

BellSoc AGM 2018

21st February, 18:30, held at Edgbaston Old Church

Present (UoB Students): Susannah Moore (chair); Jack Page (secretary); Amelie Hunnebeck-Wells (treasurer); Jonas Munoz Novelo (steeple-keeper); Iwan Jones; Hannah Bristow; Alex Frye; Jonathan Newey; Dulcie Marlow; Mieczyslaw Parker (10)

Present (Non-members): Daniel Calvert, Nick Jenkins, Tom Horton, Edgar Wilhelm (4)

Apologies for Absence

Jennifer Robertson apologised for not being in attendance.

Welcome from the Chair

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

Approval of minutes

Minutes from the previous AGM were approved unanimously by the members who had been present the previous year (4 members).

Matter Arising

Jack confirmed that the proposed name change of the society (from Change Ringers to BellSoc) had been approved by the SGX. We also agreed that this itself had helped with recruitment of new members as the new name has provides more clarity to what being a member of the society entails.

Treasurer's Report

Amelie was the first to provide her report. She reported that the society now had £124.28 in the account, a reduction from £214.70 at the previous AGM. A loss was made at the annual dinner, whereby the society overpaid the restaurant by £70. Confusion arose on the night because Susannah (master, and organiser of the dinner) was not in attendance, and so rather than reclaim the £70 that had been paid to the restaurant in error, the other members spent the money on wine for the table.

This leaves the society with insufficient funds to pay for the mini-ring that we hire every year for the societies fair. As a result we will need to investigate raising revenue by other means, or consider not hiring the mini-ring this coming year.

However, no money was spent on stays in the last year, highlighting an increase in the quality of teaching that the society provides, and the calibre of learner that the society has attracted.

Secretary Report

Jack then gave his secretarial report. He highlighted that the year had been successful for the society, with the Lichfield mobile belfry successfully booked for the societies fair for another year. Last year, recruitment was a challenge, which was emphasised when the society fell below the required membership of 20 for the first time in its history. However, this year, due to a strong recruitment drive and a number of experienced ringers arriving to study at the university, we have successfully reached the minimum membership requirements set by the SGX.

Jack also focussed on how the society might deal with not having enough money to pay for the Lichfield Mobile Belfry this year, and suggested that going inside the Guild of Students on a stall might in fact help with recruitment, as often the car park is not a place that many people visit during the day. Finally, Jack congratulated the society on holding another successful summer outing, this time to the Reading area.

Master's report.

Susannah again highlighted how pleased she was that the society had successfully recruited so many new members since the beginning of the academic year. She highlighted that BellSoc was the only university bellringing society in the UK (and in fact the world) to ring an undergraduate peal in 2017, which she said would hold us in good stead for victory in the ART (Association of Ringing Teachers) awards at the beginning of March.

Susannah also congratulated the society on good representation at the NUA, a gathering of young ringers from all the university ringing societies in the North of England, and thanked all those who gave their time to help at the Give it a Go Fair in January. Whilst no one was recruited from the event, Susannah highlighted how important it is to keep up appearances.

Steeple Keepers Report

Jonas said little work was required on the bells at Edgbaston over the last year. The ropes are in a good state and all stays have remained in-tact.

Presentation of accounts

Following on from Amelie's report, those present were shown the last account statement received from the Guild. Susannah highlighted the fact that our biggest expense over the year has been the dinner as Amelie pointed out, as well as hiring the mini-ring for the Societies Fair. She also highlighted the in- and out-goings of payments for the BUSCR dinner, emphasising the loss made due to the confusion on the night.

Finally, Susannah told members present that the guild should have taxed us but haven't. Whilst she has informed the guild of the state of affairs they have still not taxed us. Those present decided that the new committee should be aware of this situation, and should be prepared for taxation.

Election of Committee

Susannah 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 Alex put himself forward. He explained that he was committed to the society, he is good at timekeeping and comes from an experienced ringing background, which will hold him in good stead for running the weekly practices that the society holds. He also suggested he was a keen ringer of hand bells, which the society has taken up as a means of keeping new members interested and active whilst the experienced ringers are ringing complex methods.

- Election of Chair
 - Alex: 10
 - RON: 0

Alex Frye elected as Chair

Secretary

Only Jack put himself forward. He felt that his experience both as master (2016/17) and secretary for the previous year would prove useful for the new committee. He said he understood the 'ins and outs' of the guild and would be able to guide the new committee well. He also suggested that his organisation of the mobile belfry for last year's societies fair would be a useful skill to have in the forthcoming year.

- Election of Secretary
 - Jack: 10
 - RON: 0

Jack Page elected as Secretary

Treasurer

Only Iwan put himself forward. He said being treasurer of BellSoc had been his dream for a while, and believed it was but a small way to repay the debt of gratitude he owes the society for teaching him how to ring bells since coming to university. He said he was passionate about numbers, and his mathematical mind will help him to make sense of the complex sums involved in running the accounts of the society

- Election of Treasurer
 - Iwan: 10

- RON: 0

Iwan Jones elected as Treasurer.

Steeple Keeper

Only Jonas put himself forward. He said, like Jack in his role as secretary, he had been in the role before. Whilst limited work was required on the bells over the last year, Jonas said he had learnt a lot about the way bells work, and would be best placed to come to the rescue should anything go wrong.

- Election of Steeple Keeper

- Jonas:

10 ▪ RON:

0

Jonas Munoz Novelo elected as Steeple Keeper.

Summer Outing

Jack proposed that BellSoc have a 'proper' summer outing, which was now made possible by the large increase in membership over the last year, and suggested that Devon be a good venue. Those present agreed that a long weekend in Devon was a good idea and a preliminary date of 16th-19th August was set. Michael highlighted the issue of cost, and Jack suggested that hiring a church hall would be a good way to ensure accommodation costs were minimised.

AOB

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

T-Shirts

Daniel suggested that it was unfortunate that BellSoc did not have any form of T-shirt identification to represent ourselves at the NUA or Societies Fair. Jack proposed that he and Daniel look into obtaining some embroidered shirts between now and the end of the academic year, with Daniel suggesting the price could be around the £11 mark.

Bell-fund

Susannah initiated a discussion about who should pay for stays should they need to be replaced. In the past, BellSoc's primary expenditure has been on replacing stays, yet Susannah suggested that the church had its own bell fund and so could pay for replacements if need be. However, Tom made that point that replacing stays is a sign of poor teaching and human error rather than 'necessary repairs' that the church says their bell fund is for i.e., wear and tear. Susannah proposed that Jack, as secretary, investigate further and gain absolute clarity on what the church is prepared to pay for with regards to maintenance.

Location of AGM

Iwan proposed an alternative venue for next year's AGM, as the church is often very cold during February, suggesting a public house might be a more suitable venue. Alex suggested the committee could confer and discuss the matter nearer the time.

Continuing Action

Susannah closed the meeting at 19:17. Continuing action from the meeting is:

- Jack to investigate the position the church takes with regard to their bell fund - Daniel to further investigate clothing arrangements.
- Jack, as outgoing secretary, to write up minutes.
- New committee to complete online training and review annual risk assessment.
- The society will await the outcome of the ART awards to see whether they have enough money to pay for the mobile belfry for the upcoming societies fair.