

Change Ringers AGM 2017

8th February, 18:30, held at Edgbaston Old Church

Present (UoB Students): Jack Page (chair); Jennifer Robertson (secretary); Sara Bangiere; Fiona Cashell; Amelie Hunnebeck-Wells; Susannah Moore; Jonas Munoz Novelo (7)

Present (External Members): Thomas Horton; Jacob Webb (2)

Apologies (UoB Students): Alex Deam (treasurer); Hannah Bristow (Steeple Keeper) **Apologies**

(External Members): Alistair Cherry

Welcome from the Chair

Jack welcomed everyone to the AGM, thanking them for coming and outlining the agenda.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the previous AGM were unanimously approved by the two members of the society who had been present. Changes to the constitution agreed in the previous AGM (i.e. the reduction of the number of committee positions) has posed no problems over the past year. Matters arising from the previous AGM included organisation of a summer tour and finalisation of details regarding the BUSCR dinner, both of which have been resolved over the year.

Chair's Report

Jack highlighted what he believed to have been the key events in the society year, making it a successful one. This included: the seven peals rung by the society (past and current members); the weekend outing to Loughborough during summer; the NUA (Northern Universities Association), a trip to Sheffield to spend time with other university change ringing societies; and the BUSCR dinner, which featured members of the society performing some hand-bell ringing and a very amusing guest speaker.

Secretary's Report

Jenny focussed on the drive to increase membership in the society this year, as the society has traditionally been a small one. Despite the fun of the Societies Fair, for which we hired a mini-ring, and our new flyers and posters, number of new members in September was low. This resulted in entering a dialogue with the SGX to try and negotiate maintaining the society with fewer members than the required number, bearing in mind that change ringing is an activity that works best with fewer than 20 people present. The SGX were very encouraging and permitted us to continue with fewer members with the conditions that we think about how we could accommodate more members and try and reach the target of at least 20. Actions following this included being present at the Give it a Go! fair and inviting some of our External Members to register with the Guild. We have seen a small increase in membership over the year, but we may have to consider new strategies to attract more members next year.

Treasurer's Report (received from Alex and read out in his absence)

Looking back at our accounts, when I first became Treasurer 4 years ago we had about £395. Today we have £214.70. And considering just the period since the last AGM, after the dinner payment went out we had £290.20.

In terms of the overall drop, the main reason is stays. Now on a couple of occasions in the past, we have managed to take money from our Guild grant and transfer it over to cover the cost of new stays. It may

be worth the new Treasurer looking to see if we can do this with the most recent cost - although I'm not sure our grant is as big this year.

It should also be noted that most of the drop has occurred in more recent years - that is, stays have been needing to be replaced more than they did when I first started out. Now, I guess this is just random bad luck, and we do have £214 so we have enough to deal with another £120 cost (the size of the last one) if necessary. But in case this bad luck continues, it may be wise for the new Treasurer to consider ways of bringing in more money just in case. Ways such as raising membership fees (currently the Guild minimum of £3), looking to the church/visiting ringers for help, perhaps a small profit from the dinner can be generated, even just bake sales outside Spar. However, I say "consider" because it really is up to the judgement of the new Treasurer if this is needed or not. But either way, they should probably ensure that in the next grant application to the Guild (May/June time I believe), they ask for money for potential repair work.

Steeple Keeper's Report (read out in Hannah's absence)

Several adjustments and repairs have taken place in the tower this year, financed in part by the society, in part by the school of bell-ringing and in part by Edgbaston Old Church. These changes have included: replacement of a broken stay; refurbishment and replacement of bearings; and installation of new ropes, which members of the society helped with.

Presentation of Accounts

Following on from Alex's report, those present were shown the last account statement received from the Guild. Jack highlighted the fact that our biggest expenses over the year have been stays, as Alex pointed out, as well as hiring the mini-ring for the Societies Fair. He also highlighted the in- and out-goings of payments for the BUSCR dinner, saying that because we paid for our guest speaker's ticket, the event made us a slight loss.

