

**OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELLRINGERS
BICESTER BRANCH**

**MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT LAUNTON
ON SATURDAY 21st FEBRUARY 2015**

(1) OPENING REMARKS

Mrs Teresa Carter (Vice President) took the chair. She thanked the Reverend Becky Matthew for taking the service, Mr Michael MacArthur and Mrs Anne Martin for making the arrangements, and Mr Anthony Cole for playing the organ. She welcomed the Guild Master and 13 members of the Branch to the meeting.

(2) APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Colin Lee, Jill Bailey, James Champion, Sue McCready, Jeremy Adams, John Harris

(3) MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of 22 February 2014 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

(5) CORRESPONDENCE

The Secretary drew attention to the thanks expressed by the Ringing for England Campaign in its 5th year for those who ring on St George's Day (23rd April) and create any welcome publicity.

The Guild Representative and Secretary asked for comments on the Master's item for discussion at the forthcoming General meeting on (a) what towers have done to attract ringers and what has worked; (b) why do people leave?

Members mentioned (a) church coffee mornings with open tower or at fête; 'have a go' morning/ afternoon open tower; word of mouth; parish magazines; summer church garden party with bell ringing beforehand; wasted resource of ex-ringers but asked to ring for weddings; (b) ill health; other interests taking precedence; personality clashes within a tower; problems of practice night on specific night; child protection accreditation has to be in place which can be a possible practical problem.

(6) OFFICERS' REPORTS

- *Secretary (Kathryn Grant)*

Our 2014 AGM, attended by twelve members (and the Guild steward), was held in Weston on the Green, newly augmented to six on 22 February, followed by a pub supper. Five new members were welcomed to the Branch (two moving from the North Bucks Branch) but we sadly 'lost' Keith Thomas to the Banbury Branch on his move to North Aston – we are grateful to him for being Tower Captain in Woodeaton, looking after the 2 bells in Noke, serving as Guild representative, and expert engraver of the Cliff East shield for many years.

Branch practices have been generally well attended and enjoyed by those who've been able to come. Our Ringing Master and Deputy arranged a special Ringing Up & Down course in July for three branch members. Sadly our Secretary failed to make outing arrangements for 2014 but the Branch BBQ and striking competition was held in Islip again with two teams taking part (one of which contained two of our younger, novice, members, which was good to see). However in July our oldest member, Hilda Jane Jones, died aged almost 98. She was an active member of the Branch along with her family who still ring in Piddington.

Two noteworthy quarter peals have been rung in the Branch this year -

St Edburg's, Bicester

Rung for the installation of the Reverend Verena Breed on her installation of Team Rector on 25 September
1260 Plain Bob Doubles (on front 6)

- 1 Helen Parkinson
- 2 Ian Smart (1st inside)
- 3 Steve Walker
- 4 Jeremy Adams
- 5 Anthony Cole (c)
- 6 Janet Smith

St Nicholas, Islip

Rung to commemorate the 100th anniversaries of Mrs Anna Awdry (mother of treble), Arthur (father of 2) & 80th anniversary of Dennis Mitchell (father of 6). Also in memory of Madeline Gibson, 89 & Marjorie Adams, 88 (both of whom passed away this week) on 2 November

1260 Grandsire Doubles (on back 6)

- 1 Sally Wale
- 2 Kathryn Grant
- 3 Ron Burgess
- 4 Keith Thomas
- 5 Anthony Cole (c)
- 6 Teresa Carter

On the proposal of Anthony Cole, seconded by Sally Wale, the report was adopted.

All in favour.

- *Treasurer (Sally Wale)*

The current account stands at £1,265.55. Subscriptions were £576 and wedding donations were £150. The deposit account stands at £7,725.01 with the Central Board of Finance CoE Funds. Interest of £38.51 accrued this year with a rate of 0.5%. Donations of £75 were sent to ODG Bell Fund and to the Bell Restoration Fund.

