

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

**MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT ISLIP
ON SATURDAY 20th FEBRUARY 2010**

(1) OPENING REMARKS

The President welcomed 9 members of the Branch to the meeting and thanked the Reverend Charles Masheder for taking the service; the organist, Mrs Mary Hatwell, and Mrs Teresa Carter for making the bells available. He also welcomed the Guild Steward (David Joyce).

(2) APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Hilarie Rogers, Valerie Evans, Sue Macready, Jane Carlo, David Little, Peter Nicholas, John Harris, Jeremy Adams, Anthony Bibbings, Steve Jeffery

(3) MATTERS ARISING

The minutes had been published on the website, and were read, accepted, and signed. The Secretary reported that she had been unable to make any arrangements for the proposed trip to Herefordshire and the President reported that an outing was scheduled on 23 May, organised by Simon Cole, should members wish to join it.

(4) CORRESPONDENCE

None

(5) OFFICERS' REPORTS

Secretary

At our AGM in February Keith Thomas replaced Rosemary Henson as Branch Rep and all other officers remained as in the previous year. Two new members were elected.

Branch Practices have continued with a few additional ringers supporting the normal local tower bands – we are very grateful for anyone who visits from other branches! Wedding ringing has been continuing especially in the summer. Caversfield had three weddings in 2009, having had none since 2003! Sadly our Branch outing planned for 25 April had to be cancelled due to insufficient interest and we were unable to hold the Branch striking competition.

St Edburghs in Bicester was out of action, due to refurbishment, from the end of August but was available for ringing again in December. Work also took place in St Mary the Virgin, Ambrosden with ringing suspended until December too.

All in favour.

Treasurer

Sally Wale reported that the 2009 accounts had been audited by Les Harris. There were 79 members in total (an addition of 6 on the previous year). The deposit account stands at £7485.21 and the current account at £1905.38, after donations. Guild subscriptions were £6 and the Treasurer pointed out that those subs which were not paid by the due date mean that the ringers concerned are uninsured.

There was some discussion about the wedding fees paid to the Branch by towers – Middleton Stoney had passed on a proportion but many other towers retained all fees. A suggestion was made that £10 from each wedding fees should be passed on to the Branch for future tower projects. The Secretary agreed to write to Tower Correspondents in the Branch suggesting what the practice should be.

On the proposal of Teresa Carter, seconded by Geoff James the accounts were adopted. All in favour.

Branch Representative

Keith Thomas reported that he had attended two meetings on the branch's behalf: the first on 14 March at Easthampstead and the other at Great Milton on 28 November. At Easthampstead the meeting discussed the state of the Bell Fund and found that even in the present situation it was in reasonable state, though it was difficult to get good rates of interest on the account. The General Committee Meeting discussed making a compulsory element of the membership subs to go to the Bell Fund as happens in some other guilds (Suffolk guild). This was put forward for discussion among members. Insurance: The new rate will be £300 per week for 104 weeks (from £200). Death will be £30k and the age limits are now removed. There is to be rule changes about "Distinguished Members" and that there will be no longer any new "Honorary Members". There was a discussion about the wording of "inappropriate behaviour to young ringers" in the child protection document. The Guild Festival will be on 9th July 2011 in Oxford. There was also talk of getting people to ring for St Georges Day. Training leaflets are now downloadable from the guild website. At Great Milton the meeting discussed various matters arising from the previous meeting. Towers & Belfries reported on the removal of the bells from Balliol College. Sonning tower has been inspected and received a Silver Award. Brian Gatward explained the budget and said that the Guild liability for corporation tax was £10, so it was expected that the revenue would not bother to collect it as it was under £100. Subscriptions for 2010 will remain at £6.00. Under Any Other Business - it was hoped that there would be some ringing for the anniversary of the death of Rev. F E Robinson, the Guild's founder master. The winners of the six bell striking competition were St Mary's, Reading, who were also the winners of the ten bell. The next meetings will be at Shipton under Wychwood and Beaconsfield.

The Branch Representative was congratulated by David Joyce, the Guild Steward, on his report and on the proposal of Fay Harris, seconded by Sarah Cole, the report was adopted.

Branch Ringing Master

Mixed numbers had attended the Branch Practice but the 8 bell practices advertised in Bicester were not able to continue with too few attending.

Teresa reported that Sally Wale had worked hard to organise the April outing but had only had 7 responses so it had been cancelled. However Anthony Cole had planned an outing for 20 March in the Buckingham area.

There had been no striking competition during the year but some towers had rung for St Georges day. On the proposal of Sally Wale, seconded by Geoff James, the report was adopted. All in favour.

Website Manager

Whilst I have been able to keep up to date the events diary, I have not been able to update the pages for a number of months due to problems with the hosting ISP. I therefore took steps to move the website to my home webserver at the beginning of January in order to apply a number of changes that had been pending. This may not be the best long-term solution as my own bandwidth is limited, so I will be investigating other options (such as the guild web server) to host the site.

As usual, anyone able to write reports, articles or tower updates will be very welcome as it gives more life to the website.

(6) ELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS

No new members

(7) ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Teresa Carter took the chair whilst the election of President took place. The following officers were elected.

President: Willie Haynes	P: Teresa Carter	S: Sally Wale
Vice President: Teresa Carter	P: Anthony Cole	S: Geoff James
Vice President: John Harris	P: Geoff James	S: Michael MacArthur
Secretary: Kathryn Grant	P: Anthony Cole	S: Teresa Carter
Treasurer: Sally Wale	P: Teresa Carter	S: Kathryn Grant
Joint Ringing Masters: Jeremy Adams/ Teresa Carter	P: Geoff James	S: Keith Thomas
Branch Training Officer:	Position held	
Branch Rep: Keith Thomas	P: Teresa Carter	S: Michael MacArthur
Website officer: Anthony Cole	P: Kathryn Grant	S: Geoff James
Auditor: Fay Harris	P: Sally Wale	S: Keith Thomas

All in favour

(8) Guild events

Spring General Committee Meeting on 13 March 2010 at Shipton-under-Wychwood

Radley course on 17 April 2010

Annual Ringing Day on 3 May 2010 hosted by the Chiltern Branch

Guild AGM on 15 May 2010 hosted by the Central Bucks Branch

6 bell striking competition on 2 October hosted by the Oxford City Branch

Autumn General Committee Meeting hosted by the EBS Branch on 27 November

(9) Branch Events

Outing confirmed for Saturday 20 March, by car, to the Buckingham area.

Striking Competition 8 April in Bletchingdon (now coinciding with date of Branch Practice)

(10) Donations to Bell Fund and Restoration Fund of ODG

(Amended minutes) £56 each to be given to the Bell Fund and Restoration Fund of the ODG (the decrease from previous years due to the fall in interest rates). All in favour.

(11) Church Collection

The collection at the service (£30.10) would be given to church funds.

(12) AOB

Geoff James thanked the officers for their work through the year.

(13) DATE OF NEXT MEETING

AGM on Saturday morning 19 February in Stratton Audley.

The meeting was closed by the Branch President with prayers.