

Minutes of A.G.M. held on Wednesday 4th March 1981 in St. Monica's Hall, Edgbaston Old Church.

The meeting was opened by Mr P.A.L. Rioch (master) at 8.15.

There were twenty-three members present, another arriving later, and two observers. Apologies for absence were received from Mr C. Horton, Mr R. Haynes, Mr R. Middleton, Miss F. Burra, Mr B. Dellaway and Miss C. Hayes.

Minutes of the Last A.G.M.

These were read by Miss J.M.D. Kimberley. Their acceptance was proposed by Mr J. Hitchings and seconded by Miss C. Provost; they were approved by the meeting and signed by Mr P. Rioch.

Matters Arising from the Minutes

Miss S. Redmond enquired what had happened to the society's visits to Smethwick. Mr P. Rioch replied that the society was committed to ringing at Edgbaston on Sunday mornings.

Master's Report

Mr Philip Rioch started by saying how much he had enjoyed his year as master. He said that the perennial problem of teaching learners had been solved by intensive treatment in the first weeks of the Autumn term and he thanked Mr P. Harden for arranging the ringing course at Bristol during the Christmas vacation. He felt that progress had been made by everyone at their respective stages of method ringing but thought that with few exceptions the striking was at best indifferent and at worst appalling. However, it also had to be remarked that we had won the Northern Universities striking competition for the second year in a row and there was a marked improvement in handbell ringing.

Mr P. Rioch said that peals had not been rung in abundance that year but twenty-four quarters had been successfully completed and he congratulated individuals for their personal achievements.

The society had led a very active social life during the year and the master thanked Mr P. Harden for his work as social-secretary which had included not only ringing outings but also totally unrelated events such as ice-skating and fancy-dress parties.

Mr P. Rioch remarked that this A.G.M. was the end of the society's 25th year, a landmark which had been celebrated in style at the annual dinner. He thanked everyone for their help in its organisation, in particular Miss S. Redmond for her hard work. He concluded by thanking his committee and said he felt confident the society would continue to flourish.

At this point the vicar and church warden arrived.

Treasurer's Report

Miss Rachel Smith reported that there was a balance of £43-66 with a guild grant of £41-31 to come. She said that steeplage had gone up and secretarial expenses had risen considerably. She suggested that subscriptions be raised to £2 for ordinary members and £1 for associate members with all social events self-financing.

General Secretary's Report

The secretary read part of a letter from Mr C. Horton who was unable to attend the meeting. He felt the holder of the post should be someone on the spot and able to keep in close contact with the rest of the committee. He said that if someone was elected in their absence the meeting should be sure they were willing to stand and he thought the meeting could consider making it an annual post.

Matters Arising from Reports

Miss S. Redmond said that the suggested rise in subscriptions sounded too high and Mr N. Worman asked what was done with the money. He was told it covered expenses, losses on social events and a donation to Edgbaston church. A proposal that associate members should pay the same as ordinary members was defeated.

Mr A. Jenner proposed that subscriptions rise to £2 for ordinary members and £1 for associate members. This was seconded by Miss H. Gibbs and the motion was carried.

There was discussion as to whether the post of General Secretary be annual or biannual and a vote decided in favour of an annual election. The vicar suggested that notice be given that as from the next A.G.M. the post of General Secretary would be subject to election each year.

President

The Rev. E. Coombes was proposed as president by Miss W. Thomas and seconded by Miss S. Lord. He then took the chair for the election of officers.

The election of Officers

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| Chairman and Ringing Master | Mr Paul Harden was elected unopposed |
| Deputy Master | Miss Rachel Smith was elected unopposed |
| Secretary | Miss Heather Gibbs was elected unopposed |

There were two nominations for Treasurer; Miss S. Dring and Miss M. Griffiths. Miss Megan Griffiths was elected.

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The president raised the question of whether we could have written votes and proposed that it be added to the constitution that as from the next A.G.M. there could be written nominations. This was passed by twelve votes to eight.

There were also two nominations for General Secretary; Miss V. Vere and Miss C. Provost. Miss Valerie Vere was elected.

The new committee then took over the proceedings.

Election of Associate Members

Ann Beevers, Juliet Graham and Katherine England were all elected as associate members.

Amendment to the constitution

The new master, Mr P. Harden, proposed the following amendment to section three of the constitution.

“Clause 2, whilst they are resident members of the University they shall be termed ‘ordinary members.’

Clause 3, An ordinary member shall pay an annual subscription to the Treasurer of the society.

Clause 4, An ordinary member who has paid at least ONE annual subscription shall become a “life-member” with the same privileges as an ordinary member, on giving up residence at the University.”

There was much discussion over this controversial amendment, it being pointed out that there are many different sorts of courses involving different periods in and out of the University.

Miss S. Redmond asked what was wrong with having life-members still at the University and Mr P. Harden replied that while people benefitted from the society, such as from secretarial expenses, they should contribute to it. Since no decision could be made the President, Rev E. Coombes, suggested that the amendment be reworded at a committee meeting and put to an E.G.M. All were in favour of this.

Next Term's Activities

Mr P. Harden said that the camping weekend should be on dates when most people could participate and proposed 26th June to 28th June. This was passed with only one objection. Three venues were suggested; Cornwall, Yorkshire Dales and Milton Keynes. It was left to the committee to discuss.

The peal weekend was unanimously set for 19th June to 21st June.

Any Other Business

1. It was proposed by Mr J. Gamble and seconded by Miss C. Denwood that a new post of "Romance Officer" be created, to be nominated at the Annual Dinner by the master. This received a favourable vote. The vicar suggested the master could appoint a temporary one at an appropriate occasion.
2. There was a general feeling of dissatisfaction with the standard of catering at the previous annual dinner, held in the Union, and after some discussion Mr P. Harden proposed that the next year's be in a hotel with a ceiling price of £10. This proposal was passed.
3. A holiday in Scotland was discussed with various dates being suggested. The second week of the summer vacation was decided on.
4. Miss S. Redmond proposed that the certificates presented to the society should be kept by the master. The vicar suggested that they be put in the tower.
5. Miss S. Redmond also mentioned that she and Miss V. Vere were trying to make an index of life-members and suggested that the new Treasurer and Secretary might like to do the same for current members. The idea was left open.

Miss S. Lord thanked Mr P.A.L. Rioch for his year as master and presented him with a small gift.

The meeting was closed at 10:18.

Signed
Heather Gibbs (Hon. Secretary)
P. Harden

* This section was withdrawn in the 1982 AGM.

Typed up by James Mundy, July 2023.