

Standing Committee Activity June – October 2020

The Standing Committee:

Clare McArdle (Master), Arthur Reeves (Guild Ringing Master), Stella Tew (Secretary), Tracy Stevens (Treasurer), Mark Eccleston (Archivist and Webmaster), Trish Everett (Safeguarding Officer). The Standing Committee has met several times via zoom since the 16 May Guild Business Meeting and discussed other matters by email as required.

Ringing Master's Report

Throughout the summer, Guild officers have continued to work hard to ensure the Guild remains relevant and valuable to members in a virtual world. We have arranged a significant number of online theory sessions and other social events. Whilst online training certainly has limitations, they have proved useful in overcoming geographical barriers with some presenters living as far away as Penrith, Glasgow and even Australia!

Following a summer break in August, we have recommenced our Wednesday evening sessions, but have broadened our focus. As well as ringing theory training, we have also arranged history sessions and for information Questions and Answers sessions, including one with the Editor of The Ringing World. We will endeavour to continue arranging these sessions until the end of the year, and will review the programme over the Christmas period.

I'd like to offer a huge thank you to all those who have hosted training sessions. All of our training resources are available on our website, with recordings also accessible on the Guild's YouTube channel. Once we are able to practise towerbell ringing again, these resources will remain accessible – they're there to be used!

We have arranged a number of social events including three online quizzes, a successful 'Bake Off' competition in May, raising funds for Solihull Marie Curie Hospice. In July we held a photography competition, judged by Michael, Vicky and Elizabeth Wilby, and Richard and Gill Postill. The themes of 'summertime', 'churches' and 'funniest photo' offered us a variety of wonderful entries which can be viewed on our Flickr site: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/188246618@N07/albums>

Other members of the Guild have continued to make use of Ringing Room, with Phil Ramsbottom leading workshops. Janet Horton has coordinated a number of handbell practices, and some towers are now starting to tentatively ring their towerbells, albeit with reduced numbers, on Sundays. As further national restrictions appear to be looming on the

horizon, the Standing Committee will continue to work to provide members with online training opportunities and social events.

Guild Library

We have had limited access to the Guild Library in recent months, although this has not prevented us acquiring new material to enhance our holdings. For a modest donation, we've received a number of books from the library of the late John Illingworth (one-time Secretary and Trustee of the Guild). In addition, we've purchased Tina Stoecklin and Simon Gay's attractive new book 'Change Ringing on Handbells Volume 1: Basic Techniques' as well as a copy of 'De Tintinnabulis' by Hieronymi Magii, translated by Ann Martin.

In the previous Standing Committee report, I mentioned that I would be seeking alternative homes for a number of ringing books formerly belonging to Andrew Stubbs but which were not required for the Guild Library. Almost all of these titles have now been claimed, although the logistics of transferring these items due to Covid-19 remains a challenge. I was particularly pleased to find a home for the 39 bound volumes of The Ringing World covering 1959-1997, although little interest has yet materialised for the loose issues covering 1998-2020! With regard to Andrew's archival papers, I have liaised with representatives from the College Youths, Central Council and The Ringing World – and a process of relocation and, in some cases, authorised secure destruction, is in hand.

Website

The website continues to receive attention with regular updates in the 'Recent News' section. Our homepage now has a clear link to our 'Training Resources' section which comprises video recordings, slides, presentations and quizzes relating to our regular Wednesday evening training sessions. Analytics from our YouTube account indicates that our recordings continue to be accessed, the most popular being the presentation by Julia Cater about the technique required to ring big bells.

We continue to populate the website with new content. I am currently working on a list of all past officers and officials of the Guild (from 1889 to the present day). This will shortly be uploaded and, if you're interested in the history of the Guild, it makes for fascinating reading.

We always welcome comments and suggestions for improvement: we are committed to making our website a valuable and attractive resource for members whilst providing clear signposting to non-ringers who would like to learn more about us or ringing in general.

We did submit a call in the last Guild newsletter, asking ringers and Tower Contacts to check the details recorded in their 'Towers' section. Covid-19 notwithstanding, this information can quickly become out of date and we want our website to remain accurate. Please get in touch with the Webmaster if any updates are required.

Safeguarding Report

It has been three years since the Diocese held safeguarding training especially for Bellringers. Leadership safeguarding training which has replaced the C2 training which we did is being offered via sessions on Zoom. Trish Everett Safeguarding Officer is currently in negotiations with the Diocese to see if a Zoom session with associated workbook can be tailored to Bellringing - so watch this space!

We will be repeating the safeguarding survey of towers so that we have a clear picture of what is happening across the Guild. We will send this out in the next few weeks.

In the meantime, the latest guidance on safeguarding from the central council can be found here:

https://cccbr.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/SM_Safeguarding_PlusAppendices_2019_Ver_2-Guide-plus-appendices-1.pdf

Appendix C offers a good practice guide for safeguarding in towers, once normal ringing resumes of course!

Full risk assessments should be carried out prior to returning to the limited ringing we are allowed to do.