

Minutes of St Martin's Guild Business Meeting

Held on Saturday 6 January 2018 at the Pastoral Centre, Northfield.

The meeting began at 10.10, the Master, Simon Linford, in the chair.

1. Attendance and apologies for absence

54 members had signed the attendance book. Apologies for absence were received from: Richard Cann, Mike Dodson, David Flint, Andy Hardy, Diane Hooper, Tom Horton, Adam Knight-Markiegi, Steve Pugh, Dave Reeves, Stephen and Rowena Shipley, Emily Tamhne, Stephanie Warboys, Jeffrey Webb and Vicky Wilby.

2. Remembering members who have died

The meeting stood in memory of Peter Beresford, Jim Dunn and Leon Hines.

3. Minutes of the business meeting held on 7.10.2017

The minutes of the business meeting were agreed to be an accurate record: proposed by Eleanor Linford and seconded by Jonathan Townsend.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

5. Reports

Written reports had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

5.1 *Standing Committee*

There were no questions arising.

5.2 *Financial reports*

5.2.1 *Treasurer*

Tracy Stevens (Treasurer) presented the Guild's accounts and a written report. She highlighted that uptake of Paypal as a method of payment of subscriptions by members had increased; donations had increased; the Guild had received a substantial bequest from the estate of Brian Downie. £10,000 had been paid to Castle Bromwich from the BRF towards their restoration and augmentation project, completed in 2017. A request for £200 had been received from Knowle.

There were no questions for the Treasurer.

5.2.2 *Independent Examiners*

On behalf of both of the Independent Examiners, Stephen Horton stated that the accounts were a true representation of the Guild's finances and that they were happy with the way the Treasurer maintains them. He reported that they had made recommendations concerning the Guild's bank accounts and security which the Treasurer had agreed to act upon. He proposed **that they be accepted by the meeting**, Tim Sunter seconded. The motion was carried.

5.2.3 *Treasurer's proposals*

The Treasurer proposed that:

Annual subscriptions increase to £10.00 (£5.00 for concessions); that Non resident Life membership is set at a single payment equivalent to a full year's subscription at £10.00

(£5.00 for concessions). The motion was seconded by Stephen Horton and carried by the meeting.

The Treasurer made further proposals:

Apportionment of 25% of subscriptions to the BRF and a £75 apportionment to the Library Fund, seconded by Phil Ramsbottom. **The peal fee should remain at 0p per rope/seat**, seconded by Michael Wilby. Both motions were carried.

5.2.4 **100 Club**

Clare McArdle reported that the 100 Club had raised £1,259 for the BRF in 2017 and that membership stood at 84. She reminded the meeting that January was the time for members to renew their 100 Club memberships and for new members to join. She stated that she was handing over the running of the 100 Club to Leo Fielding and Bernadette O'Dwyer and thanked them for offering to take it over. On behalf of the meeting, the Master thanked Clare for the work she had done running the 100 Club during the preceding years.

5.3 **Ringling Master**

Arthur Reeves (Guild Ringing Master) highlighted some of the successes achieved by Guild members during 2017 – winning the National 12-Bell Striking Contest and a band from St Paul's taking second place in the Tewkesbury Shield; Guild members Alistair Cherry and Michael Wilby taking part in the record length peal of Bristol Maximus at Alderney.

Arthur reported that Guild ringing events during the year had been well attended and in particular highlighted the "all-comers' challenge" at Moseley, which had brought together over 40 ringers of wide ranging skills and ages. He thanked everyone who had attended Guild events and Phil Ramsbottom in particular for unstinting drive and initiative with 10 and 12 bell quarter peals and many of the focus practices.

The plan for 2018 is to develop existing regular line up of ringing event. Arthur advised members to look out for a new monthly email to the e-list, to be posted at the beginning of each month, as a reminder of what is on offer.

5.3.1 **Brumdingers**

Simon Linford was pleased to report that Brumdingers – a dedicated weekly practice for young ringers – was about to celebrate its first anniversary. He had begun the initiative to attract children of a similar age to Charlie Linford, so she could ring with people of her own age. To date there are now 8 regular attenders in the age range 10–13. Practices take place at Moseley on Thursdays at 6.30 – the cubs/brownies time slot. The practices are gaining momentum with all participants now able to ring rounds or more. Some of the Brumdingers rang for the Crib Service on Christmas Eve, their first public performance. A good rapport has developed with the parents and some of the Brumdingers have said that it is their favourite activity of the week.