Ringers went up by 1 to 72 last year but are likely to reduce considerably in 2015 with only 1 ringer at Brill, Bletchington and Fritwell. Subscriptions were received promptly in the majority of cases. The 2014 accounts have been audited by Michael Wilkinson, outgoing Clerk to Islip Parish Council and written thanks sent by the Treasurer. The 2014 secretarial expenses have been paid in 2015 so, along with the 2015 expenses, will be in the 2015 accounts. On the proposal of Sarah Cole, seconded by Anthony Cole, the report was adopted.

- *Report from Guild Representative (Anne Martin)*

The website <http://odg.org.uk/> includes information on the work of the various committees, library, diary dates, downloads e.g. for methods and tower maintenance tasks, striking competitions and more. The magazine, *Odd Bob* is published in May and November - next Issue May 2015

The activities of the Guild are organised by several sub-committees.

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 Early December

Next course, **Radley , 11th April 2015**. Although the poster advises that application must be made by 31st Jan, it may still be worth applying. (They considered cancelling the Steeple Aston course due to lack of numbers.) Also, ringing criteria will be more closely defined this year as stays were broken at both the Radley and Steeple Aston courses.

- An annual [Training Meeting](#) for Branch training officers (or their equivalent), with discussion and practical session, normally in February. (Held 7th February 2015)
- A [support network](#) to enable ringing teachers in the Guild to share their experience and support each other. (More details on the website)
- A **book stall**, containing popular ringing books that members can see and buy. The book stall is at all major Guild events
- Guild publications for sale: a series of 13 [leaflets](#) on a wide range of topics. (Some of which can be downloaded from the website),
- An award scheme for [young ringers](#), normally run every few years. The most recent was run in 2013/2014. The next will run from April 2015 to March 2016.

Are you a Guild member who is less than 18 on 1st April 2015?

If so, you can enter the award scheme, which is designed to encourage and recognise young ringers' achievements. The scheme runs for a year (April to March) with the awards based on each participant's achievement and progress throughout the year, and they will be presented at the Guild AGM in May 2016.

Special ringing occasions in 2015

- 800th Anniversary of the sealing of the Magna Carta (sealed 15th June 1215) (Ringing Sun 14th June, 2015)
- 300th Anniversary of the first recorded peal (Sat, 2nd May, 2015)

Guild Festival will take place on 9 July 2016 in Oxford. Cathedral service at 11am, Newman rooms for lunch (still being negotiated), then open towers.

Subscriptions remain at £8 for 2015.

Peal Fees remain at 50p per participant for 2015.

Practices for the Ringing World National Youth Striking competition: The Master reported that practices are being held monthly for young ringers in the Guild. At present they have about 20 ringers. She asked if any branches have young ringers who would like to join them. (Competition Sat 11th July, but practices will continue after that). They need to be able to ring Triples. If the branches have anyone they should contact her before asking the young person, as they may have already been asked.

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

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

As in previous years we have had regular branch practices in the first week of the month and special practices during the third week of the month, interspersed with a couple of other events.

The practices have in general been well attended (we have only had one branch practice and one special practice where we didn't have enough to ring, and in both cases the pub wasn't far away!). I am pleased to say that a few new faces have been added to those I would now consider the "regulars" which bodes well for ringing in the branch.

We have rung plenty of Grandsire Doubles and Plain Bob Doubles through the year both at branch practices and special practices, and in the latter half we have had more call changes and plain hunt than previously thanks to a few new recruits who are making great progress. We were also able to ring Plain Bob Minor and Plain Bob Major, Grandsire Triples and even managed some less well known methods such as St Simon's Doubles, Cliffords' Pleasure, All Saints Doubles and Little Bob Minor.

Our outing this year sadly didn't happen, but I hope to arrange one for 2015 – details will be made available as soon as I can.

I arranged a Ringing Up & Down course in July which was attended by 3 branch members; we rang firstly at Bicester and then (after a pub lunch) Caversfield. Feedback has been very positive and the course materials which I made available on the website have since been used in the Towcester area who have held a similar course. My thanks to Jeremy and Mike MacArthur for their help and for Hilary, Anne and Jean for attending.

