

## Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held in the Dirac Room, St John's College, Cambridge on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2012

### **Members Present**

President: C Y Barlow

Master: M L D Drinkwater

Secretary: N T Clements

|              |               |                 |
|--------------|---------------|-----------------|
| J A Agg      | P J Earis     | F R W M Manners |
| O Bardsley   | J E Earis     | S Pike          |
| P L H Brooke | R Flockton    | D C W Richards  |
| N P W Butler | E C Frye      | R Shipp         |
| J Cranfield  | C M P Johnson | L T W Smith     |
| S A Croxall  | F H King      | S C Walters     |
| J Dann       |               |                 |

#### **1. Apologies for Absence.**

Apologies had been received from W J Benfold , G R Harris, B R M Johnson, R A Smith, J D Shanklin, CC Shearer, L D Simpson.

#### **2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2011**

The minutes had been available on the Guild website for several months. With no objections they were signed by the President.

#### **3. Matters Arising**

L T W Smith brought up the matter of the Barnett Bells, which were currently being looked after by him. He reported on the state of the bells and when asked by the President as to whether he was happy to continue to hold on to the bells he replied that he was.

#### **4. Matters arising from the Lent Business Meeting 2012**

There were no matters arising not covered on the agenda.

#### **5. Election of new members**

No new members were elected.

#### **6. Cambridge Towers**

The Master reported that StAG was in good shape, relations with the church were amicable with the Guild having rung at a wedding over Easter showing the benefits of the bells for the church. The stay on the 3<sup>rd</sup> at StAG had been replaced having been broken by visiting ringers and the cord holding the spider has been replaced with a steel cable for security.

Bene't's is also in good shape though the stay on the 4<sup>th</sup> has recently cracked and is in need of replacing.

The Master thanked Great St. Mary's for the opportunities the Guild has been given to ring there, mentioning practice for the upcoming Ridgman competition as an example.

## **7. St John's Project**

As reported in the minutes of the Lent meeting, a small group of Guild members (the President, Chris Johnson, Tom Ridgman, Patrick Brooke, Dickon Love, Richard Smith, Max Drinkwater) had met on 19 January to discuss how to take the project further. Tom Ridgman has agreed to project manage the installation and assist with fundraising. The next step will be for the President, Chris Johnson and Tom Ridgman to meet with the St John's Development Director.

## **8. Secretary's Report**

The Guild accounts were submitted to the meeting. F H King commented that due to the Secretary changing annually the format inevitably varied from year to year, and noted that this year the accounts included large sums due to the SUA. P J Earis enquired as to the amounts included under the heading Misc. The secretary replied that these were due to the Guild Christmas dinner and payments for the OUSCR dinner coming through the Guild accounts this year. F.R.W.M. Manners questioned why this was on the books if it simply flowed through the accounts. J. E. Earis asked why the peal fees sum was so low. The secretary replied that some money from peal fees had been used for expenses and had never actually come through the accounts and so was not noted down in the Guild accounts. J E. Earis suggested this was poor practice and not something that should be repeated in the future. F H King highlighted the fact that £120 has moved from the general account to the handbell fund in accordance with the previous decision not to insure the handbells but to put an annual sum aside for refurbishment or replacement. He also spoke of the importance in careful recording of peal fees. The President said this was something explicitly mentioned in the new rules. L Smith said it would be a good idea to record which peal each fee corresponded to.

The Guild assets were also presented to the Guild. F. H. King said that it was important that in the future a full listing of the Guild's assets should be made. P L H Brooke added this was particularly important as the Guild now had to declare its assets. F H King explained to the meeting this was as a result of the charity commission now requiring an inventory check. A distilled summary of income and expenditure together with a listing of the current and replacement value of the assets held by the Guild are now required separately to the accounts. The President agreed that knowledge of the Guild assets was only partially complete.

With no further questions the accounts were approved, having been proposed by M L D Drinkwater and seconded by R. Shipp.

## **9. Master's Report**

The Master's report had been circulated to the meeting. He said he was pleased to be able to say that the majority of those who had joined the Guild of the year were still actively involved and he was happy to be leaving behind a healthy Guild though he was slightly disappointed that no great increase in the amount of handbell ringing had been achieved though a highly successful dinner touch had been rung. P J Earis congratulated the Master on his achievement and the meeting gave a round of applause. M L D Drinkwater thanked the meeting saying he hoped the Guild could carry on to great things in the future. D

Richards added he felt the Master had been an excellent ambassador for the Guild particularly with regards to the Guild's interactions with other local ringing groups.

#### **10. Steeplekeeper's Report**

The Steeplekeeper's report had also been presented to the meeting. The Steeplekeeper said that with the exception of a few broken stays the Cambridge towers were in good shape. S C Walters made a recommendation that the Guild should check the bolts that had been used to secure the new wire cord used in StAG as he knew of cases where these bolts had come loose causing the spider to fall down.

#### **11. WebMasters Report**

In the absence of the WebMaster the President read out his report to the Guild and suggested any questions regarding the report be put to the WebMaster himself. M L D Drinkwater thanked L. Simpson for his continued work as WebMaster but said that it may be a good idea to hand over his responsibilities in the near future. PJ Earis said that he felt it was silly to have a WebMaster who was not resident in Cambridge and in direct contact with the Guild and so the Guild should make it a high priority to replace the WebMaster before the start of the next academic year. The President said she had discussed this with the WebMaster and that she and M L D Drinkwater felt it appropriate to leave the appointment to be discussed by the Committee.

