## OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELLRINGERS BICESTER BRANCH

### MINUTES AGM HELD AT KIRTLINGTON SATURDAY 18th FEBRUARY 2017

**(1) OPENING REMARKS** Mrs Teresa Carter (Vice President) took the chair. She thanked Mrs Penny Wood for taking the service, and Mr Steve Vickars for making the arrangements. She welcomed 15 members of the Branch to the meeting including the Guild Master and called first for a minute’s silence in memory of Celia Lowe.

**(2) APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** Willie Haynes, Stuart Gibson, Colin Lee, Linda Honey, Jeremy Adams, John Harris, Bob Hessian, Kate Hessian

**(3) MINUTES OF LAST MEETING** The minutes of 20 February 2016, which had been made available on the Branch website, were accepted on the proposal of Michael MacArthur, seconded by Anthony Cole, and signed.

**(4) MATTERS ARISING** None. First ¼ Guild certificates were presented to Anne Martin & Steve Vickars. **(5) (5) Correspondence** £1000 had been donated to Oddington (see Treasurer’s report); £500 to be donated towards work on Kirtlington bells (replacement of the clapper bushes and re-greasing the bearings)

**(5) OFFICERS’ REPORTS**

##### Secretary (Kathryn Grant)

* This year’s AGM was held on Saturday 20 February at Caversfield. Although we were relatively few in number, we were able to elect 8 new members from Kirtlington, Stratton Audley and Islip.
* Overall we’ve had 12 branch, and other special, practices in 8 towers this year involving an average of 12 ringers (mostly branch members and welcome visitors) at each. Thanks to Anthony Cole, our ringing master who has arranged them and all the following events - a superb outing in April by minibus ringing at 5 towers in the area east of Hereford; a rope splicing course in July for 6 members at Stratton Audley and the annual striking competition and barbecue in September at Bicester (won by Bicester) and finally a mini-tour ring in October at four of the 3 or 4 bell towers in the Branch with an afternoon on Mark Walker’s mini-ring in Wheatley.
* Three Bicester Branch members made progress at the Radley course and two at the Steeple Aston one. The new Kirtlington band has been doing well with enthusiastic help from the Branch and Oxford City Branch members particularly for whom we are very grateful.

Another noteworthy event was the quarter peal in Bicester in May – first quarters for Anne Martin and Steve Vickars, and first quarter peal as conductor for Jeremy Adams.

*Bicester, Oxon St Edburg*

*Monday 30 May 2016 in 44 minutes*

*1260 Grandsire Doubles*

1   Anthony Cole  
2   Anne Martin  
3   Ron Burgess  
4   Richard Haseldine  
5   Jeremy Adams (C)  
6   Steve Vickars

*Rung on front 6*

*2, 6: 1st QP 5: 1st as conductor*

Finally one of the Islip ringers, Celia Lowe, died in December after a long illness. She had learnt to ring relatively late in life but had been a reliable and much-loved member of the band.

On the proposal of Anthony Cole, seconded by Steve Vickars, the report was adopted. All in favour.

##### Treasurer (Sally Wale)

The Current Account stood at £1,330.13 on 31st December 2016. Subscriptions were £576, and wedding donations were £170. Subscriptions remained at £8 per ringer with £5 going to the guild. Guild subscriptions were £360.

The Deposit Account stands at £7,784.55 with the Central Board of Finance, Church of England Funds. Interest accrued this year was £20.84 compared to £38.70 last year. This was due to the interest rate dropping from 0.5% to 0.4% during the year.

Donations of £150 were sent to ODG Bell Fund and to the Bell Restoration Fund from the Branch.

The slow decline in ringers each year from 2010 has reversed this year and we had 72 paid up members compared to 64 in 2015.

Tower Captains have been reminded about subscriptions and it is hoped that this year we will have a quick response, subscriptions are coming in well.

The accounts have been audited again this year by Chris Rippon the Treasurer of the Islip Village Hall Committee, and I have written thanking him on behalf of the branch.

As Keith Thomas is now a ringer at Steeple Aston, (not in the Bicester Branch), Kathryn Grant has agreed to be a signatory in his place. Changes are being put into action with Barclays Bank now.

£1,000 has been released from our deposit account for the work on Oddington’s bells. I have a copy of Whitechapel’s invoice, but need to know who and when this money should be passed to.

Following a fundraising query raised by Michael MacArthur and discussion that wedding donations (including those from Ambrosden) were given to the Branch as our contribution to the Guild, on the proposal of Anthony Cole, seconded by Michael MacArthur, the report was adopted.

###### Report from Guild Representative (Anne Martin)

The Guild Representative reminded everyone of the website for the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers at <http://odg.org.uk/> and *Odd Bob* (May and November)

*1 Education Committee* Courses catering for a wide range of needs

Basic method ringing (Radley and Steeple Aston), More advanced method ringing (September (Michaelmas) Ten bell ringing (Last one, 4 February, Aston Clinton)

Next course, Radley, 8 April. Although the poster advises that application must be made by 1 February, it may still be worth applying. (They considered cancelling the previous courses due to lack of numbers). Ringing criteria has been more closely defined this year as stays were broken at previous courses. New ringing criteria attached at end of this report.

An award scheme for young ringers, will run again this year, for 2017/18. Under 18’s on 1 April 2017, should consider taking part.

