

Minutes of the Lent Term Business Meeting held in St Bene't's Church, Cambridge on Friday 8th February 2019

Members Present

President: R A Smith

Master: M F Nash

Secretary: I F E Smith

Alistair Benford

John Hutchinson

Sam Johnson

James Ellison

Peter Daws

Thomas Haslam

Jonathan Shanklin

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Oliver and Megan Bardsley, Chris Winkless-Clark, Akiko Saito, Martha Radbourne, Rachel Anderson, Luke Smith and David Richards.

2. Minutes of the Michaelmas term business meeting 2017

The insurance on handbells is not only for the event of them being 'stolen' but also 'damaged'.

The minutes with this amendment were proposed as a true account by the Jonathan Shanklin and seconded by Sam Johnson. They were accepted unopposed.

3. Matters Arising

a) Guild Library

James Ellison reported on the matter of selling the Guild library. He said that the book seller had quoted around £7000-£8000 for the value of books that could be sold.

There had been 20 bids received, on 8 books which are not owned by the UL. This came to a sum of around £800.

The UL is only interested in 5% of the library value meaning we could sell the rest of the books to the book seller and get 95% of the value. Most of the books would still be available to Guild members through the UL.

Richard Smith said there had been some adverse comments from older members of the Guild. He said lots of people were questioning whether we should be selling the library if the main reason to sell it, is to raise money for handbell restoration. This is the perception from people not at business meetings. Those present at the meeting agreed that this is not the case, and that the idea of selling the Guild library had been circulating for a while (long before we were thinking about refurbishing the handbells).

Richard Smith said there was the suggestion from other members of the Guild that we are being rash to use the Guild library sales to fund the handbells and that the Guild library is of some significance. He said there is a substantial volume of historical books. He also stated that he had known no-one

who had borrowed anything from the library in the last 10 years, but this may be due to the library not being easily accessible for a least 20 years.

He has come up with a viable alternative whereby we could preserve the library, mainly intact, and move it to the ringing room at 'the catholic' church and the Guild be given a key to access it. This would be relatively accessible. However, we would have to find some lockable book cases to store the books in and find the money to fund the book cases. Richard Smith also mentioned that it is still uncertain as to whether this will result in the library actually being used.

James Ellison said that the books don't require too much space and Richard Smith presented a picture of potential book cases we could use.

Richard Smith said that this alternative is costlier but if we sell the books then we can't change our minds.

Jonathan Shanklin said that he could recall no occasion when people have wanted to look at a specific ringing book. He also stated that any member of the Guild could go to the UL if they wanted. He said that there was considerable evidence that the handbells are used frequently by the Guild, so they should take priority. He said that there was little point in keeping the library unless there was evidence that people had been prevented from using it due to accessibility therefore, he is in favour of disposing it.

Sam Johnson stated that none of us (residents) are very invested in the library.

Peter Daws exclaimed that he did mind the library being sold as he likes books and likes to have collections of books together, his books at home are like a 'think tank'.

It was mentioned that all the useful books on methods were already in the working library and they would remain there.

Richard Smith also said that the library contains nothing/very little published in the last 20 years and is mostly filled with books on the history of ringing and ringers.

James Ellison stated that the only value of the Guild library is that it is a collection that has been together for a long time. It is of sentimental and historical value. The UL will have most of the books. He said the books would be temporarily held in the Pendlebury and this will be accessible.

Richard Smith said the financial side is relevant as we would need to locate adequate book cases. He suggested asking for donations for the book cases. He does not yet have a quote for the cost of book cases.

Jonathan Shanklin formally proposed the selling of the Guild library unless there is sufficient donation for housing of the library in book cases in 'the catholic'. The majority was in favour of the proposal.

b) Handbell Restoration

The Master reported that the Guild had been awarded the £1000 grant from the Societies Syndicate for the restoration of the handbells, thanks to Oliver Bardsley's application.

There has been £325 donated by Guild members; £1000 received by the Societies Syndicate; and around £900 in the handbell insurance fund. In total this makes about £2225 currently funded for handbell restoration.

James Ellison quoted Oliver Bardsley's email from the 9th Jan, which estimated the cost of the bell refurbishment and new cases to be: £2500 for the 'Barnett bells' and £1500 for the 'Dinner touch' set.

Richard Smith suggested leaving the £1000 grant to use on the 'dinner touch' handbells and continue to gain funds for the 'Barnett bells'.

Jonathan Shanklin asked if we are getting money from selling any sets of handbells. Richard Smith stated that the most obvious ones to sell are 'Stone-age Bruce'. This is a ring of bells that has hardly been used and he estimated getting around £300 for them. It was noted that the bells were donated by J B Williams.

Richard Smith said that it would be rash to sell assets if we didn't need to, but the selling of 'Stone-age Bruce' would help to fund the 'Barnett bells' restoration. Sam Johnson also pointed out that it would be ludicrous to refurbish all 5 sets of handbells as we don't need that many.

Richard Smith put forward the proposal to sell 'Stone-age Bruce' and not use the £1000 grant initially but attempt to raise funds for the 'Barnett bells' first. The proposal was seconded by Jonathan Shanklin and this was accepted unopposed.

4. Election of New Members

The following people were elected to membership of the Guild. They were proposed by Sam Johnson and seconded by John Hutchinson:

Owen Johnson
Thea Zijlstra

All were elected unopposed

5. Cambridge towers

Sam Johnson said there was nothing to report from Bene't's. He mentioned the works are still going on at St Clements, but it is still not certain as to whether they will have bells. If they do, the bells won't directly affect the Guild.

It was reported that the bells at StAG and 'the catholic' were also still there.

6. Teaching Officer's report

Alistair Benford reported that Michaelmas had been busy for learners. There were 3 lessons per week which has now gone down to 2, and there are 6 regular learners coming along. Alistair mentioned that the simulator is not working on one of the bells in GSM (the 7th) and maybe the 2 and 8 are faulty too. Richard Smith said he will see if he can do something about that.

7. Diary Dates

OUS Outing-16/02/19

The Master said that the OUS outing was being organised by Oxford in the Bedfordshire area.

University Sermon-24/02/19

Guild Dinner at Corpus Christi- 16/03/19

The Master reminded everyone to get tickets for the dinner.

AGM-05/05/19

Guild Week-16/08/19-21/08/19

Jonathan Shanklin said that 6 people were going to be staying in a pub and there had been some more expressions of interest. The church hall had said 'no' to having students stay there and so Jonathan will enquire as to whether they have any other recommendations for cheap accommodation for students.

Jonathan said he was planning to go in various directions each day for ringing.

8. Any other business

The President closed the meeting at 21:58

I F E Smith