

Minutes of St Martin's Guild Annual General Meeting

Held on Saturday 7th January 2023 at St Mary's Moseley.

The meeting began at 1.35pm with the Master, Clare McArdle, in the Chair.

Standing Committee Officers also present were Phil Ramsbottom (Ringing Master), Arthur Reeves (Secretary), Tracy Stevens (Treasurer), Mark Eccleston (Archivist and Webmaster), Trish Everett (Safeguarding Officer).

1. Attendance and apologies for absence

There were 42 members present, including the Officers. Apologies for absence were received from: David Hull, John Anderson, Eleanor Linford, Simon Linford, Rachel Mitchell, Rosemarie Seadon, John Rogers, Sue Rogers, Jonathan Townsend, Tim Sunter, Jenny Sunter, Sonia Field, Jane Morris, Jeff Webb, Casey McLellan, Will Davies, Linda Whitehead, Angie Wakefield, Rebekah Horton, Rose Horton, Michael Wilby and Don Finnemore.

2. Remembering members who have died since the last meeting

The Guild stood in silent memory for the following members who had died since the last meeting: Anthony Barnfield, Bill Dargue, William Mills and Keith Haslam.

3. Minutes of the business meeting held on Saturday 8th January 2022

The minutes were proposed by Graham Kelly and seconded by Richard Lewis. They were accepted by members as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes

The following were identified by the Master as matters arising from the minutes:

Henry Johnson Dinner Secretary: the position remains vacant. The Master highlighted that nominations for this position could come from the floor and encouraged members to consider their interest in the post.

Newsletter Editor: Andrew Brown has taken over as newsletter editor from Andrew Clark.

Commonwealth Games and Platinum Jubilee had both been commemorated by Guild ringing.

Central Council mobile belfry donation: a £250 donation had been made towards this project, using some of the 2021 surplus from the 100 Club.

5. Reports

Written reports had been circulated in advance of the meeting in a document entitled 'Officers' Reports'.

5.1 Financial reports

5.1 Treasurer

Tracy Stevens (Treasurer) presented the Guild's accounts and a written report.

The Treasurer reported that £1,640 had been collected in subs over the year. However, there remained 36 unpaid members in spite of several reminders. The Treasurer will continue to remind members to pay their subs. The Treasurer thanked those Life Vice Presidents and Life Members who continued to contribute their subs.

The Treasurer reported that the Guild Zoom account will expire at the end of January, because it was felt that it was no longer needed.

The Treasurer, at the request of the Independent Examiners, reminded members that all members were covered by the Guild Public Liability Insurance which was renewed annually on 27th August. The Treasurer outlined what the insurance covers, reminding members that this is not a Personal Claims Insurance which would need to be organised independently

The Treasurer outlined that the Guild handbells were insured and currently held at the Simon and Eleanor Linford's.

The Treasurer reported that the 100 Club had made a surplus of £1,442 in 2021. As agreed at the last AGM, this fund was moved to the General Fund and ringfenced for training events. As of this AGM, £250 had been donated to the CCCBR Mobile Belfry project and £200 donated to Brumdingers to support their transport to the Youth Competition. The remaining funds (£992) would therefore be transferred to the Bell Restoration Fund, as agreed by the 2021 AGM.

There was a £1490 surplus on the 100 Club this year which would be transferred to the General Fund for 12 months and ringfenced for training.

The Treasurer reported that £27.29 had been raised through Amazon Smile and thanked those who did use Amazon Smile.

The Treasurer reported that there had been one request from the Bell Restoration Fund from Kingsbury Church at 10% of the cost for work they had carried out. This amounted to £610. This amount had been agreed and paid to Kingsbury Church. Tony Daw, Bell Restoration Fund Trustee, had carried out a visit and was satisfied with the work carried out.

The Treasurer reminded members that the Guild held a number of books in stock. And encouraged members to use the online shop both for books and merchandise.

Members passed their thanks to Tracy for all of her diligent work as Treasurer, which was seconded by Clare McArdle as Master.