5.4 **Peal Secretary**

Michael Wilby (Peal Secretary) reported that 2017 had been an odd year with peal numbers, at 49, the lowest since 2014; participation in peals was down and the number of venues was the lowest since 1950. 50% of the peals had been rung at St Philip's and large proportion of the remainder had been hand bell peals at St Chad's. He said that whilst peal ringing was not the be-all and end-all of ringing achievement, its trends could nevertheless be viewed as an indicator of the state of ringing. Peals at the high end of complexity continue to be rung regularly, however, there had been a considerable drop in the number of 8-bell peals.

On a brighter note there had been 6 first pealers in 2017.

Michael noted that the drop in peal ringing is not restricted to the St Martin's Guild, nationally peal ringing is down. It is the organisers of peals who drive peal ringing. When they move away or stop organising peals the number of peals drop.

The Master reported that monthly Sunday afternoon peals of Surprise Major (single method or spliced) would be reintroduced. In addition the peals will be a vehicle to bring on conductors by ensuring a different conductor each month.

5.4.1 **Peals for Illumination**

The Peal Secretary recommended three peals for illumination:

16 Jan 2017 Birmingham, St Philip 5016 Spliced Maximus (Particles)

13 Jun 2017 Birmingham, St Paul 5040 Cambridge Surprise Royal

09 Sep 2017 Castle Bromwich 5090 Cambridge Surprise Major

5.5 **Henry Johnson Dinner Secretary**

Stephanie Warboys (Henry Johnson Dinner Secretary) had tendered apologies.

5.5.1 **2018 Dinner update**

The Master reminded members that the Dinner would be held on Saturday 24 February at the Orange Studios, with Richard Jones in the chair. The format will be a less formal buffet arrangement with entertainment and activities. Tickets are priced at a lower rate – £33 (£20 for students) in the hope that it will generate an increase in sales. Posters and tickets were available from Chris Mills, Clare McArdle, Stephanie Warboys and Jenny Sunter.

5.5.2 **2019 Chairman**

The Master confirmed that Alan Regin had agreed to chair the 2019 Dinner. Alan had been awarded the MBE in this year's New Year's honours for services to campanology and its heritage, due recognition for his work as CCCBR Steward of the Rolls of Honour. In addition, Alan had been one of the driving forces behind the fund raising and installation of bells at St George's, Ypres to commemorate the centenary of the First World War. The date of the Dinner will be 23 February 2019.

5.6 **Librarian**

Mark Eccleston (Librarian) had nothing to add to his written report.

5.7 **Safeguarding Officer**

Trish Everett (Safeguarding Officer) drew members' attention to links in her report to the CCCBR website where there is much useful information relating to Safeguarding. She reported that all appropriate safeguarding procedures and risk assessments were in place for the RWNYS and are in place for Brumdingers.

Trish was pleased to report that 25 Guild members attended the free diocesan safeguarding training in September. She reminded members that they could contact her for support and advice on safeguarding issues.

5.8 **PR Officer**

Tim Sunter (PR Officer) thanked all those who had contributed to a successful year which had generated some very good publicity for the Guild.

5.9 **Central Council Reps**

James Ramsbottom and Richard Andrew reported that they had both volunteered to join the new working groups being formed under the restructuring of the CCCBR. They reminded members that there was no requirement for participants to be Council members or reps, the only criteria being a bell ringer with special interest.

The Master thanked the CC Reps for their work.

6. **Election of members**

6.1 **Full members**

The following full members were elected:

Name	Tower	Proposed	Seconded
Robert Mayne	Northfield	Sarah Vernon	Stephen Horton
Alison Edmonds	York	Eleanor Linford	Arthur Reeves
Ewan Hull	York	Eleanor Linford	Arthur Reeves
Eliza Hull	York	Eleanor Linford	Arthur Reeves

The Master presented certificates to Alison, Ewan and Eliza.

6.2 ***Non Resident Life Members***

The following NRLM was ratified:

Luke G Groom

6.3 ***Associate members:***

The following students from BSoBR had been made Associate Members by the Standing Committee since October:

Ed Wilhelm

Jonathan Newey

Nick Jenkins

Harriet Smelt

7. **Rule changes**

The Master reported that the proposed changes to the Guild rules were the result of 15 months of consultation with considerable input from many Guild members, in particular Mike Dodson, John Anderson and Andrew Stubbs. He thanked them for their contribution. During the process he had consulted both the Bishop of Birmingham and the President of the Central Council. Both had viewed the proposed changes positively.

