by the vicar.

6. Diary dates

SUA – 11/11/16 till 13/11/16

London outing - 26/11/16

Peal weekend – 11/02/17 till 12/02/17

Guild Dinner at Peterhouse - 18/03/17

AGM – 07/05/17

Guild Week - 04/08/17 till 09/08/17

Harriet Armitage said "St. Bart's" declined to allow us to ring there on the London outing. Also that she now has a "nice map" with "pretty colours" on for the outing.

The president said the peal weekend will be centred around Birmingham although the 12 bell rings may be further out.

The guild dinner at Peterhouse was remarked to be a new venue not visited for some time.

It was noted that guild week is earlier this year coming (2017) and will be held around in St Albans. There is still the possibility of scout hut accommodation in London and the president will survey those likely to wish to be accommodated there as to their interest in due course. The president did note it may be cheaper to commute from Cambridge if suitable local accommodation were available.

7. Any Other Business

a. Proposed rule change

A proposal by James Dann and seconded by Frank King to alter the guild rules such that full membership would be open to anyone whom has a proposer, who can vouch for them, a seconder and are elected by a majority of Full members present at a meeting. There are other associated components which would include removal of the associate member class and restriction of committee members in accordance with proctorial requirements. Final wording of the rule change is as yet undecided.

James Dann stated that Frank King's notes on the rule change were extensive. He summarized them as; last year's proposed rule change was to broaden membership and reduce discrimination. There is now a very small group of people who are now discriminated against. Stephen Burr asked "who are they?" James Dann suggested the situation of a gap year student who has not yet matriculated but who is in Cambridge with a confirmed place. It was debated whether such a person should be allowed to join with no resolution. James Dann stated the rules were now very complex and probably there exist cases not yet imagined that will cause contention. The proposed system of the proposer "vouching" for the person would allow anyone to join whilst preventing the risk of unsuitable members joining.

Stephen Burr noted that many people proposed in the past have not continued their involvement with the guild. It was also noted there is no complete list of members of the guild (a group is planning to create such a list probably in the summer).

It was noted that the university would allow this broader membership but that committee members would have to be restricted. Sam Johnson asked how far this broadening of membership would go for example would local Bene't's ringers be allowed to join. This was said to not be the idea of the rule change.

The president stated this would effectively remove the class of associated member and make all those in that class full members. The master gave Harriet Armitage as a prime example of someone this rule change would affect; being an OUS member, currently in Cambridge, making a large contribution to guild ringing. It was noted that OUS members were already reciprocal members. The secretary proposed the rule should include "Membership is open to everyone unless they're a member of the OUS." He later retracted his statement.

Details of what would happen to associated members were mentioned however it was decided this was better to be discussed later. The president suggested that there are two elements to this

change, removal of associate membership and broadening those eligible for the guild. Also that there is no reason these two parts have to be together. Continuing he said that these rule changes are not a trivial matter and require a great deal of consultation. It was noted that last year's rule change had had some good natured discussion. It was suggested a consultation group would be set up, possibly based on the one for the last rule change.

Stephen Burr noted that when he was studying in Bristol he saw Cambridge as one of the least broadly open university bell ringing groups, this new rule change would put us at the opposite end of the spectrum. James Dann said that common sense was needed and that the vouching of the proposer was a critical part of the rule. The president noted the Cambridge youths have no "rules" as such but a document of guidance for those who should be elected thus it is flexible but still has guidance.

It was said that this rule may result in some guild members starting to feel alienated by successive rule changes, and that there was no desire or intention to do this. The president stated a balance had to be struck between the student/resident guild and the wider guild.

Stephen Burr inquired as to progress on the guild holiday. The master stated progress was slow as of late but he intends to invite the freshers along shortly.

It was reiterated that the librarian, possibly with support of the secretary and other volunteers intended to go through previous minute books to create a complete list of those elected to the guild. It was noted that it may be hard to ascertain if some of these people are still alive.

It was generally agreed that the Charmborough ring and the sign-up sheets (for learner practices) had greatly assisted in a large recruitment for the guild.

The president closed the meeting at 21:54

J H J Ellison