

# Minutes of the Annual General Meeting, held in Sidgwick Hall, Newnham College, Cambridge, on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2025

## Members Present

President: J A Agg  
Master: S J Spencer  
Secretary: A S Cooke

Catriona Agg\*  
Rui Aoyama  
Claire Barlow  
Oliver Bennett  
Samuel Canning  
Greg Chu  
Toby Clifton  
Matthew Collier  
Amy Dunn

Thomas Haslam  
Tilly Heaton  
Lucy Hennessy  
Tom Higton  
Stella Johnson  
Kate Jennings  
Frank King  
Eleanor Marshall  
Jonathan Martin

Melissa Nash  
David Richards  
Josho Sarma  
Marlene Schaff  
Poline Sidiropoulou  
Luke Smith  
Joseph Wakeling

\* Arrived late

The President opened the meeting at 14:05

## 1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from:

Lena van Dongen  
Kirsten Hawkins  
Thomas Hooley  
Samuel Johnson  
Maya Noonan  
Juliet Robinson

Jonathan Shanklin  
Richard Smith  
John Sturdy  
Jadd Virji  
Chris Winkless-Clark

## 2 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2024

With minor corrections, these were proposed as a true and correct copy of the meeting by Kate Jennings, seconded by Eleanor Marshall and accepted unanimously.

## 3 Matters Arising

### 3.1 Guild Membership Fee

The Master explained that, following discussions at the 2024 AGM, the committee had decided to propose a rise in the membership fee from £10 to £15. This was then formally proposed by the Master, seconded by Toby Clifton, and accepted unanimously.

## 4 Election of New Members

There were no new members to elect.

Catriona Agg arrived at 14:09.

## 5 Cambridge Towers

### 5.1 St Andrew the Great

The Steeplekeeper reported that the damaged clapper of the seventh had been repaired by Taylor's. She explained that the annual inspection would take place soon with the new steeplekeeper.

### 5.2 St Bene't's

The Master reported on behalf of Sam Johnson there was nothing new to report other than the stay on the tenor having been replaced.

### 5.3 Great St Mary's

Greg Chu reported that the simulator is now working for all of the bells. He added that anyone wishing to practise ringing on 10 or 12 was very welcome to attend practices.

### 5.4 Our Lady and the English Martyrs

The Master reported that the ringing at OLEM had resumed and that the Guild had ran well attended practices in Michaelmas and Easter term with another scheduled for later this term.

### 5.5 St Clement's

David Richards reported that a teaching was continuing at St Clement's and that monthly session were being held on Saturdays for those focused on rounds and call changes, and plain hunt. He highlighted the upcoming meeting of all the various groups that teach in Cambridge and suggested that someone from the Guild should attend. The Master confirmed that arrangements had been made for a member of the committee to do so.

## 6 Presentation of Accounts

The Secretary presented the accounts which were completed up to the end of the financial year and showed a healthy surplus of £553.56. He explained that the accounts had not yet been formally examined but had been checked by Frank King. Frank King confirmed this to be the case, with the formal examination to take place soon. He added that it would useful for the annual statements from the savings account to be obtained faster to help both him and the secretary. The President suggested that this was something for the new committee and the Senior Treasurer to discuss.

## 7 Officers' Reports

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

Neither the Master or Teaching Officer had anything to add to their reports.

The Steeplekeeper commented that there was nothing to add other than that she had yet to hear back from Taylor's regarding to the invoice for the work to the 7th. The Master explained that this was expected to be around £160.

The President thanked the committee for their work in the past year and this was met with applause.

