



Peterborough Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers

Annual General Meeting

10th June 2023 at Marston St Lawrence

Minutes

890. **Welcome:** The meeting began at 17:46 with a welcome to all by the President. He went on to pass on to members appreciation received from Bishop John Holbrook on the ringing undertaken for the Coronation.
891. John Beresford proposed the **Vote of Thanks** on behalf of the Wellingborough branch. He thanked the incumbents for the use of the bells, Revd Nick Leggatt for taking the service, Ian Chapple and Simon Dixon for arranging the ringing, the Culworth branch for providing the tea and the Marston Estate for the field for car parking.
892. **Members who had passed away** since the last AGM were remembered during the service. They were: David Thorne (Seaton), Tony Clarke (Wing), Dorothy Stopps (Cogenhoe), Revd Michael Haighton (Barby), John Nicholls (Caldecott), Dorothy Wood (Rushden), Brian Gross (Towcester branch), Margaret Dean (Kilsby), Ian Burrows (Barnack), Tony Evans (Peterborough Cathedral), David Wilson (Great Casterton), Paul Loxston (Brigstock), John Chambers (Stanwick), John Kinchin (Guilsborough branch), Sue Collett (Moreton Pinkney), John Wilson (Nassington), John Denning (Polebrook), Paul Clewett (Guilsborough branch), Kevan Chapman (Finedon), Janet Café (Green's Norton), Harry Poyner (Whissendine), Stan Watterson (Gayton), Jeremy Orme (Hambleton), Jack Hadley (Wilby), David Rippin (Ketton), Gordon Eggleton (Irthlingborough).
893. Members eligible for **50 years membership** were read out. They were: Christine Downey (Bozeat), David Hamson (Brixworth), Caroline Mitchell (Thrapston branch), Nick Parsons (Northampton), John Riley (Peterborough Cathedral) and Alison Willgress (Nether Heyford). Alison Willgress was presented her certificate by the President.
894. There were proposals for **Honorary Life Membership** for Bridget & Graham Paul. This was proposed at the Northampton branch AGM by Louise Griffiths and seconded by Giles Willson. Giles spoke of their long period of ringing and their accomplishments, service to ringing in Northampton, the ART teaching and the Northampton Hub. There were no comments from the floor and the proposal moved to a vote. The proposals were carried by those present.
895. **The Minutes of the past meetings** were reviewed by members, These were proposed for acceptance by John Beresford, seconded by Anne Cook and the meeting agreed the motion.
896. There were no **matters arising**
897. **The Guild Management report and Accounts** had been circulated to members in the annual report. Alistair Donaldson proposed that this be received by the meeting, seconded by Cathy Dixon and the motion was carried.
898. **Fees recommendations** were read by Helen Allton on behalf of the F&GP committee. These were that:
- Membership remain at £7 for adults and £3.50 for junior members
 - Peal fees remain at 0p per rope
 - Central council fees for the next meeting, to be held in Ipswich in September, are up to £150 to cover return rail fare and 1 night's accommodations.
- These proposals were made by Helen Allton, seconded by Alistair Donaldson and agreed by the meeting.
899. **Bell Fund:** There were no grant applications to be proposed at this meeting. John Beresford, as steward, proposed a sum of up to £2000 to be put aside for minor projects in the next year. This was seconded by Alison Byrnes and carried.

900. Elections of Officers. The following office holders had been proposed and seconded in advance of the meeting, there were no further nominations from the floor. All nominees were, therefore elected.

President	Alistair Donaldson	P: Anthea Hiams, S: Elaine Greatrex
Master	Simon Dixon	P: Gordon Eggleton, S: Jayne Horne
Secretary	Helen Allton	P: Barbara King, S: Jonathan King
Treasurer	Chris FitzGerald	P: Geoff Pullin, S: Jim White
Steward	John Beresford	P: Pam Bailey, S: Kate Inchley
Peal Secretary	Paul Mason	P: Brenda Dixon, S: John Stanworth
Report Editor	Jim & Gwynneth White	S: Geoff Pullin, S: Helen Allton
Newsletter Editor	Jonathan Stuart	P: Cathy Dixon, S: Alistair Donaldson
PRO	Cathy Dixon	P: Barbara King, S: Jonathan King
CC Representatives	Nick Elks	P: Sue Marsden, S: James Thorpe
	Simon Dixon	P: Cathy Dixon, S: Brenda Dixon
	David Westerman	P: Richard Allton, S: Len Hallifax
	Alistair Donaldson	P: Nick Elks, S: Len Hallifax

Alistair Donaldson thanked Jane Sibson for her many years' service as a Central Council Representative, as she is now standing down from this role after 24 years.

