

## Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held in the Theatre, Yusuf Hamied Centre, Christ's College on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2022

### Members Present

President: J A Agg

Master: G Chu

Secretary: S C Johnson

Chris Winkless-Clark	Jadd Virji	Andrew Roberts
Oliver Winkless-Clark	Sam Johnson	Dima Szamozvancev
Clarke Walters	Claire Barlow	James Ellison *
Kate Jennings	Abby Timmel	Catriona Agg *
Alan Winter	Alex Hackett	Luke Smith *
Frank King	Barry Johnson	Ben Gladwyn *
Jonathan Nash	Lena van Dongen	Pippin Barrett *
Kirsten Hawkins	Jemima Morris	Matthew Wadey *
Thomas Haslam	Melissa Nash	
Jonathan Shanklin	David Richards	

\* arrived late

The President opened the meeting at 13.35.

### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mark Damerell, John Hutchinson, Nicholas Small, Elizabeth Hopper, Richard Smith, Thomas Hooley, Ben Willetts (elected during this meeting), Faustyna Krawiec, Ella Wood, Chili Qin, and Matthew Wadey.

### 2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2021

James Ellison was present but not on the list of those attending. The minutes were otherwise accepted as a true representation of the meeting, proposed by Kate Jennings, seconded by Dima Szamozvancev and accepted unanimously.

### 3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

#### **4. Minutes of the Lent Term Business Meeting 2022**

With no objections, these were proposed as a true record of the meeting by Chris Winkless-Clark, seconded by Jadd Virji and were accepted unanimously.

#### **5. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

James Ellison entered.

#### **6. Election of New Members**

Ben Willetts was proposed for Associate Membership by Stella Johnson and seconded by Chris Winkless-Clark. He was elected unanimously.

#### **7. Cambridge Towers**

St Bene't's: Sam Johnson noted that there is currently scaffolding due to work on the nave which should be removed by next Friday. The church is currently closed to visitors, but this doesn't affect the ringing. There has been no major work on the bells since the Lent Term Business Meeting. May 20<sup>th</sup> is the last open practice before exams, after which there will be handbell practices for 3 weeks during Quiet Period with tower bell practices resuming on 17<sup>th</sup> June. Teaching will continue throughout.

Luke Smith and Catriona Agg entered.

St Andrew the Great: Chris Winkless-Clark, the Steeplekeeper, reiterated a few points from his report. The main change at StAG was a broken stay which has been replaced with a new fibreglass stay, and a sheared clapper, which has been rewelded. Practices will not happen on 26<sup>th</sup> May and 2<sup>nd</sup> June but will restart after that.

Great St Mary's: Dave Richards didn't have much to report but noted that the service schedule might be changing again. The Master asked if the 8 worked on the simulator yet. Luke Smith (Belfry Maintenance Officer at GSM) said that he had come up with a plan to fix it.

OLEM: Jadd Virji felt his ringing at OLEM had improved since the Lent Meeting, and the lost quarter was not his fault. The Master suggested we may be having a practice at OLEM in June.

St Clement's: Barry Johnson reported that the bells will be installed in the tower tomorrow. There will be a dedication service at 3.30pm on 12<sup>th</sup> June. The use of the tower will depend on their demand, but it is likely to be an ideal location for teaching with a working simulator. The tower will likely be open to the public from 3-6pm, so if the Guild wished to use the tower it would be outside of these times. The President thanked Barry for his continued work on the St Clement's Project.

Ben Gladwyn and Pippin Barrett entered.

#### **8. Presentation of Accounts**

The accounts and assets list were circulated before the meeting. The Secretary noted that it looks like there is a large profit this year, but this is due to a few large cheques related to the dinner not going out of the account until after the year end (30<sup>th</sup> April). There was a small loss of £68 made this year, but she reminded the meeting that this is because we spent £800 of our own money on new ropes for StAG this year. Frank King noted that while they have not been examined with a capital E, they have been examined with a lower-case e, and Frank and the Secretary will be meeting tomorrow to formally approve them.

There were no queries related to the accounts, so they were proposed by Dave Richards, seconded by Greg Chu and passed unanimously.