## 8 Election of Officers

### 8.1 Senior Officers

The Master read out the nominations for Senior Officers, which were as follows:

Position	Nominee	Proposer	Seconder
President	Jonathan Agg	Jadd Virji	Andrew Cooke
Senior Treasurer	David Richards	Kirsten Hawkins	Sam Spencer
Accounts Examiner	Frank King	Stella Johnson	Chrs Winkless-Clark

These proposals were accepted with no objections. Applause

### 8.2 Junior Officers

The Secretary then read out the nominations received for Junior Officer positions:

Position	Nominee	Proposer	Seconder
Master	Amy Dunn	Samuel Spencer	Kate Jennings
Secretary	Oliver Bennett	Andrew Cooke	Greg Chu
Assistant Master	Samuel Canning	Lucy Hennessy	Matthew Wadey
Steeplekeeper	Matthew Collier	Jadd Virji	Thomas Haslam
Teaching Officer	Eleanor Marshall	Tom Higon	Samuel Canning
Librarian	Tom Higon	Marlene Schaff	Eleanor Marshall

These proposals were again accepted with no objections.

## 9 Diary Dates

*University Sermon, Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2025* - The Master acknowledged that this was in the middle of exams but stated it would be good to have as many people there as possible.

*OLEM Practice, Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2025* - The Master again recognised this was in the middle of exams but suggested it could be a nice break from revision.

*Norwich Outing, Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2025* - The outing is being organised by Sam Spencer with 3 of 4 towers and a dumbbell ring confirmed but unfortunately not Mancroft as the bells were unavailable.

*Ridgman Competition, Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2025* - The Master explained that the competition was being held in Boston this year with the test piece being Yorkshire Surprise Royal. He added that any was welcome to join in the practices for the band. David Richards (who is organising the event) reported that preparations were progressing well but that the bells would be challenging.

*Ringin' for the Prince of Wales, Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2025* - Frank King reported that he need a band to ring for the birthday of the Prince of Wales, for which the University is required to ring. He asked anyone who thought they could help to contact him.

*Youths vs Guild Rounders, Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2025* - The Master explained that there would be a picnic followed by the traditional rounders match and that there was an opportunity to meet members of the congregation at GSM following that morning's service.

*Guild Week, Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> to Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2025* - the Secretary read out the following report which he had received from Chris Winkless-Clark, who is organising the week this year.

*"Guild week organisation is progressing smoothly, and I aim to have a full tower list to send round within the next few weeks. I aim to include towers from 3 to 16 bells, with tenor weights ranging from 20lb to 48cwt! Points of interest include 90mins at the Bullring, the twelves of Birmingham, Worcester Cathedral and Solihull, plus a 12-bell QP at Worcester All Saints, the UK's only 7-bell tower, and the "characterful" 8 at Ullenhall. Accommodation this year is at Southcrest Manor Hotel in Redditch (please see my Lent email for more details), or a church hall just down the road, complete with a shower.*

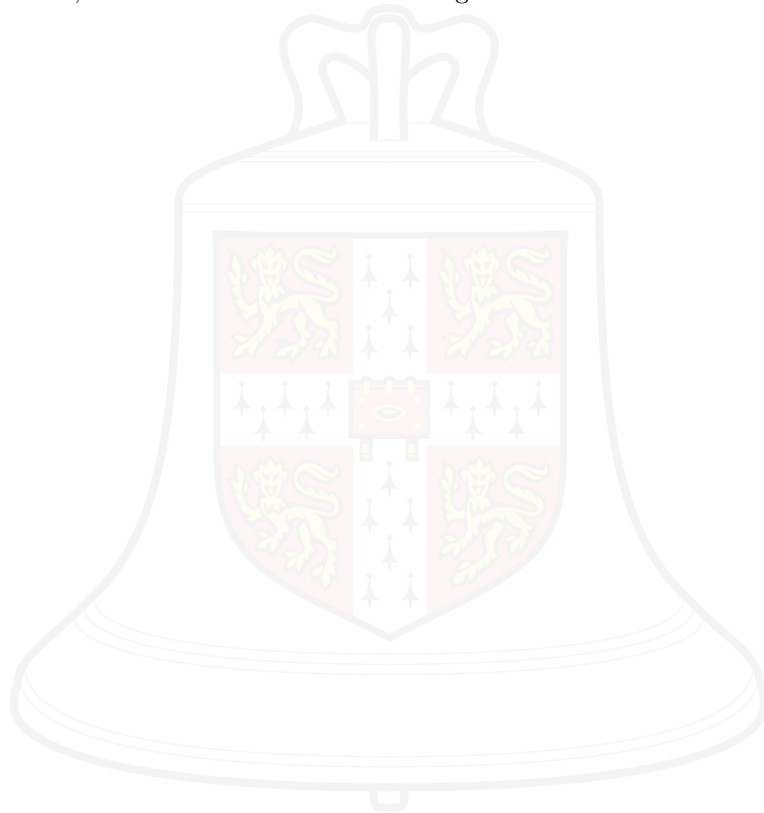
*Thank you to those who have already let me know their intentions to come, I would be especially keen to know about the levels of peal enthusiasm."*

