

Guild Reps Report 2016 to 2017

My role as Guild Rep last year was somewhat frustrating. With Hilarie Rogers now well embedded as Master and keen to elicit views from the Branches, it was a good opportunity to learn from others and to share the good practice guidelines that our RDLs (particularly Lesley Belcher, now retired from her role) have been gathering within our own branch. However, family circumstances prevented me from attending not only the AGM on May 21st but also the Autumn Meeting; for this I sincerely apologise to members.

I did make last year's Spring General Committee Meeting in Little Missenden, which was a delightful jaunt, with a marvellous tea and plenty of ringing wares on offer. (I availed myself of a sweat-top and a T-shirt at knock-down prices, and acquired yet another book for my library.) The focus of the discussion was upon good handling and how to ensure good striking, and the summary is available on the Guild's website. There was much talk of ART business (this Meeting clashing with the ART's Conference in Birmingham); in answer to my query as to whether the Guild should ensure representation at the Conference, the Meeting was informed that several members were in attendance there, and the Meeting voted to support the making of a donation to the ART.

At the 2016 ODG AGM in the Vale of the White Horse I believe we had other branch officers representing North Bucks, although our sole representative at November's Autumn Meeting of the Guild in Chipping Norton was Alan Marchbank. As Deputy Master and Chair of the ODG Bell Fund, Alan is a valuable conduit of news and advice for our branch, and we're very grateful for his 'inside knowledge'. The minutes report that these Meetings involved some tidying up of the rules. Delegates were also asked to consider questions of Child Protection, and branches are recommended to ensure that their Safeguarding arrangements for Young People (and vulnerable adults) are up to date and being followed by all Towers. Please see our own North Bucks Branch website for advice on safeguarding matters if you are unsure. It was also announced that the new Bishop of Oxford, Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft, is delighted to become a patron of the Guild.

I look forward to attending the 2017 Guild Spring Meeting which takes place next week, in Harwell (Oxford Branch) and will consider the topic of the Guild's Festival of Ringing. If you have any strong views on this subject, please convey them to me for collation and presentation to the Meeting. A brief questionnaire on the subject has been prepared, but I'd be grateful to receive any informal feedback on the Festival in person at the North Bucks AGM. I should be able to report back to you in the next issue of 'In Touch'.

Finally, I would remind you that we are very keen to recruit a second Guild Rep (and who, I hope, would cover occasions when I can't be present). I'd be delighted to answer questions from any member interested in the position. You do get to visit towers outside North Bucks, and if two travel together it's particularly sociable - so why not consider it? Just three Saturday afternoons a year - with opportunities for a slap-up tea (everyone pulls out the stops for the Guild). How can you resist?

Patricia Rosewell