OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD CITY & DISTRICT BRANCH

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting - 15th. November 2003
St. Mary the Virgin, Iffley.

The Chairman, N. David Lane, welcomed the Master Graham Clifton and the members to the Annual General Meeting.

1. Apologies for absence
Rev.Anthony Ellis, Jane and Andy Broadbent, Lesley Smith, Victoria Davey-Wilson, Ron Burgess, Richard Verral, Peter Lloyd, Bernard Masterman, Anthony Cole and all Wolvercote members.

2. Approval of informal minutes of the half-year meeting held at North Hinksey.
Approval proposed by Joy Fizpatrick and seconded by T. Peter Franklin.

3. Matters Arising
There were no matters arising.

4. Correspondence
There was no correspondence.

5. Election of New Members
Jeanne Fay of Iffley. Proposed by Keith Godfrey, seconded by Steve Davies.

6. Presentation of Certificates
Membership certificates were presented to Jennie ~~Street~~ Bridge and Sylvia ~~Bridge~~ Street, neither of whom was present.

7. Reports from Officers
a) Hon. Secretary
The striking competition methods for 2004 will be Plain Bob Major and Grandsire Caters. The secretary urged the members to enter a band for the 8 Bell Competition.
The subscription for the year to come has been recommended to remain at £5.50 and will be ratified at the Autumn General Committee Meeting.
Quarter peal certificates are available and will be redesigned shortly to be more like the membership certificate.
There are Guild badges available from the secretary.
The Reading Branch has a job description for a Branch Training Officer which the City Branch members may consider adopting. The Ringing Master thought that this would be a great idea. Anthony Hughes said that the Ringing master had plenty to do with all the organisation and administration matters concerned with his post and that a Branch Training Officer would be of real help.
Anthony Hughes asked if there had been any more requests for training sessions and Hugh Deam said that he had not given any thought to it during the winter.

The Guild Festival will take place at Newton Longville on 12th June 2004.
The Guild Report will be compiled over the next few weeks. All Guild members may request their own free copy. Last year a number of people failed to claim the copy that they ordered. The Secretary will circulate this information with the request for membership details for the Report. Please remember to complete that information.
The sponsored ringing week is the 22-29 February, 2004. It would be nice if this Branch could make some contribution to this appeal week.
It had been suggested at the Branch Secretaries' meeting that Odd Bob be reduced to two copies per year and that the number of copies circulated to towers should also be reduced to a maximum of two per tower.
The Autumn Annual General Committee Meeting is scheduled to take place in the City Branch in 2004. The Secretary suggested Kidlington because it is the only church in the Branch with adequate facilities; she also asked all members to help with the tea and organisation of the event.
The Secretary brought to the attention of the members that the contribution of the City Branch to the Guild Bell Fund and Restoration Fund was the lowest in the Guild. She suggested that this should be changed through some fund raising activities. The Master told the meeting that in his Branch it had been agreed that an additional £1 was added to the subscription annually.
Proposal:
The annual subscription of the City Branch will be £1 more than the Guild subscription and the additional levy will be donated to the Guild Bell Funds,
Proposed by Katie Lane
Seconded by Joy Fitzpatrick and carried by all the members present.

b) Hon. Treasurer
Simon Edwards circulated the accounts; there were no queries regarding these accounts. The Treasurer reminded the members that sponsorship is available for ringers going on their first course and that students should be recruited for Radley and Easthampstead.

c) Ringing Master
Hugh Deam thanked the members of the Branch for a happy first year. There has been good attendance at Branch practices. Everyone has different priorities for example some people emphasize striking, others complexity of method and others want to take back more skill to their own towers.
The Ringing Master said he hoped that this aim to please everyone had worked and had a lot of people to thank.
He showed the Branch calendar to the members and said that any profit would go towards the City Branch or the Guild Bell Funds. The calendar cost £175 for 50 copies which would be sold at £5 each. The Ringing Master thanked Steve Geoffrey for the competitive price, John Beck and June Steele for the idea. He the thanked Janet and Jonathan for the striking competition certificates and Roy Jones for organising the towers for outings.
He said that he was prepared to get a lot of people through quarter peals even if the standard of ringing was not as good as it might be. He continued to say that there were

lots of towers outside the Branch that do not mind 'scratchy stuff' because they think its good to hear the bells ring.
He mentioned that members had rung first quarters, several had rung quarters with most methods and there had been firsts of conducting.
All in all it had been a pretty good year. Next year there was a good agenda for outings.
There is a scarcity of people who can ring on 10 or 12 or even good complex 8-bell stuff.
He urged members not to be scared if they could only ring plain hunt.

The Chairman asked Hugh Deam to make a proposal for the profit from the calendars.
After some discussion the Chairman proposed that the profit from the calendars should be donated to the Guild Bell Fund. It was seconded by Roy Jones and carried by the members.
Anthony Hughes commented on the debt paid to Hugh Deam for the energy he has put into ringing outings and wedding bands. Thanks were given from the Chairman and members.
Hugh Deam said that he would now like more co-operation with neighbouring branches.
He then said he would like to present the striking competition certificates and The Master, Graham Clifton, was asked to do the presentation.

