

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS

NORTH BUCKS BRANCH

**MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Held at The Two Brewers, Olney on Saturday 14th March 2015**

Chairman's Welcome

The officers had agreed that Doug Hird would chair the meeting in the absence of the Branch Chairman, Brian Newman. Doug welcomed 18 members and James Champion, ODG Secretary, to the AGM.

In Memoriam

Members stood in silence to remember Branch members who had passed away over the last year:

Owen Warren of Stoke Goldington
Lou Moodie of Newport Pagnell
Bob Winstanley of Loughton
Robert George of Maids Moreton

Apologies for absence

Ruth Groves (Guild Steward), Hilarie Rogers (Guild Master), Stuart Gibson (Guild General Treasurer), Bob Christopher, Derek White, Phillip Starr, Scott Ayers, Mark Vale, Ted and Becky Fawcett, Hilary, Claire, Alice and Sophie Reading, Alan, Tine, Alex and John Marchbank, Richard and Helen Stanworth, Brian Newman, Roger and Judy Gay, Roy Keeves, Jean Mattinsley, Lesley Belcher, Tricia Rosewell

Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Autumn meeting held at Newport Pagnell on the 13th September 2014 were published in *In Touch* and circulated prior to the meeting. Adoption of the minutes was proposed by Nick Read, seconded by Sheila Ware and agreed by show of hands.

Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

Officers' reports

The Officers' reports were circulated prior to the meeting.

Sheila Watts, Treasurer, had closed both building society accounts and opened one bank account which made the accounting much simpler. The General Fund balance is quite high at the moment, but £750 is due to be paid to Hanslope tower soon. She encouraged towers to make requests for grants. There were still 11 towers who had not yet paid their subs this year.

Adoption of the accounts was proposed by David Phillipson, seconded by Nick Read and agreed by show of hands.

Election of new members

Nominations were received for the following:

<u>Tower</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Proposer</u>	<u>Secunder</u>
Downs Barn	Amanda Kidrowicz	Alan Marchbank	Paul Barrett
Downs Barn	Katie Percival	Alan Marchbank	Hilary Reading
Downs Barn	Chloe Percival	Alan Marchbank	John Marchbank
Great Brickhill	Rebecca Brown	David Middleton	Brian Baldwin
Olney	Tony Locke	Liz Sheaf	David Phillipson
Olney	Karen Paine	Liz Sheaf	David Phillipson
Hanslope	Tracey Fields	Sheila Blenkhorn	Roy Keeves
Hanslope	Lydia Bates	Sheila Blenkhorn	Roy Keeves

Re-elections

Wolverton	Roger Everson	Mick Nimmo	John Mercer
Woughton	Martin Petchey	Brian Baldwin	Jean Mattinsley

All were approved by show of hands.

Election of Branch Officers

<u>Post</u>	<u>Nomination</u>	<u>Proposer</u>	<u>Secunder</u>
Chairman	Graham Bartholomew	Nick Read	Sheila Watts
Secretary	Gary Reading	Graham B'mew	Sheila Blenkhorn
Minutes Secretary	Ann Birch	Linda Maycroft	Liz Sheaf
Treasurer	Sheila Watts	Sheila Blenkhorn	Linda Maycroft
RDL Buckingham	Lesley Belcher	Linda Maycroft	Gary Reading
RDL Milton Keynes	Graham Bartholomew	Sheila Watts	Gary Reading
RDL Newport Pagnell	Doug Hird	Chas Knight	Liz Sheaf
Guild Rep (1)	Linda Maycroft	Ann Birch	Nick Read
Guild Rep (2)	Tricia Rosewell	Sheila Watts	Nick Read
Guild Rep (3)	Vacant		
Newsletter Editor	Nick Read	Linda Maycroft	Sheila Watts
Branch Archivist	Doug Hird	Liz Sheaf	Graham B'mew
Independent Examiner	Alison Fowler	Sheila Watts	Sheila Blenkhorn

(In response to a query, James Champion clarified that the Independent Examiner needs only to be independent of the Branch Committee members.)

