



**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE
SURREY ASSOCIATION OF CHURCH BELLRINGERS HELD
ON SATURDAY 14TH MAY 2016 AT CATERHAM ST JOHN**

Kate Flavell, General Master, took the chair and opened the meeting at 5:11 p.m.

1. Apologies for Absence

These were received from:

Malcolm McAlister, Sheila Marsh, Martin Foster, Daniel Smith, David and Sally Sayce, Bernard Hawkins, John Squirrell, Hilary Jacques, Sylvia Davies, Brian and Viv Boustred, Anthony and Helen Vere-Hodge, Maggie and Geoff Paul, Vicky Williams, Sarah and Phil Hughes, Cherry Steward, David Underdown, David and Sarah Gilmore and Ed and Val Muller.

Richard Wallis read out the list of members who have died in the past year: Fred Benn (Battersea), Tony Clayton (Life member), Don Little (Coulston), Anthony Middleton (Leigh) and Sue Unsworth (Kingston).

2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Barnes on Saturday, 9th May 2015

These had been made available to members prior to the meeting. They were approved nem con and the Master was authorised by the meeting to sign them as being a correct record.

3. Matters arising

Richard Wallis reported that the General Committee had twice discussed the issue of Honorary Life Membership following the comments made at last year's AGM at Barnes. Each time it was obvious that consensus among those present would not be obtained, as there was a wide range of views.

At one extreme some thought that there should be no Life Members at all, and those that had previously been elected would be required to pay a subscription again. Others presented the issue of such a large proportion of our membership as Life Members as an anomaly that needed correcting. Others said that this was not a problem and that nothing needed doing.

The discussion in General Committee had moved on to how the extra money generated by any change would be spent. This then went further on to how much the subscription levels should be and what services the Association should be providing. This discussion proved more fruitful with the introduction of Fellowship Grants during the year where we have already had three claims to date.

After all that, events then took an unexpected turn when Libby LeBihan's legacy was received, which was to be discussed later in this meeting.

4. General Committee Report & General Fund Accounts

These had been previously circulated to members prior to the meeting via the website. No questions were raised. The meeting authorised the adoption of the Report and Accounts.

5. Belfry Repair Fund & Accounts

5.1 These had also been previously made available to members via the website. There were no questions, and the Report and Accounts were duly adopted.

5.2 The Numbers Club Quarterly and Annual draws were made during the meeting. The winner of the Quarterly draw of £110.43 was number 117, the Beddington Band; and the winner of the Annual draw of £344.98 was number 142, Phyllis Palfreeman of Buckland.

5.3 Sheila Cheesman gave a brief update on the position of the proposed works to the bells at Southwark, which are anticipated to commence on 18th July. The bells are due to come out

of the tower the week commencing 25th July. They are expected back in the tower after Christmas 2016.

- 5.4 Bob Cooles reported that Chris Stanley hopes to order two new trebles for Merton; and a Surveyor is due to report on the viability of the Tower at Clapham Common (St Mary's).

6. **Training Group Report & Accounts**

- 6.1 The Report and Accounts had been made available to members prior to the meeting. No questions were raised and both were approved.

- 6.2 Paul Flavell provided an update:-

The ITTS Module 2 course had taken place in April, relating to elementary change ringing; with regard to learning the ropes, 22 members have passed level 1 to date; some members have also been accredited as teachers; Shirley and Noel ran a Training Day Booster session, with Plain Bob Minor at Addington and Plain Bob Doubles/Grandsire Doubles at Caterham St John; there will be a Steeple Keeping course on 4th June 2016 at Benhilton and there is one vacancy for this remaining; on 6th August there will be a Surprise Minor Beyond Cambridge course to be held at Clapham Holy Trinity - this is for the benefit of those who are competent at Cambridge Minor and who want to ring other Surprise Minor methods, and the course will be limited to 6 students; on 3rd September there will be a conducting course run by Paul Flavell, which will be a classroom session with a maximum of 6 to 8 students; on 4th October 2016 Noel Gibbin will be running an Up and Down in Peal course; and on 5th November 2016 there will be the usual Bletchingley Training Day. Details will follow.