## 10 Any Other Business

There was no other business to be considered.

With no further business, the President closed the meeting at 14:22.

A S Cooke



## Appendix: Officers' Reports

### Master's Report - Sam Spencer

This year has continued to treat the Guild well despite a large number of graduations last year, with particular thanks to the residents for helping to support a strong intake of freshers and learners. 85 different people have rung at either StAG or Evensong this year with an average of 15 and 11 people at each session respectively. Touches rung have ranged from rounds and call changes (125 times), to Halloween, Christmas, Forward, Slithery, and Elliptic (each rung once). The most rung methods were Plain Bob and Stedman Triples, and Cambridge Surprise Major. There have also been a number of spliced touches rung including spliced Surprise Major and spliced stage Plain Bob/Grandsire.

Since last year's AGM, the Guild has scored 48 quarter peals and 9 peals with over 100 ringers including a first quarter as conductor for Lena van Dongen, first peals as conductor for Andrew Cooke and Kirsten Hawkins, a first quarter inside for Amy Dunn—along with too many other firsts to mention. We are grateful to the SCY for their welcoming environment for students looking to ring on higher numbers, along with the opportunity to use St Clement's for practices and quarters. Our particular thanks to Dave Richards for his support during his time as Master, and we wish the best of luck to his successor, Greg Chu.

Last Easter saw plenty of tower bell ringing up until quiet period at which point Bene't's practices were replaced with handbell sessions or an early pub depending on the individual preferences. The Guild entered a band with 7 current students to the Ridgman at Biggleswade, coming 5th ringing Grandsire Caters. The post-exam period saw a peal of Cambridge Surprise Major with a first in tower for Andrew as well as firsts of Major for Andrew and Lena. Away from ringing, we enjoyed this year's alternative dinner at MillWorks, a rounders match of undergraduates vs graduates, Emmanuel's May Ball, and watching the Trinity fireworks from GSM. August gave us plenty of ringing on the Yeovil-based Guild Week organised by Peter and Christine Hill, as well as a residents' trip to the New Forest and Brownsea Island.

The new academic year brought us the Freshers' Fair once again, this time with the new Touring Tower mini-ring providing us an excellent foundation for recruitment which brought in more than 150 prospective learners and a dozen existing ringers. As described in Josho's report, teaching has continued well throughout the year and it is great to see so many learners joining us at the regular practices and service ringing. Intermediate practices at St Clement's have continued, providing some dedicated time to focus on rounds and call changes or leading/covering. Thank you to all of those who have given up their time organising and teaching in the past 12 months.

This year has also seen a number of handbell practices providing a more structured opportunity to learn for those who never went to/have stopped going to teaching sessions. It's good to see such keen uptake for these—hopefully these will continue and be able to provide a strong foundation for an increase in the number of students involved in Guild handbell ringing.