There had been no nominations for Safeguarding Officer or Youth Officer. John Beresford volunteered for Safeguarding Officer and was proposed by Alistair Donaldson, seconded by Robert Wood. This was agreed by the meeting. The post of Youth Officer remains vacant.

The Newsletter Editor, Jonathan Stuart, asked for anyone interested in acting as an Assistant Newsletter Editor to get in touch. There's a lot involved in turning around the submissions from branches, officers and other submissions within a short period of time and an assistant to share the load would be greatly appreciated.

901. The Guild Calendar was listed

- a. Summer Festival 2023 – 9th September in Towcester branch. Ringing location tbc, contest and evening ringing at Towcester.
- b. Spring Meeting 2024 – 13th April in Guilsborough branch
- c. AGM 2024 – 8th June in Northampton. Ringing at all 4 Northampton towers, service in All Saints, meeting in St Giles' hall.
- d. Summer Festival 2024 – 14th September in Daventry branch.
- e. The 10 bells for the remainder of the year are 8th July at Rothwell, 9th September at Daventry and 11th November, location to be confirmed. As this is Remembrance day the timing may be adjusted.

In 2024 the 10 bells will continue, taking into account the 100th anniversary arrangements. Date are: 13th January, 9th March, 29th June, 14th September and 9th November.

- f. Second Saturday sessions are ongoing and future events include an intermediate 8 bell practice, Stedman, Grandsire, Plain Bob, running a practice and other courses.

902. The 100th Anniversary committee reported on the planned events for 2024. The intention has been to include ringing and social events to bring the Guild together. And to eat cake. The planned events were announced as follows:

January	Sunday 14 th	Peterborough	Evensong in the Cathedral, preceded by ringing at the Cathedral, followed by a reception
February	Saturday 10 th	Wellingborough	Social event, barn dance, buffet. Moulton Hall
March	Saturday 9 th	Thrapston	Nene Valley ringing challenge
April	April 13 th	Guilsborough	Guild Spring Meeting & 6 bell striking contest

May	Saturday 11 th	All	Tower open day, Guildwide
June	Saturday 8 th	Northampton	AGM, with ringing, service & meeting
July	Saturday 13 th	Wellingborough/ Thrapston	Stanwick Lakes, ringing day out
August	Saturday 10 th	Rutland	Ringing & picnic around Rutland water
September	Saturday 14 th	Daventry	Guild Summer Festival & branch 8 bell striking contest
October	Saturday 12 th	Kettering	Anniversary Dinner Kettering Park Hotel
November	Saturday 9 th	Culworth	Guild Quiz & fish & chip supper in Syresham
December	Saturday 28 th	Towcester	Carol Service at Towcester, preceded by ringing & reception afterwards

In addition to events there will be anniversary merchandise, featuring the anniversary logo. Mugs are available, clothing can be ordered. A calendar featuring the images entered into the photo contest at last year's Summer Festival should be available at this year's Summer festival as should jigsaws featuring a commissioned artwork.

There is also some ringing planned. We aim to achieve 100 peals, including those marking specific ringing events of the past. As not everyone can ring peals we'd also like to achieve 100 firsts, be those first quarters, first as conductor, first time calling call changes, first time ringing a method. This would be open to all members. And we'd like there to be a piece of ringing in every tower across the Guild. Not necessarily a peal or quarter just a piece of ringing.

At the conclusion of this, Jayne Horne spoke to thank the committee for their efforts, putting together the calendar and merchandise. This was supported by the meeting.

903. With the **Central Council** meeting not until September Simon Dixon reported there are no proposals yet forthcoming for discussion. There is a potential proposal to reduce the size of the Council, potentially reducing the number of Guild reps from 4 to 2. However, there are no proposals available at present. Derek Jones raised the question as to the value of the Central Council meeting now that the Central Council Executive has taken over the majority of the Council's activity.