5.2 Independent examiners report

Steve Horton reported on behalf of both Independent Examiners. Steve confirmed that the records and accounts had been checked and that they reflected the true position of the Guild.

The Independent Examiners had recommended that the Treasurer should conduct an inventory of the Guild assets.

Both Independent Examiners commended the accounts to the members.

The accounts for 2022 were proposed by Alan Cotterill and seconded by Luke Daniel. They were accepted by the members.

5.3 Treasurer's proposals

The Treasurer proposed that the subscription rates remain at £10 and £5 for concessions. The Treasurer proposed that these same rates remain for Associate Members also remains at £10.

The Treasurer proposed that there be no changes to peal fees or to apportionments.

This proposal was seconded by James Ramsbottom and accepted by members.

The Treasurer reminded members that the CCCBR has revised the way they calculate subscription fees for Guilds and Associations. From 2023, fees will be 20 pence per member (rather than per representative). This will represent a saving for the Guild under current membership numbers.

The Treasurer introduced Membership Mojo as a new platform, which has been used by the Surrey Association for several years. The Treasurer was keen to launch Membership Mojo by mid-January for a number of reasons. Members will directly log-on Membership Mojo to pay their subscription fees direct. The platform allows members to directly keep their details up to date. Members can still pay using cash, cheque or BACS via the Treasurer. Membership Mojo supports GDPR. With this in mind, the Treasurer asked members to delay paying their subs until this platform had been launched.

Membership Mojo also provides a platform for communication, helping to resolve the issue that some members are currently facing with Gmail communications.

5.4 100 Club

Clare McArdle (Master) had submitted a written report.

The Master thanked all members who subscribed to the 100 Club, highlighting that several had done so for many years. The 100 Club currently had 101 members.

As previously reported, in 2022 there had been a £1,490 surplus on the 100 Club which would be transferred into the General Fund to support training. The Master thanked those in particular who donated their prize money back into the 100 Club.

5.4 Ringing Master's report

Phil Ramsbottom (Ringing Master) had submitted a written report.

The Ringing Master highlighted that he felt there were gaps in learning when he became Ringing Master that he felt his workshops, along with other communications he was conducting, was helping to narrow.

The Ringing Master highlighted that he was particularly pleased that certain members and towers were organising their own initiatives, including higher numbers and Surprise Major Practices. He was encouraged and proud of the level of activities on offer to members.

The Ringing Master highlighted his Three Events Challenge, of which he was leading on. The aim of this was to encourage members to organise their own events. The Ringing Master introduced the following members who had completed the Three Events Challenge:

Margaret Burling
Sand Cooper

Keith Whitehead
Max Earthquake.

The four were presented with a certificate by the Ringing Master.

James Ramsbottom corrected a point in the written report of the Ringing Master, stating that St Philip's Cathedral had come third in the Robert B Smith Ringing contest.

The Ringing Master concluded by highlighted his concerns over communication and that some members were not reading messages or notices from the Guild. He said that the Standing Committee would look at this over the year.

The Master thanked the Ringing Master for all of his work over the year, highlighting his dedication and efforts especially relating to the number of workshops now on offer.

5.5 Henry Johnson Dinner Secretary's report

The Master highlighted that the Henry Johnson Dinner Secretary position remained vacant. The 2023 dinner has been organised by the Master, but she was keen to highlight to members that the Guild was still looking for a Secretary.

The 2022 dinner was a live event with Steve and Janet Horton in the Chair. The dinner also commemorated and celebrated Andrew Stubbs.

The Master highlighted that there had been a small loss on the dinner, which could not continue. This explains why ticket prices needed to increase for 2023.

Feedback from the 2022 dinner had been sought and was largely very positive. The main issues related to the availability of beer, which has been raised with the venue and should be addressed for the 2023 dinner, and the cost of wine. Regarding the cost of the wine, the feeling was that this would not be any cheaper at any other city centre venue.