Frank King thanked the past two Secretaries for the excellent job they have done, and to the outgoing Secretary for her work in preparing the assets list, which has not been done formally for several years. After some discussion about the loving cup, the President concluded that the most important thing related to the assets was to keep track of the locations of all the sets of handbells, as has been done this year with their frequent use.

## **9. Officers' Reports**

The reports circulated in advance, from the Master, Steeplekeeper, and Teaching Officer, are included at the end of these minutes.

The Master, Greg Chu, didn't have much to add to his report which was circulated in advance, but thanked the other officers, and suggested that perhaps the 12 bell practices weren't worth the effort it took to organise them. He noted that StAG practices are better attended than practices at St Bene't's.

The Steeplekeeper, Chris Winkless-Clark told the meeting that since his report had been circulated, one of the pieces of felt on the spring of one of the bicycle bells had fallen off and would need to be superglued by the new Steeplekeeper. He reiterated the points at the end of his report:

- a. The engineering department may still charge us for welding the tenor clapper but were unlikely to (there was general agreement from Claire Barlow, an engineering fellow)
- b. It is helpful if the Steeplekeeper can be kept in the loop regarding visiting bands, as during his time in office this miscommunication could have caused a visiting band to be lacking ropes at StAG
- c. Unless it is necessary for ringing to restart straight away, it is better to wait for the Steeplekeeper to arrive before work is carried out, as recently the broken stay was removed while he wasn't there, and was later misidentified, making cutting a new stay the same size much more complicated than it needed to be

He also thanked the officers, and those in his report who have helped over the past 3 years.

The Teaching Officer, Dima Szamozvancev, thanked the wider resident Guild for their help with teaching and congratulated the learners who have made so much progress this year.

The Assistant Master, Jonathan Nash, refuted the Master's claim that StAG was better attended than Bene't's, pointing out that Bene't's was better attended if Sunday morning was also taken into account. He noted that on Friday evenings we almost have too many people for the number of ropes, and Sunday mornings are also adequately attended.

The Librarian, Jadd Virji, noted that the main highlight of the year was the tours of material from the Guild archives at the UL over the Dinner Weekend in March. The UL were very helpful when trying to find a document in the archives as requested by a Guild member and were also very accommodating with the tours. Claire Barlow queried whether the Working Library at St Bene't's was still there. It was agreed that it was and that auditing this was a priority.

Fitzwilliam College Housekeeping found an old Guild photobook which was lost around 2003/2004, which has been returned to the Guild via the Secretary and Librarian. He suggested that this is digitised, then deposited in

the UL before it has a chance to be lost again. The President said this can be consolidated with the album made by Max Drinkwater to replace the (now found) missing album and updated to complete the more recent years.

The last Guild photo was in 2019, and several photos will be taken after the meeting. The President suggested perhaps more informal photos could be included for the past few years through the pandemic to ensure that all the current students are in the photo albums.

Jonathan Shanklin proposed a thanks to the officers for growing the Guild and improving the standard of ringing. There was general applause.

## 10. Election of Officers

The President passed the chair to the Master, who read out the nominations for Senior Officers. They were elected unanimously.

Position	Nominee	Proposer	Seconder
President	Jonathan Agg	Greg Chu	Jadd Virji
Senior Treasurer	David Richards	Chris Winkless-Clark	Kate Jennings
Accounts Examiner	Frank King	Jadd Virji	James Ellison

The President returned to the chair and read out the nominations for Junior Officers. They were all elected unanimously.

Position	Nominee	Proposer	Seconder
Master	Kate Jennings	Stella Johnson	Chris Winkless-Clark
Secretary	Kirsten Hawkins	James Ellison	Stella Johnson
Assistant Master	Andrew Roberts	Jadd Virji	Kirsten Hawkins
Steeplekeeper	Alex Hackett	Chris Winkless-Clark	Thomas Haslam and Sam Johnson (joint)
Librarian	Jemima Morris	Kate Jennings	Abby Timmel
Teaching Officer	Lena van Dongen	Kirsten Hawkins	Dima Szamozvancev

The following Officers were co-opted, and the meeting was happy with these suggestions.

Position	Nominee
Webmaster	Ben Gladwyn
Handbell Officer	Stella Johnson
Address List Keeper	Nicholas Small

## 11. Diary Dates

The following diary dates were reiterated.