All were approved by show of hands.

Doug thanked the officers for their work over the last year.

Report on Actions resulting from 2014 AGM Discussion Groups

Linda Maycroft delivered the report on behalf of Lesley Belcher.

The Committee had worked on the outcomes of the break-out groups at last year's AGM.

Branch Practices

The Committee had tried different timings of the Branch Practices over the last year, holding some in the morning, some in late afternoon and some in the evening. It had not made any difference to the attendance. It was suggested that experimenting with different timings should continue for another year.

Eight and ten bell practices

The eight-bell practices had been a success with good progress being made.

The ten-bell practices had been dropped towards the end of the year due to a lack of support, but Graham Bartholomew was keen to continue to try again to develop a ten-bell band. Terry Page stressed the need to ensure that there were sufficient ringers attending the practices to be able to ring on the ten. Doug said that with electronic methods of communication it should be possible to ensure that there were enough ringers at the practices. Nick Read felt it was worth trying again to link up with other ten-bell towers outside the branch to assist this branch in developing ten-bell ringing. Doug thought that the development of the eight-bell band could move into ten-bell ringing. It was always going to take time to build up ten-bell ringing in a mainly six-bell branch. It was agreed that the ten-bell practices should re-start and feedback taken on board.

Training and Development

The Ringing Up and Down course held in the autumn had been a success with a good mix of ringers attending the course. Another training course is planned for the autumn.

The North Bucks Branch won the striking competition with Towcester Branch for the first time in many years. The new trophy (made by Andrew Spencer of Buckingham) was doing the rounds of the Branch towers.

Efforts are now being made to improve striking within the Branch. A pilot session with some members of the Shenley and Loughton bands is being planned, with help from the Guild.

The Quarter Peal week was a success with another planned for this year.

Communications

The new Branch website had gone live. Any feedback on it would be very welcome.

Tidyclub was now being used for communicating with branch members. There were a number of other features offered by Tidyclub, including sending out texts, which will be considered in the future.

Nick said that at the next committee meeting the officers will be discussing whether there was scope of sending out a regular newsletter by e-mail. More and more people communicated by e-mail so we should consider changing how we communicate.

Social

This year saw the return of the Annual Dinner which was taking place immediately after the AGM.

There had been a Branch outing last April, organised by Graham. Another is planned for August, probably to London. Sheila Watts urged financial caution when planning the outing.

Brian Baldwin suggested that non-refundable deposits for any transport costs be taken in advance to prevent any future losses arising from branch outings.

An Autumn social is being planned which will mean there will be a Branch social event each quarter.

Forthcoming Events

Open Towers day on the 11th April in aid of the Hanslope Tower bell restoration fund. There will be 16 towers open in the Branch.

The ODG Ringing Day is on the 4th May in the Central Bucks Branch with the eight-bell striking competition being held at Winslow.

The ODG AGM is on the 16th May at Cowley in Oxford.

The Branch Social and Striking Competition is on the 20th June at Whaddon.

The National Youth Contest is being held in Oxford on the 11th July.

Any other business

Graham explained that it had been decided that the competition for the Chairman's Cup should be held at the same time as the Branch Striking Competition. However, this year the Striking Competition is being held at Whaddon and it was felt that these bells would be too difficult for inexperienced ringers. It was suggested that the Chairman's Cup competition could therefore be held at the Autumn meeting which this year will be at Bradwell.

James Champion reminded everyone of the Guild Young Ringers Awards and to send in nominations.

Sheila Watts proposed a vote of thanks to Linda for all the work she had done on researching the lives of the Branch ringers who had died in World War One. She also thanked Linda for organising the day's events (the service earlier in the afternoon, the AGM and the dinner) and presented Linda with a thank-you gift.

Doug proposed a vote of thanks to everyone at Clifton Reynes for the service and tea.

The meeting closed at 7.30 pm.