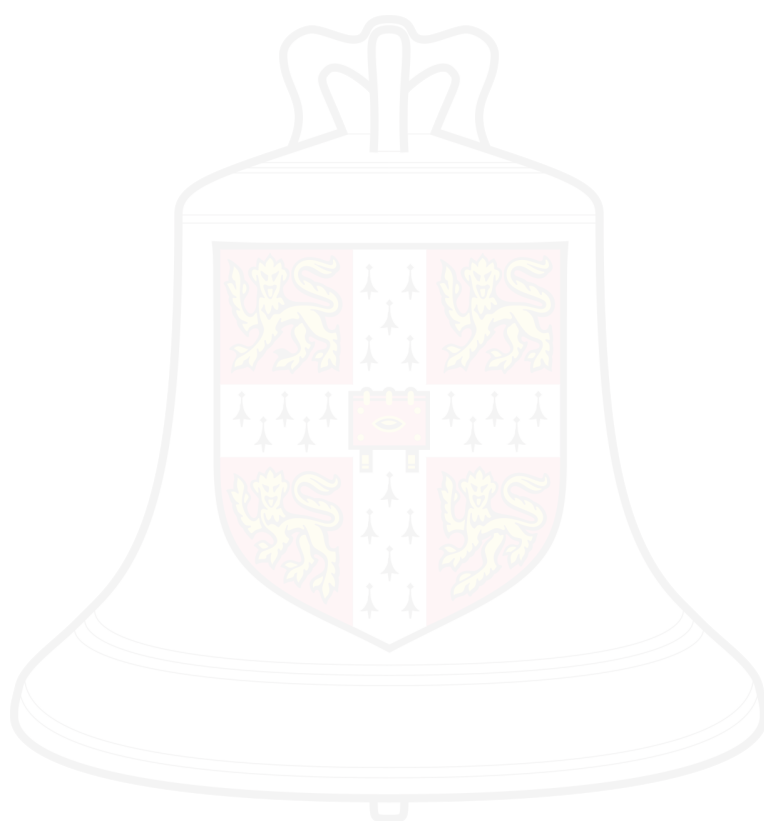
Practices at OLEM resumed after more than a year without them to great excitement, producing one of the Guild's best-attended ringing sessions of the year. Michaelmas also gave us the Freshers' Cycle Outing organised by Jonathan Martin, to Chesterton, Fen Ditton, Horningsea, and Histon; an SUA in Southampton; the London Outing organised by Kate Jennings including a visit to St Margaret, Westminster. The term was brought to a close with Guild Christmas Dinner planned by the anti-curry officers Lucy and Josho.

The New Year was hosted by Eleanor and took the Guild back to the Isle of Wight for a long weekend of racing demon, muddy walks, and cold swims and led us into a packed Lent term with a trip to the new escape rooms, pizza for the Guild's birthday, and pancake day. The Joint Outing was organised by Amy and took us to a number of towers around Northampton—unfortunately without Oxford with us after they ran into transport issues.

The Annual Dinner this year was held at Fitzwilliam College and was enveloped by a weekend of peal and quarter peal ringing with particular congratulations to Oliver Bennett and Eleanor Marshall for scoring their first quarter peals! I'd also like to thank the Dinner Touch band for their efforts and dedication in practising throughout the term, especially to Sam Canning, Eleanor Marshall, Tom Higton, and Matthew