- a. Cambridge District 6 bell Striking Competition: Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> June

Chris Winkless-Clark is organising this and he reminded the meeting that it will be held at Harston. He will send an email to determine interest for a team or teams, and possibly a few ringers for a scratch band.

- b. Blessing of the Bells of St Clement's: Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June

Greg Chu said that we are hoping to ring directly after the Evensong Service at St Clement's. The service will likely be at 3.30pm, but timings aren't yet confirmed. The Ridgman band will be ringing for GSM Evensong on 12<sup>th</sup> June, so everyone else who wishes to ring will be welcome at St Clement's.

c. Ridgman Contest (King's Lynn): Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June

Greg Chu and Jadd Virji are organising the band for this and will be in touch with them soon.

d. Guild Week (East Yorkshire): Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> – Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> August 2022

Alan Winter reminded the meeting that Guild Week will be held in Beverley. There will be a couple of peals and a couple of quarters, which he said 'wouldn't be wonderful', but quickly clarified he was talking about the towers rather than the standard of ringing.

Dave Richards reminded the meeting that the National 12 bell will be held in Guildford on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> June for anyone who wishes to attend. If anyone wants to volunteer, then they should talk to Catriona Agg.

Kate Jennings reminded the Guild that the Rounders Match between the Guild and the SCY is on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> June. Andrew is organising a boat to be entered in the cardboard boat race, which happens on the same day.

Dave Richards reported that there will be ringing at GSM on 1<sup>st</sup> October for the new academic year, which will be coordinated by Frank King.

Matthew Wadey entered.

## 12. Any other business

Jonathan Nash raised the point that several people who regularly attend GSM practices don't have key fobs. Dave Richards suggested that he talks to the SCY Secretary, Melissa Nash, who will start to coordinate this. Chris Winkless-Clark suggested reinstating the doorbell to the ringing chamber.

We are going to add Jonathan Agg and Kirsten Hawkins as signatories on the account and remove Richard Smith. We will change the address on the accounts to the Senior Treasurer's address. This was proposed by Jonathan Shanklin, seconded by Melissa Nash and passed unanimously.

Luke Smith noted that there may be building work starting around Lion Yard again, so we should keep an eye on this to see the impact on ringing at StAG.

Alan Winter stated that the Ridgman Contest this year will be the 15<sup>th</sup> he has organised, named after Bill Ridgman, a previous President and explained some of its history. It would be good if the next organiser was related to the Guild or the EDA and asked if anyone was interested in these to contact him and they could perhaps organise it jointly next year.

The President was pleased to see how well the Guild has done over the past few years, especially taking the initiative with teaching and learning new things. Many ringers in Cambridge are happy to help with practices or quarters etc. so to get in touch if anyone wanted help with something like this.

With no further business, the President closed the meeting at 14.21.

S C Johnson

## **Appendix: Officers Reports**

### **Master's Report – Greg Chu**

The Guild has had a tremendous year. In Easter, we had our annual rounders match and picnic with the Cambridge Youths, alternative dinner at the Hilton, punt outings, pub trips, handbell practices, and scored the first Guild tower bell quarter peal in more than a year. In August, we had Guild Holiday at Andrew's in Altrincham and had Guild Week in Cambridge, organised by the President, which included a tower bell quarter at Fen Ditton.

With the new academic year upon us, we once again brought out the Charmborough Ring at the Freshers' Fair. As mentioned in Dima's report, recruitment and retention for the Guild has been at an all-time high, with around 200 signups, 71 people coming to our have-a-go sessions, and still around 10 learners coming to our teaching sessions and practices regularly. Particular ringing highlights in Michaelmas included ringing for Remembrance Sunday, against Climate Change ahead of COP 26, and in the Ridgman contest, where we came 4th. We also had the Freshers' cycle/bus outing, where we visited the Shelford area, the SUA in London, and the London outing. On the social side of things, we had a well-attended formal at Churchill college, and a Christmas dinner hosted by James.