Michaelmas Training day – Saturday 30 September Steeple Aston course - Saturday 28 October

The education committee are keen to hear of other training needs. Contact the Chairman or Secretary of the Education Committee (contact details http://odg.org.uk/officers.php

*2 The Guild AGM* will be held at Tilehurst, near Reading on Saturday 20 May. Arrangements are in hand for the following: A challenge to visit as many towers as possible. Mini ring workshops for methods and tunes on hand bells. Splicing workshop.

Last year’s AGM Activity day was excellent, and included a tour of Whites of Appleton premises and its mini ring, Simulator and dumb bell at Buckland (Buckland is worth a visit just to see its fantastic mosaics), a marvellous lunch and handbells, as well as numerous towers being open.

All members are encouraged to attend the AGM, and activities.

*3 The Festival* in Oxford was poorly attended last year. The Master’s feedback question for the March General Committee meeting will be: Do we still need the Festival in its current form?

*4 Safeguarding Policy*. A draft Safeguarding Policy has been produced by the Guild. However, more items are to be added. It will be discussed with the Diocese at a meeting in February 2017, so the Guild will defer approval of the policy until the March General Committee meeting. There is an article on safeguarding in the November 2016 *Odd Bob*.

*5 Library review* A trial electonic archive is underway. If you are able to help, or provide feedback, please contact the Librarian (Doug Beaumont). Help is required with the design in the first instance. It was proposed that some professional help will be employed for the more delicate items. Information about the trial archive is contained under the link on the home page 'Trial Archive - Information and discussion points'. www.archives.odg.org.uk/

*6 There has been difficulty* getting enough teams for the 8 bell striking competition, possibly because it is held on the May Bank Holiday. There was discussion about moving the date, perhaps to be on the same day as the Spring General Committee meeting in March, (although the date is now set for 2017).

Suggestions for improving the turnout at the 8 bell striking competition to the Master who will take it to the F&GP committee.

*7 Subscriptions* for 2017 will remain as last year (a) Resident ringing Members & Associate Members £8; (b) Non-resident Ringing Members £8 Peal fees 50p per rope

On the proposal of Sarah Cole, seconded by Kathryn Grant, the report was adopted.

##### Branch Ringing Masters (A.C.Cole & J Adams)

It has been another busy year and quite a productive one too. We have seen the relatively new bands at Kirtlington, Stratton Audley and Caversfield improve and spread their wings attending the branch events and other bands continue making progress also. Sadly there has also been a decline in activities at some towers due to lacking numbers, a problem which is mirrored around the country.

12 branch practices have been held with average attendance of 11.6 ringers and 9 Special Practices with 11.8 average attendance! We have also had 2 outings, the first to Herefordshire in April (thanks to Ian Smart and his sister Sarah Connor for organising the outing and Teresa for sorting out the transport), and the second in October around the 3 and 4 bell towers of the branch and to the mini-ring in Wheatley.

Our training course this year was held in Stratton Audley where 6 ringers got tied up in knots splicing ropes. In September Bicester, and Helen & Rob Parkinson, hosted the annual Striking Competition and BBQ which was contested by 3 teams, and judged by Richard White from Woodstock. It was a rather damp evening, but we had a very warm welcome, and the trophy stayed in Bicester this year. We have also managed a few notable firsts –2 first quarter pealers (Anne Martin and Steve Vickars) and one first as conductor (Jeremy Adams) so well done to the three of them. Let’s hope 2017 is equally productive!

On the proposal of Sally Wale, seconded by Michael MacArthur, the report was adopted.

##### Website Manager (Anthony Cole)

As in previous years I have written reports on all branch events as well as one ringing holiday and other ringing related articles. I have also this year undertaken to update the website to enable it to be viewed on both desktop PCs and mobile devices. Please do take a look, particularly if you prefer viewing it on a tablet or mobile device and let me have any comments as to the altered layout on these smaller screens.

On the proposal of Sue Macready, seconded by Anne Martin, the report was adopted.

**(6) ELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS**

The following new members were elected: Henry Parsons (Ludgershall) Proposed: Jan Haseldine S: Richard Haseldine; Louise Goodman (Kirtlington), Caroline Cater (Kirtlington), Ellie Seddon (Kirtlington) all proposed Steve Vickars S: Judith Vickars

**(7) ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Jeremy Adams suggested that all the officers were elected *en bloc* P: Jeremy Adams S: Anthony Cole President: Willie Haynes Vice Presidents: John Harris and Teresa Carter Secretary: Kathryn Grant Treasurer: Sally Wale Guild Representative: Anne Martin Branch Ringing Master: Anthony Cole Deputy Branch Ringing Master: Jeremy Adams Website Manager: Anthony Cole

**(8) GUILD EVENTS**

* Radley course 8 April
* Guild 8 bell striking competition and Annual Ringing Day, on 1 May hosted by the Bicester Branch
* Michaelmas Training Day 30 September
* Steeple Aston Course 28 October
* Autumn General Committee Meeting 25 November Great Brickhill

**(9) DONATIONS TO BELL FUND AND RESTORATION FUND OF ODG**

On the proposal of Sarah Cole, seconded by Kathryn Grant £150 will be given to each fund. All in favour.

**(10) CHURCH COLLECTION**

The collection at the service would be given to Kirtlington.

**(11) DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

AGM on Saturday 17 February 2018 morning (venue to be decided)