904. The **Rule Change proposal** was introduced by the Secretary, reminding members that the committee had been formed by the GMC in March 2022 and comprised Richard Allton, Sarah Bence, John Beresford, Chris FitzGerald, Derek & Sue Jones. The committee members had worked diligently to bring the proposed rule change before the meeting.

Sarah Bence introduced the changes. These are intended to provide segregation between the Constitution, that defines what the Guild does, and the Rules that define how it is to be carried out. There are to reflect the Charity commission oversight of the Constitution, but not the rules. There is a move to future proof the Rules so that changes can be made without necessarily having to update the Constitution. However, this has been carried out with consideration of the Guild's history.

Sue Jones added that she also endorsed the work the committee had done, always bearing in mind that there is a lot that the Guild would want to continue doing, while reflecting that modern means of communication exist.

Derek Jones described the proposed rules as an evolution, not a revolution. He noted that the last time the Guild's rules had been reviewed was almost 50 years ago, so a revisit was timely. These reflect new posts, such as the 100 club representative which has occupied an anomalous position since it had been introduced. The aim was to keep what was good and bring the rules up to date.

The President thanked the committee for their work and opened the proposal to the floor. Giles Willson expressed some concern about the use of the word 'discretionary' and the potential discriminatory aspect of members over 75 not having to pay a subscription. The wording was discussed, but no alternative wording was suggested by the meeting.

Geoff Pullin noted a number of changes that he considered to be positive improvements and asked a number of questions.

Alison Willgress noted that as the rules were intended to be more flexible with regards to changing them, it would be as well to move to accept these rules as presented, and revisit as and when alternative wording or experience showed that modifications were required.

At this point, the meeting was adjourned, to allow members to move their cars from the field, which was planned to be locked from 7 pm. The meeting was adjourned at 18:45 and restarted at 19:05 pm.

The committee addressed the questions raised, to the satisfaction of those present. The meeting moved to a vote and this was passed, exceeding the 66% of those present to do so.

905. The 100 Club draw was made

Place	Number	Name	Prize
1	4	Lesley Hallifax	£49.17
2	82	Marion Whittaker	£17.88
3	26	James Glover	£11.92

906. Any Other Business included a brief update on the ringing for the Coronation from the Secretary and an update on the progress of the Branch re-organisation meeting.

Alistair Donaldson informed members about the ongoing Come Out on Thursday quarters, those interested should get in touch, there is information in the newsletter and on the website. At times the project would benefit from a few more experienced ringers to strengthen the bands.

The newsletter availability was raised by Jonathan Stuart, thanking all those who had contributed. The next edition will be available at the Summer Meeting, so the print deadline is 27th August. Correspondents will be given notice in advance.

Cathy Dixon informed members that there is a flower festival at Yarwell in aid of their augmentation from 4 to 5 at the end of the month.

907. The meeting was closed at 19:22

Appendix

Top Table:

President – Alistair Donaldson, Secretary – Helen Allton, Master – Simon Dixon, Steward – John Beresford

Members Present

Richard Allton, Jenny Ball, Jim Bence, Sarah Bence, Paul Bennett, Janet Beresford, Alison Byrnes, Ian Chapple, Mary Coleman, Murray Coleman, Anne Cook, Odette Dawkins, Gary Denby, Cathy Dixon, Barrie Griffin, Hilary Hardie, Anthea Hiams, Nick Hiams, Jayne Horne, Derek Jones, Sue Jones, David Kirkham, Joy Kirkham, Andrew North, Carole Pullin, Geoff Pullin, Liz Reading, Martin Rowling, Jane Sibson, Chris Skermer. Jonathan Stuart, Dennis Thrift, Nick Watts, David Westerman, Dorothy Westerman, Graham White, Gwynneth White, Jim White, Alison Willgress, Ian Willgress, Giles Willson, Robert Wood.

Apologies for absence were received from:

Rt Revd John Holbrook Bishop of Brixworth, Hilary Aslett, Pam & Paul Bailey, Sue Baker, Geoff Brown, David Dainty, Brenda Dixon, Nick Elks, Chris FitzGerald, Louise & Selwyn Griffiths, Andrew Gunstone, Robin Hickmott, Chris & Frank Jenkins, Alan Marks, Sue Marsden, Jane Marsh, Liz Moore, John & Penny Pardoe, Jenny Paul, Judith & Robin Rogers