#### **12. CCCBR Report**

R. Shipp reported that the CCCBR was very concerned about the general problem of the aging population of bell ringers, however this was not an issue for the Guild which has a healthy number of younger ringers. One of the great strengths of the Guild is also the close relationships it has with other local ringers; this something which is not universal amongst University societies. He was happy to answer any questions on the subject.

The President noted that L. Simpson is currently a representative for the Guild but wishes to end this after this year and she felt that a student or active young resident member of the Guild should replace him. P L H Brooke commented that he had been a representative on the CCCBR as a student, and he encouraged undergraduates to put themselves forward highlighting the benefits it could bring. R Shipp added his agreement. The President said that she wished for nominations to be brought to the Lent meeting so that we have a designated representative in place before the AGM.

#### **13. Revision of Rules**

At the last AGM, the President was tasked with revising the rules with the aim of bringing a proposal to the present meeting. A draft was presented to the meeting. The process has involved extensive consultation, with all Guild members invited to participate and substantial (and often contradictory) input from around 40 people. The rules have been completely rewritten but most of the changes are by way of clarification and removal of inconsistencies and irrelevancies. The means by which the Guild should notify members (e.g. of meetings) has been left undefined as 'appropriate means', acknowledging that communications technologies are changing in ways which are impossible to predict. The

category of Associate member has been redefined, taking into account the preferences expressed by the current resident Guild. It is to be hoped that we will make more use of this category than has been the case in recent years. The post of Auditor is redesignated as Accounts Examiner, to reflect current approved practices.

There was discussion of whether limiting Full Membership to matriculated members of the University excluded significant categories of people such as some research workers. The President explained that this is indeed the case, but that agreement amongst those involved in the consultation was that the over-riding consideration should be to have a clearly defined membership criterion. The category of Associate Member should be used to welcome those not qualified for Full Membership. F H King noted that matriculation is a status which may change in future.

The new rules require nominations for Honorary Membership to be discussed at a meeting prior to the one at which a vote is taken. F H King highlighted the need for delicacy and discretion, since it would be possible for a nomination to be discussed but then for the election to be unsuccessful which could create bad feeling if the candidate became aware of this. It was agreed that careful management is required, but the problem should not be insuperable. In answer to the question of what would happen if the Guild were to offer election as an Honorary Member someone who did not wish to accept, the President stated that they could decline the offer.

The new Rules were accepted, proposed by S C Walters, seconded by C M P Johnson.

The President was thanked for driving the process of revision to a successful conclusion.

#### **14. Election of Officers**

The Master took the Chair to elect the Senior officers.

He read out nominations and the following were all elected unopposed.

##### Senior Officers

|                              |                             |                       |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| President: CY Barlow         | Proposed by: MLD Drinkwater | Seconded: C Johnson   |
| Accounts Examiner : F H King | Proposed by: MLD Drinkwater | Seconded: TN Clements |
| Treasurer: P L H Brooke      | Proposed by: MLD Drinkwater | Seconded: NPW Butler  |

The President then resumed the Chair, and read out the following nominations. All were elected unopposed.

##### Junior Officers

|                           |                             |                          |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Master: E Frye            | Proposed by: FRWM Manners   | Seconded: MLD Drinkwater |
| Assistant Master: J Dann  | Proposed by: MLD Drinkwater | Seconded: N Butler       |
| Secretary: R Flockton     | Proposed by: MLD Drinkwater | Seconded: S Pike         |
| Librarian: S Pike         | Proposed by: O Bardsley     | Seconded: J Dann         |
| Steeplekeeper: O Bardsley | Proposed by: J Dann         | Seconded: MLD Drinkwater |

It was agreed the future WebMaster will be selected by the committee.

She thanked the junior officers for their work during the year, with particular thanks to Max Drinkwater for his outstanding contributions in all ways.

## 15. Diary Dates

The Master noted the following diary dates:

10/05/12 – last StAG practice before exams

11/05/12 – last Bene't's practice before exams

17/05/12 – ringing for Ascension Day

27/05/12 – ringing for University Sermon

14/06/12 – practice at StAG

15/06/12 – practices at Bene't's resume

16/06/12 – Ridgman competition in Kempston, Beds.

17/06/12 – rounders vs. SCY

(TBC -alternative dinner will follow that week)

18/08/12 – Guild Week at St John's College, Bramcote, Notts.

Guild Week 2013. No arrangements are yet in place for this week, with potential organisers unwilling to take on the task on this occasion. The President proposed that we experiment with a different model: using commercial accommodation (e.g. Travelodges) rather than customising a package at an institution, as has been our practice. Such a model could have the virtue of simplicity and flexibility in various ways, including being more family-friendly, giving freedom for people to choose their preferred style and cost of evening meal, and opening the possibility of moving to a second location during the Week. It also relieves the organisational load: finding and negotiating customised accommodation is one of the most time-consuming aspects of organising a Guild Week. The selection and booking of towers could be divided between a small group of people, so long as their activities are co-ordinated.

The idea of this experiment found favour with the meeting and was considered to be well worth trying as a model for the future.

We need to find someone willing to take on the overall task of co-ordinating arrangements, for accommodation as well as towers. Worcestershire was suggested as a possible area, but a co-ordinator could have their own preferences. A note will be sent to the Global list.

The President then put forward a request from ringers in East Teignmouth, Devon for the Guild to ring a peal. The Guild had rung the first peal in the tower on 4 September 1912, commemorated by a peal board, and they wished for the Guild to ring again to celebrate the centenary of this event. She asked for any volunteers to organise this peal, a request for this will be sent to the global list.

With no other business the President closed the meeting at 15.11

N T Clements, C Y Barlow  
9/5/12