The Guild visited Stella's at New Year. We also had a joint outing with the OUS in Bedford, where we visited 8 towers in a day. In Lent, many of us continued to participate in Jonathan Shanklin's weekly improver's session on Monday. We also had 12-bell practices at GSM once a fortnight and a special practice at OLEM, and rang in solidarity with Ukraine. In just 8 weeks, the Guild scored 25 quarter peals, including one of Jovium Surprise Major, including the first blows in the method for most of the band. These events culminated in an extremely successful dinner weekend, where 5 peals and 9 quarters were scored, including 3 tower bell peals and 7 tower bell quarters on dinner day itself. The dinner was held in Newnham, and featured Tom Hooley as our Past Master speaker, and Nikki Thomas as our guest speaker. We finished the term ringing for the boat race at St Mary's Putney.

Over the year, the Guild averaged 20 people for each practice, where we rang anything from rounds and call changes to surprise major. In addition, the Guild scored 11 Guild peals and 85 quarter peals, of which 49 quarters were in tower. However, the highlight of the year was witnessing two of our learners ring their first quarter peals, a testament to their enthusiasm, and the dedication of all our teachers. As I mentioned during the dinner, teaching is now synonymous with the guild, and I am touched by how every resident member has been so eager to create such an encouraging and supportive environment for our learners to succeed. I'm sure that the upcoming committee will do a marvellous job in continuing the Guild's success. I wish nothing but the best for the Guild in the upcoming year.

## Steeplekeeper's Report – Chris Winkless-Clark

This year has been another eventful one from a steeplekeeping perspective. Although the annual inspection in June revealed no major issues (my thanks to Greg Chu, Andrew Roberts, Stella Johnson, Melissa Nash, and Jadd Virji for their assistance with this), multiple have arisen over the course of this year. The most significant of these occurred in early March, when the head of the tenor clapper sheared off. This occurred at a weakness in the clapper caused by repairs undertaken in 2009 to fix the same issue. Although the technicians at the engineering department were able to tap and weld the sections back together, this is a temporary fix, and the problem is likely to continue reoccurring due to the weakened state of the clapper. Taylor's have been contacted regarding a replacement, and have given a quote for £271 plus VAT (i.e. £325.20). They say to allow two weeks for the work to be completed, during which time they will require the existing clapper. I therefore recommend that this take place over the summer when there are large periods with no ringing scheduled. My thanks to Jonathan Agg, Claire Barlow, and Jonathan Shanklin for their advice on this matter, and to James Ellison, Kate Jennings, Stella Johnson, and Abby Timmel for their help with the heavy lifting!

Another breakage was the stay on the 6<sup>th</sup>, which was found to be cracked at the same point in early March. This is obviously no cause for alarm, and should not be too surprising as this bell has been used a lot with learners just starting to ring unaided this term, so it has experienced some rather robust usage. After some minor mishaps with incorrect lengths, a new fibreglass replacement has been crafted and fitted - this should therefore absorb energy better and be less likely to break while still serving the same purpose, so is ideal for a bell that often gets bumped. My thanks to Barry Johnson, Sam Johnson, and Stella Johnson for their assistance with this matter.

I am pleased to report that the business of dealing with our ropes, which dominated my previous year as steeplekeeper, is now fully resolved. The new ropes arrived in August, and are currently sitting in the void until they are needed. It was decided that they would not be fitted immediately, as this seems a waste of the current ropes which should still have a few years' life in them, especially seeing as we would otherwise have fitted new tails which would not have then been rung on at all! Speaking of which, the new tail ends took a while to loosen up, and to get the lengths correct, but are now working well. My thanks again to Phil Gorman, Dave Richards, Dima Szamozvancev, Elizabeth Hopper, Greg Chu, and Stella Johnson for their contributions toward this project.

An adjacent issue has also arisen, as the lights in the void and belfry are currently not working. The church (whose responsibility this is) is aware, however there is no quick fix as replacement bulbs are no longer in production. This has caused work on the bells to be slightly more tricky, though not unmanageable with the help of torches. It is unknown at present how long this will continue to be an issue.

On the handbell side of things, very little has changed since the last AGM. The GSM set has now been transferred to a rucksack with individual bell covers, which has proven helpful given their continued use. My thanks to Stella Johnson for sorting this. Our larger three sets have seen regular use this year for both teaching and performances, and all six sets were utilised in June when the Guild rang some Plain Hunt on 28. I am pleased to report that the bicycle bells (which were not covered in the last report) are in excellent condition, and have seen some use for short touches on the Cam and outside St Paul's Cathedral.