The meeting was informed that some of the members who had tendered apologies had registered proxy votes in favour of the changes. There was some dispute over the validity of proxy votes but, referring to rule 9.8 of the current rules, the meeting agreed that proxy votes were permissible.

7.1 ***Motion 1***

Replace Rules 1, 2, 3 and 4 with new Rule 1

Carried with 3 votes against.

7.2 ***Motion 2***

Replace Rules 5, 6 and 11 with new Rule 2

There was considerable debate about the proposal to drop membership by election in favour of an application process. Concerns were raised over the proposed decision process being down to a Membership Committee of 3.

The following amendments to the proposal were agreed:

2.1.1 "election at next meeting" replaces "ratification by the Membership Committee. Membership commences from the date of payment."

2.1.2 "and ratification by the Membership Committee" deleted

2.1.3 replace "Membership Committee" with "the secretary and approval at the next General Meeting" and replace "Membership Committee" with "meeting".

2.2 delete

The motion, with amendments, was proposed by Andrew Stubbs and seconded by Michael Wilby and was carried.

7.3 **Motion 3**

Replace Rules 7 and 10 with new Rule 3

It was agreed that the role of PR Officer should not be replaced by Recruitment Officer. It was further agreed that both Offices should stand.

The motion was carried with the amendment.

7.4 **Motion 4**

Replace Rules 8 and 9 with new Rules 4 and 7

Amendment to 4.8: "ten, two of whom" replaces "four, three of whom"
4.9 delete

The motion was carried with the amendments.

7.5 **Motion 5**

Delete Rule 13

After clarification of the correct numbering, the motion was carried.

7.6 **Motion 6**

Replace Rules 14 and 15 with new Rule 5

5.1.2 and 5.1.3 were deleted from the proposal.

The motion was carried with the amendments.

7.7 **Motion 7**

Replace Rule 16 with new Rule 6

The motion was carried.

7.8 **Motion 8**

Adopt new Rule 8

The motion was carried.

7.9 **Motion 9**

Replace Rule 17 with new Rule 9

The motion was carried.

7.10 **New Rules**

A copy of the new Rules is appended.

8. Election of Officers

Master: Simon Linford

Secretary: Clare McArdle

Treasurer: Tracy Stevens

Ringing Master: Arthur Reeves

Archivist: Mark Eccleston

Safeguarding Officer: Trish Everett

Proposed by David Ingram, seconded by David Hull. Elected en bloc.

PR Officer: no nominations had been received.

Recruitment Officer: no nominations had been received.

No nominations were made from the floor. The positions remained vacant.

8.1 **Election of Officials**

Henry Johnson Dinner Secretary: Jenny Sunter

Proposed by Tim Sunter, seconded by Tracy Stevens. Elected.

General Fund Trustee: John Anderson
General Fund Trustee: Chris Mills
BRF Trustee: Don Finnemore
BRF Trustee: Andrew Stubbs
Proposed by Tony Daw, seconded by Richard Postill. Elected en bloc.

Independent Examiner: Stephen Horton
Independent Examiner: Thomas Horton
Proposed by Clare McArdle, seconded by Janet Horton. Elected en bloc.

9. AOB

9.1 Membership proposals

Four new members were proposed for membership by The Master, seconded by Arthur Reeves. Mark Regan, Graham Bradshaw, David Threlfall and Simon Melen had all expressed wishes to become Guild members should the new rules be adopted. All were elected.

9.2 Congratulations

David Hull thanked and congratulated the team who had redrafted the rules and asserted that other associations could learn much from the example set by the St Martin's Guild. He requested that an article be written and sent for publication in *The Ringing World*.

The meeting applauded.

9.3 Subscriptions

The Treasurer reminded members that subscriptions were now due.

9.4 Presentation

Bernadette O'Dwyer was presented with a framed memento of her first quarter peal, rung in December.

9.4 Thank you for lunch

The Master thanked the local ringers at Northfield for providing the lunch that was to follow and other refreshments during the day.

10. Date of the next meeting

In view of the preceding business determining the direction of Guild meetings, the date of the next meeting had yet to be decided. The date would be circulated at the earliest opportunity.

The meeting closed at 12.09