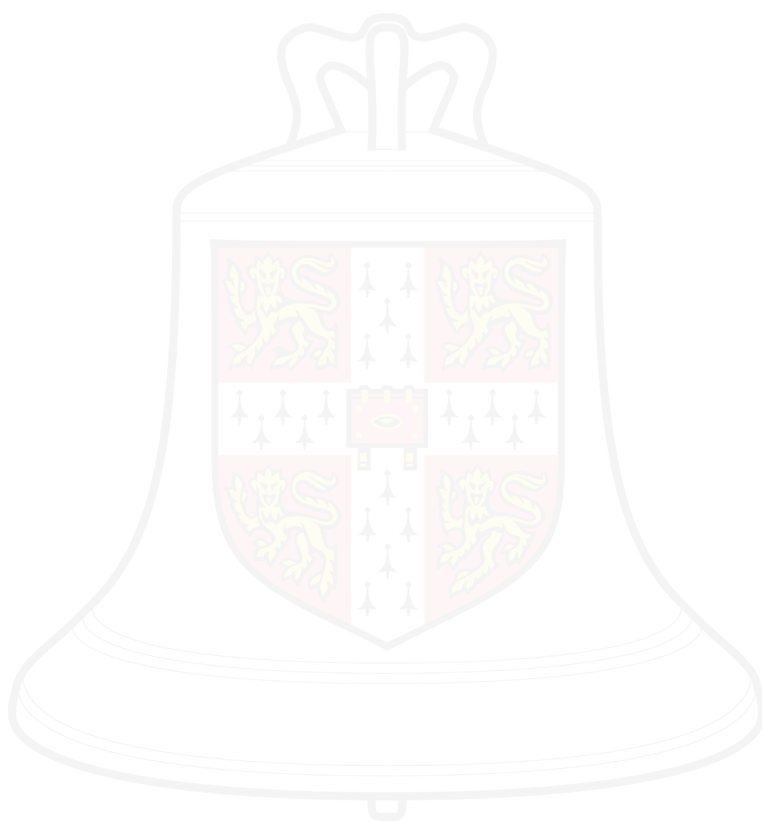
Collier for such a great debut performance. We also rang again at Fulham for the Cambridge victories at the Boat Race this year, and then had a lovely afternoon with the OUS after managing to find a ‘nearby’ pub with any space.

The Guild’s thriving year is in no small part due to the significant efforts put in by the committee—my thanks to Andrew, Amy, Jonathan, Eleanor, and Josho for all their hard work, as well as to all others who organised outings and socials throughout the year. I wish the new committee all the best, and am confident they will continue to build on the Guild’s recent success.



## Teaching Officer's Report - Josho Sarma

This year has seen the continuation of the Guild's popularity amongst people new to the ringing. We had 160 new and 12 existing ringers sign up at the Freshers' fair, due to the mini-ring and the incredible efforts of everyone who volunteered to teach, and almost 60 people attended the have-a-go sessions in Great St. Mary's. Throughout Michaelmas around 15 learners attended sessions regularly, and most continue to attend in Easter so far. Lent featured well-attended bootcamp sessions, providing a strong start after Christmas holidays. We also ran intermediate sessions at St. Clement's church, focusing on ringing rounds and plain hunt, along with some bell handling exercises. Most of the learners have now attended regular Guild practices, with some becoming familiar faces. Thanks goes to everyone who has helped teach this year, with over 50 hours of Guild teaching by nearly 20 different teachers, and especially to Sam Johnson who has taught at almost every session.



## Steeplekeeper's Report - Amy Dunn

Following the AGM last year, during the quiet period, the stay damaged by overtightening on the 6th at StAG was removed. The stay was rotated, a new hole was drilled through it and it was replaced. There has been no further visible damage over the course of this year.

A new toolbox was purchased with a combination lock, along with some necessary tools, including an adjustable spanner. The aim for this is to avoid the tools stored in the void at StAG from being mistakenly removed. In conjunction with this, an inventory of the tools stored in the void was taken. In Michaelmas, the nuts on the stays of the 3rd were found to be loose, which was not an uncommon occurrence, and were replaced with two nuts acting as a lock nut. This appears to have successfully solved this issue.

The main issue that occurred this year was the clapper of the 7th bell broke during a quarter peal attempt in February. Quotes were obtained from both Taylor's and Whites for the repair and the repair was carried out by Taylor's. The clapper was replaced in early March, in time for the annual dinner. The opportunity was also taken to raise the sallies on the back four bells, and with the tail end of the tenor lengthened, the ropes now appear to be at a suitable height.

The annual inspection of the bells will be carried out this term in conjunction with the new Steeplekeeper. I would like to say thank you to everyone who helped me with bell maintenance (and clapper transportation) this year, especially Sam Johnson and Chris Winkless-Clark.