A couple of points have arisen, which should be borne in mind going forward:

- The engineering technicians are yet to bill us for the repairs to the clapper, despite several reminders. It is entirely possible that they may have just forgotten by now, or decided not to charge us after all, but be aware that we may yet receive an invoice for this, I expect for roughly £280 (1 day - assuming 8h - at £35/h)
- It would be helpful if the steeplekeeper could be kept in the loop regarding any ringing which occurs outside of the usual term time practices (e.g. performances, visiting bands, etc.) so that scheduled work can be planned to avoid interfering with these
- While I appreciate people are being helpful, replacing the stay was made unnecessarily complicated by it being removed while I wasn't there, and then subsequently misidentified when taken home to be used as a basis for the new stay. This resulted in an iteration which was too long, and just caused problems. While I appreciate the thought, I would therefore recommend that in future, work is not carried out without the steeplekeeper present, apart from where it is necessary to allow for the immediate recommencement of ringing.

Otherwise, it only remains for me to again reiterate my thanks to all those mentioned above, as well as those who have helped in the previous two years of my incumbency (including Luke Smith, Thomas Haslam, and Martha Radbourne). I wish my successor the best of luck, and hope they have a much less eventful year than I have had to deal with!



## Teaching Officer's Report – Dima Szamozvancev

The 2021-2022 year has seen the Guild get back into teaching in full swing, resulting in the most successful year for recruitment and retention of learners to date. This can no doubt be attributed to the lifting of last year's limitations, and the first in-person Freshers' Fair for twice as many students as normal. The comfortably obnoxious sound of the Charmborough Ring – generously funded by the ART award prize money of 2020 – attracted large crowds and kept the Guild members on duty very busy on both days. In the end, we had 200 sign-ups from beginners and 8 from experienced ringers, more than ever before. The weekend taster sessions were as hectic as they were fun – trying to accommodate 71 students across three stations and four sessions was exhilarating and very rewarding. The three weekly teaching sessions needed some meticulous organising in the first term, balancing waiting lists due to lots of interest and occupancy limitations, changing plans, teacher availability, etc. The teacher numbers had a much-needed boost after some internally-run teacher training sessions in Michaelmas and Lent, led and supported by Sam, Melissa, Chris and James whose help was very much appreciated. Overall, Guild teaching in the first two terms was busy, full of enthusiasm, and very successful – I'd like to give an enormous thank you to every single one of our teachers who gave much of their own time educating the masses and nurturing the next generation of ringers, with special acknowledgement to Sam who has attended almost every session and led the ones I couldn't attend.

To manage the increased interest compared to previous years, we decided to put more emphasis on handbell teaching, rather than just treating it as something learners can do while waiting for tower bell teachers. It's been a very successful endeavour and allowed learners to get into method ringing while still getting to grips with bell handling. With the new Handbell Officer post, we are sure to keep up our advancement at handbells and get even more handbell quarters and peals under our belt!

Though learner numbers expectedly dwindled as the year continued, we still have a strong cohort of learners who have made very impressive progress and now regularly attend Guild practices and social events. Their efforts have been recognised by a flurry of LtR certificates: this year's cohort now includes three Level 1 and two Level 2 ringers, with many more logbooks filling up. Thanks to Sam once again for doing a lot of the ART assessment, and congratulations to him and Melissa for passing their ART module 2 and 1 accreditation, respectively! I'd also like to highlight our Level 2 ringers Lena van Dongen and Alex Hackett, who not only rang their first quarters both in hand and in tower this March, they are now well into ringing Plain Bob and learning to treble bob – as someone who was barely above their level at the beginning of this academic year, I'm equal parts impressed, proud, and intimidated!

All in all, Guild teaching is going strong both in numbers and in successes, and it couldn't be possible without the incredibly generous and experienced Guild teachers, and the enthusiasm of the learners. It is a testament to the whole Guild's inclusivity and investment in education that the learners feel welcome to attend practices and social events where they can get to know the other members and integrate in the ringing community – the fact that the junior committee continues to include Guild-taught ringers in important positions is something we can all be proud (and in my case, grateful) for. I would like to thank my learner buddy-turned-Guild Master Greg, Stella, and the rest of the committee for an immensely rewarding two-year tenure, and wish all the best to the incoming team of officers!