The 135th dinner would take place on Saturday 25th February again at the Burlington Hotel. The ticket price would £45 (£35 concession to students). Tickets would be sold using a platform called Participant. Julia Cater has been invited to act as Chair for the dinner.

5.6 Archivist report

Mark Eccleston (Archivist) had submitted a written report.

The Archivist highlighted both the historic and modern works held by the Guild Library. Most of the material is held at St Martin's in the Bullring, with some teaching material held at St Paul's. The library held a complete archive of Ringing Worlds, with thanks to Clare McArdle for donating her copies each week. The Archivist highlighted that the last two years of Ringing World copies would be bound this year. .

The Archivist thanked thanked Richard Jones, in particular for his work on rationalisation of some out-sized Archive material stored in the planchest drawers in the Clock Room at St Martin's.

The Master thanked the Archivist for all of his work over the year, highlighting his experience as a professional archivist. The Master highlighted that the Guild Library is the envy of many Ringing

Societies. The Master thanked the Archivist in particular for making the Library as accessible as possible.

5.7 Safeguarding Officer's report

Trish Everett (Safeguarding Officer) had provided a written report.

The Safeguarding Officer highlighted that the Church of England had published its definitive Safeguarding Framework. She highlighted that everyone who rings should do Basic Safeguarding Training online. The Safeguarding Officer highlighted that the course did not take long and covered core training needs. Tower Captains and those who teach ringing should complete the Foundation and Leadership training.

The Safeguarding Officer highlighted that the CCCBR has recently published guidance to ringers and societies, available on their website.

The Safeguarding Officer reminded members that she was always available for Safeguarding advice for when members need it. She is directly involved with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team, including facilitating training.

The Master extended her thanks to the Safeguarding Officer, highlighting that the Guild was ahead of the field especially with the links upon which the Safeguarding Officer has formed with the Diocese.

5.8 Central Council Representatives' report

James Ramsbottom had submitted a written report on behalf of both Central Council Representatives.

James reported that he and Richard Andrew had attended the Central Council weekend in Nottingham. They had attended the Ringing World meeting and were pleased to report that the Ringing World was in a largely positive state.

The Central Council Reps reported that the CCCBR had published new books over the year, including the Core 7 by Simon Linford.

The Central Council Reps highlighted the "Ring for the King" initiative for the King's Coronation, with the aim of encouraging new recruits to ringing.

The Central Council Reps introduced the Inaugural Call Changes competition to be held in June at St Mary's Moseley, with more details to come.

The Central Council Reps stated that, five years following the CRAG Review of the CCCBR, there would be a review of the CC Rules which was due now. They also highlighted that this would be Simon Linford's last year as CCCBR President.

The Central Council Reps were keen for members to liaise with them as representatives, either to ask questions or to present their views as liaisons with the CCCBR.

The Master extended her thanks to both CC Representatives. She highlighted that the Guild was lucky to have two proactive representatives who cared about their role and about the CCCBR.

6. Election of members

Full members

The following full members were elected:

Name	Tower	Proposed	Seconded
Geoff Ridgway	Solihull	Sand Cooper	Malcolm Paulson
Taliya Rubendran	Aston	Don Finnemore	Margaret Griffin
Lance Palmer	Aston	Don Finnemore	Margaret Griffin
Thomas Healy	BSoR	Arthur Reeves	Clare McArdle
Matthew Healy	BSoR	Arthur Reeves	Clare McArdle
George Ellis	BSoR	Clare McArdle	Tracy Stevens
James Ellis	BSoR	Clare McArdle	Tracy Stevens

Life members

Name	Tower
Ann Smart	Knowle
Ruth Shephard	Knowle
Steve Horton	Smethwick
Janet Horton	Smethwick

7. Election of Officers and Officials

The Master Clare extended her thanks to all of the officers and officials who had contributed to ringing events over the last year.

The Master passed on particular thanks to those standing down from office: Jonathan Townsend, John Anderson and Arthur Reeves. Tributes were presented to those standing down from the Master.