3rd Wheatley
2nd Iffley
1st Marston

Susan Reynolds then asked a question about Ringing Centres which she said she had only recently heard about.
Graham Clifton explained that there is one at Shinfield, one at Shiplake and one at Aston Clinton. The tower can be booked for the day, there is sound proofing and a simulator. There are facilities for lectures and refreshments.
Susan Reynolds asked if centres were useful. Graham Clifton said that he was in two minds about it especially if it was necessary to travel a distance.
David Lane commented that the concept was initially a Millennium project.
Roy Jones said that the Reading Branch members are in favour of centres especially for helping people learn to conduct.
John Lonsbrough said that they were a good additional facility.

d) Representative
Anthony Hughes went through the agenda of the Autumn General Committee Meeting to be held at Shrivenham on the following week-end.
He said that the Best Kept Tower inspection was now more like a MOT service and that accessibility of towers was becoming an issue. All towers are able to take part in the tower maintenance award.
The Guild subscription includes a sum for insurance.
The ODG Library is now in Caversham and is an under used resource.
The Guild web site is up to date.
The Guild Festival is in Oxford in 2006.
The Guild is responsible for the management of the funds; the Bell Fund cannot support augmentations.

The Central Council meets to discuss ringing throughout the country under the topics of Education, Towers and Belfries and Finance and General Purposes.
Anthony Hughes drew members' attention to the subject of Child Protection and urged members to read the information in Odd Bob and to contact their PCC to ensure that responsibility for minors was being addressed appropriately.
At this point there was a diversion by a member present with a request about insurance. The Master was asked what the minimum age for insurance was covered by the Guild? From the floor came queries about what recommendations for health and safety in towers were a) legal requirements, b) good practice, c) 'covering ones back', d) required by underwriters?
Graham Clifton informed the members that some insurance requirements are essential, for example, when opening the towers to the public.
The Secretary then looked up, and read out, the insurance details published in Odd Bob No. 68, page 25.

8. Election of Officers

David Lane stepped down from the chair having thanked the members for their support during his period of office from when he became secretary in 1990.
Hugh Deam gave a vote of thanks for his contribution to the branch.

The new Chairman was then elected in his absence:

Rev. Anthony Ellis — Proposed by David Lane, seconded by Katie Lane and elected nem con.

Deputy Chair:

Roy Jones — Proposed by Hugh Deam, seconded by Anthony Hughes and elected.

The Secretary had announced her intention to stand down at the half-year meeting but no nomination had been found, so she accepted nomination for another year. The past Chairman emphasised that a satisfactory nomination should be found for next year. Anthony Hughes asked if the job would be made easier if a minute secretary could be found.

Secretary:

Katie Lane — Proposed by Hugh Deam, seconded by Leon Thompson and elected.

Treasurer:

Simon Edwards — Proposed by David Lane, seconded by Roy Jones and elected.

Ringing Master:

Hugh Deam — Proposed by David Lane, seconded by Bob Benstead and elected.

Representative:

Anthony Hughes: — Proposed by Roy Jones, seconded by John Lonsbrough and elected.

Branch Liaison Officer.
There was further discussion about the role of Branch Liaison Officer. It was decided that it would be more effective to have a new officer who would work with the Ringing Master to organise training.
Katie Lane proposed that the branch elect a Branch Training Officer, Seconded by Roy Jones and accepted.
Branch Training Officer:
Jonathan Beale: Proposed by Susan King, Seconded by Keith Godfrey and elected.

89 Reports on Fund Raising Efforts
Hugh Deam has raised approximately £10 by collecting cans.
He also announced that the branch calendar, which, if successful, would be an on-going fund-raiser.

10. Approval of Candidates for Educational Courses
The members were reminded that nominations may be made for candidates to receive funds for Guild courses. Names given to the committee would always be considered for part funding.

11. Any Other Business
Roy Jones spoke about organising a branch social event, for example, a supper, service, barn dance, review, garden party and said he would address the branch at a future meeting.
Leon Thompson spoke about his desire to improve ringing in the City Branch; a special method for Branch Practices may encourage more people to come. The St. Aldate's practice takes place on 2nd and 4th Mondays and if Katie is asked for a special method it can be arranged.
David Lane suggested that John Lonsbrough should be made a life member, but sadly it was decided that he did not meet the criteria.
Hugh Deam said that the Branch Practice in September 2004 would take place on the 3rd Saturday of the month.
He mentioned the introduction of a Young Ringers Award with a ringing log and certificates.
There will be a City Branch outing to the Forest of Dean and if there are sufficient numbers a minibus will be arranged.
Graham Clifton announced he had Christmas cards and books available for sale.

David Lane gave a vote of thanks to the Iffley ringers for organising the AGM and for tea.

8th May 2004.