Changes to the Constitution

The society felt at the Give it a Go! fair that *Change Ringers* was not a very clear or exciting name for the society. In order to attract more members at the fairs next year, the name of the society should include the word 'Bell', making it slightly more obvious what the role of the society is. Sara proposed a change of name to BellSoc, which Amelie seconded, thinking this was a catchier name as well as being clearer.

Vote to change the name of the society from Change Ringers to BellSoc ○

In favour: 9 ○ Against: 0

▪ **Change of society to name to BellSoc agreed**

Election of Committee Positions

Jack explained which roles need to be filled on the committee and described the process of the election – each candidate would put themselves forward for a particular position and give a short speech (no longer than two minutes) describing why they should be suitable for the role. This would be followed by an opportunity for others present to ask questions. Then a vote would be taken, with RON (Re-Open Nominations) being an option to vote for.

Chair

Only Susannah put herself forward. She explained how committed she was to the society, having come to practices every week and to all socials, even poorly attended ones! She described the society as a second family, and suggested that being a regular attender, as well as someone who has had experience of

change ringing with many different people prior to university, means that she knows exactly what is required and what works effectively.

- Election of
Chair ○
Susannah: 9 ○
RON: 0

- **Susannah Moore elected as Chair**

Treasurer

Only Amelie put herself forward. She started her speech by saying: “I like minus-ing things but I love adding things more!” and proceeded to explain how her experience working with a charity previously had helped her become adept at administration. She professed to feeling confident with her ability to handle money and calculate and assess how much was needed for each area and was willing to take on board Alex’s advice.

- Election of
Treasurer ○
Amelie: 9 ○
RON: 0

- **Amelie Hunnebeck-Wells elected as Treasurer**

Secretary

Only Jack put himself forward. He felt that while he no longer wanted to continue as Chair, he has had experience on committee. He explained that this made him a suitable candidate for secretary as he understood how to make good use of the services the Guild provides and which procedures it would be necessary for the society to go through over the coming year. He would also know about the challenges we faced as a society last year and would be able to offer insight into how to overcome them this year.

- Election of
Secretary ○ Jack:
9
○ RON: 0

- **Jack Page elected as Secretary**

Steeple Keeper

Only Jonas put himself forward. He told us how he enjoyed “messaging around with bells”! Having been completely new to change ringing last year, he explained that he has really enjoyed learning and would love the opportunity to apply some of his knowledge as well as to learn a bit more about how the bells work. He feels capable of leading and organising teams to help with the maintenance, as has happened on a couple of occasions in the past year.

- Election of Steeple
Keeper ○ Jonas: 9 ○
RON: 0

- **Jonas Munoz Novelo elected as Steeple Keeper**

AOB Jack offered the opportunity to raise any other business. Three matters arose.

Central Council Representative

At the last AGM, the society decided to dissolve their association with the Central Council, a national change ringing society. Jack described this as having been a sensible decision. However, the Central Council have not yet been informed that we have chosen not to be affiliated with them. In order to solve this issue, Jack volunteered to email the Central Council to let them know.

Name of the New Mascot

Jack recently acquired a stuffed tortoise to be the society mascot. It had not, however, been named. There was much discussion over potential names for the tortoise. Finally, the options were narrowed down to three (Beverley, Georgina and Sheila). A vote was taken.

Vote upon the name of the society mascot ○

Beverley: 2 ○ Georgina: 2 ○ Sheila: 4 ○

Abstained: 1

- **Mascot to be called Sheila**

Clock

It was noted that the clock in the tower has stopped. It was agreed that Susannah, as the new master, would ask one of the church wardens whether the clock or the battery inside the clock could be replaced.

Continuing Action

Jack closed the meeting at 19:30. Continuing action from this meeting is:

- Jack to email the Central Council to inform them of our desire to no longer be affiliated
- Susannah to investigate a replacement clock
- Jenny, as outgoing secretary, to write up minutes and follow-through the change to the society name
- New committee to complete online training and review annual risk assessment