Mark Eccleston, on behalf of the Standing Committee and Guild, paid tribute to Clare McArdle, who was also standing down at this AGM.

The following were then proposed, seconded and elected by the meeting to the following positions:

Office	Name	Proposed	Seconded
Master	Eleanor Linford	Standing Committee	Standing Committee
Ringing Master	Phil Ramsbottom	Oliver Bouckley	Margaret Burling
Secretary	Sand Cooper	Arthur Reeves	Tracy Stevens

Treasurer	Tracy Stevens	Oliver Bouckley	Margaret Burling
Archivist	Mark Eccleston	Oliver Bouckley	Margaret Burling
Safeguarding Officer	Trish Everett	Oliver Bouckley	Margaret Burling
Webmaster	Mark Eccleston	Oliver Bouckley	Margaret Burling
Press Relations Officer	Rachel Mitchell	Mark Eccleston	Jonathan Townsend

Office	Name	Proposed	Seconded
General Fund Trustee	Arthur Reeves	Clare McArdle	Tracy Stevens
General Fund Trustee	John Fielden	Adam Knight-Markiegi	Luke Daniels
BRF Trustee	Tony Daw	Adam Knight-Markiegi	Luke Daniels
BRF Trustee	Don Finnemore	Adam Knight-Markiegi	Luke Daniels
CC Rep	Richard Andrew	Adam Knight-Markiegi	Luke Daniels
CC Rep	James Ramsbottom	Adam Knight-Markiegi	Luke Daniels
Independent Examiner	Steve Horton	Adam Knight-Markiegi	Luke Daniels
Independent Examiner	Tom Horton	Adam Knight-Markiegi	Luke Daniels

The post of Henry Johnson Dinner Secretary remains vacant.

In her absence, Clare read an introduction from Eleanor Linford as the newly elected master.

9. 2023 planned events

9.1 HM King Charles III coronation ("Ring for the King")

The Master highlighted this national initiative for ringing, stating that the media publications seems to have sparked interest in learning to ring (as it is intended to do). There had been an upsurge in enquiries to learn ring through the Birmingham School of Ringing meaning the school was now at capacity and had a waiting list.

The Master stated therefore that the BSoR can currently no longer support new ringers within the Guild. However, she was keen to support Guild towers who wanted to teach recruits. On the 28th January from 2pm-4pm, there would be a skills update for ringing teachers. The Master was also keen to host an ART teaching course (1 day) to teach bell handling. However, whilst this offer had been made to members (of which the Guild would pay) there had been no interest from members so far.

9.2 Challenge Day

The Secretary announced that a proposed date had been set by last year's Standing Committee to hold a Challenge Day in April 2023. However, with a new committee, he felt it was now appropriate for that group to decide when and how to hold Challenge Day. More information would therefore be shared.

9.3 National Call Change Competition

The CCCBR National Call Change Competition would be held at St Mary's Moseley. Details to come out soon.

10. Henry Johnson Dinner 2023

The 135th dinner would take place on Saturday 25th February again at the Burlington Hotel. The ticket price would £45 (£35 concession to students). Tickets would be sold using a platform called Participant. Julia Cater has been invited to act as Chair for the dinner. The 2024 dinner chair would be Eleanor Linford.

11. Any other business

11.1

The Master presented George and James Ellis with certificates celebrating their Level 5 Learning the Ropes.

11.2

The Secretary reminded members to be vigilant at Guild practices, especially ground floor rings, as a member had reported a recent theft of his wallet at a Guild practice.

11.3

A member enquired as to what plans were for future 6 bell Striking Contests. The Master reported that this had been discussed by the Standing Committee. Holding such events were a difficult balance between encouraging teams to enter, but not putting other teams off because they felt they would never win. This was in part the rationale for the introduction of the Challenge Day. The Master stated that this would be something for the new Committee and Master to discuss and decide.

12. Date of Next Meeting

This will be held on Saturday 13th January 2024. Time and details to be confirmed.

13. Meeting close

The meeting closed at 3.12pm