We held our branch striking competition in Islip again. We only had 2 tower teams this year, one of which featured possibly the youngest average aged team for decades with two of the Caversfield team being under 14yrs! It was a very close run contest with Islip proving the victor by 11 faults. The young recruits from Caversfield enjoyed the evening and have set their

sights on a win next year so the gauntlet has been laid down! My thanks to the Guild Secretary James Champion and his wife for judging, for Kathryn at whose home it was held and the Islip ringers for organising the catering. Bicester hosted the Guild General Committee Meeting in November with more than 50 Guild members attending for the ringing, a (very short) meeting and a (therefore) very early tea. My thanks to all who helped baking cakes and helping out on the day.

This coming year's practices will follow a similar format with mostly two practices a month and following the success and interest in the Ringing Up & Down course we shall be repeating that. I am proposing to have an outing in April and details will be made available as soon as possible.

On the proposal of Sally Wale, seconded by Anne Martin, the report was adopted.

- *Website Manager (Anthony Cole)*

The branch website continues to document all things related to our branch and some 30 articles have been published since our last meeting. Most of these have been reports on the ringing at the monthly branch practices and special practices, but a few other articles of interest have been posted such as details of quarter peals rung for a number of special occasions, ringing for University graduation ceremonies, the ringing up and down course and recently the first of what I hope to be a series of "World Tour" articles documenting the visits of one of our members to towers in other countries. My thanks to Ian Smart and Hilary Walbank for submitting articles during the year to add to the many written by me. Do please keep on the lookout for ringing related articles that might be of interest to other branch members which I will gladly add to our website when I hear about them. As of the meeting the website is down, but it will be fixed shortly.

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

(7) ELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS

The following new members were elected:

Samuel Cole (Bicester)	P: Anthony Cole	S: Michael MacArthur
Nicholas Thomas (Bicester)	P: Anthony Cole	S: Michael MacArthur
Amanda Harris (Bicester)	P: Anthony Cole	S: Michael MacArthur

(8) ELECTION OF OFFICERS

President: Willie Haynes P: Michael MacArthur S: Sally Wale

Teresa Carter congratulated the President on his 50th anniversary as a member of the ODG and the extensive publicity in the *Bicester Advertiser*, *Oxford Mail*, *Oxford Times*, Radio Oxford and *Ringing World*.

The rest of the officers were elected *en bloc* P: Teresa Carter S: Sarah Cole

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

(9) GUILD EVENTS

- Spring General Committee Meeting on Saturday 14 March 2015 (Steeple Aston)
 - Radley course on 11 April 2015 – closing date for applicants 31 Jan.
- St George's Day, Thursday 23rd April, suggested ringing at 6pm*
- 300th Anniversary of first recorded peal on Saturday 2 May
 - Annual Ringing Day, with 20 towers open, on 4 May hosted by the Central Bucks Branch
 - Guild AGM on 16 May hosted by the City Branch
 - Great Ringing Day for 800th anniversary of Magna Carta (sealed 15th June 1215) Sunday 14 June 2015
 - 70th Anniversary of VJ Day Saturday 15 August
 - Michaelmas Training Day Saturday 26 September
 - 6 bell striking competition 3 October hosted by South Oxon Branch (final at Chalgrove)
 - Steeple Aston course on 24 October in Steeple Aston
 - Autumn General Committee Meeting (Sonning Deanery Branch) and Guild 10 bell striking competition Saturday 28 November

(10) DONATIONS TO BELL FUND AND RESTORATION FUND OF ODG

On the proposal of Willie Haynes, seconded by Sarah Cole £100 will be given to each fund. All in favour.

(11) CHURCH COLLECTION

The collection at the service would be given to Launton.

(12) DATE OF NEXT MEETING

AGM on Saturday 20 February morning (proposed for Piddington). It was noted that it would be beneficial if each branch tower could be represented by at least one member at the AGM.