- 6.3 Paul Flavell emphasised that he is happy to accommodate requests for other training events if members ask for them.

7. **Communication Officer's Report**

Again, this Report had already been made available to members via the website. The report was duly adopted by the meeting. The Communication Officer, Chris Baldwin, had nothing further to report.

8. **Proposal from General Committee**

- 8.1 Richard Wallis explained that there was around £2,000 in the Peal Fund, which had originally been set up to meet the costs of writing up the Association Peals in a bound Peal Book by hand. However, Peals from 2000 to 2014 have been recorded electronically and printed, and this was paid for by an anonymous member. The Association has now ceased writing up peals in Peal Books by hand and, as a result, it was felt that the fund was no longer necessary. The General Committee had determined to split the remaining monies between the BRF fund and the Training fund. Richard Wallis duly proposed this motion and it was seconded by Patrick Wills. Shirley McGill commented that she had been under the impression that the Peal fees had stopped being payable from the date of the last General Committee Meeting so she had not collected any subsequently. There was a small amount from January that she was still holding. The effect of the motion and decision was effectively that the decision made to collect peal fees at the 1983 AGM was now reversed. The meeting voted nem con for the adoption of this motion.

- 8.2 The General Committee had made a decision to make a donation of £100 to the Ringing World. It had been considered to be an appropriate donation which does not need AGM approval. All members were happy with this.

9. **Libby LeBihan's Legacy**

- 9.1 Richard Wallis reported that details of the legacy had been sent out to members via the Yahoo Groups and had been mentioned in the Newsletter. Libby was a former Benhilton ringer who bequeathed the Association £47,000 on her death. There had only been a few suggestions received from members as to how the gift should be utilised, all differing. The issue had been discussed at the March General Committee Meeting but no recommendation for today had been provided. The Guildford Diocesan Guild had received a large legacy and had proceeded to request bids from their members as to how the funds

should be spent, the result of which is awaited. The matter of how to use Libby's legacy will be reconsidered at the June General Committee Meeting.

9.2 Kate Flavell then indicated that a decision had been made by the General Committee at the March meeting for a permanent memorial to Libby in the form of a £3,000 donation to Merton, on the basis that one of the new trebles is to be named for Libby. It was proposed that Libby's family would be invited to a service of dedication in due course. However, there was insufficient time today to discuss what could be done with the remainder of the legacy.

9.3 Jo Drew asked whether the legacy funds had been sitting in the Lloyds current account from the end of 2015. Richard Wallis responded that the funds would be moved when Lloyds Bank had finally sorted out the change in the bank signatories that had been previously requested by him.

10. Forthcoming Events

10.1 Andrew Howell (Southern District) reported that there were a couple of places left on the Southern District Beginners' outing on 28th May, and that he had got a strong band of helpers for this event. On 25th June there is the summer barbeque with an informal Striking competition.

10.2 Caroline Prescott (Northern District) reported that the Surprise Major practice will take place next Friday at Carshalton, and all were welcome; with regard to the impending Quarter Peal week, she recommended the Yahoo Group as a good way to find ringers to make up a band; there will be 12 bell practices on the first Tuesday of each month at Croydon Minster; there is also a 12 bell practice on a monthly basis at St Peter's, the entry level for which is Stedman Cinques, and all are welcome; the Northern District outing on 18th June is to St Albans and the proposal is that everyone travels by train - lunch would have to be booked so those people wishing to attend needed to notify Caroline.

11. Election of New Members

11.1 The following were proposed under the 30 year rule and then declared as Honorary Life Members: Jeff Cousins, Paul Flavell, Anthea Rata, Matthew Rose, Richard Sweet, Ken Tidy, David Wallis, Richard Wallis, Mike Wigney, and Jill Wigney.

11.2 The following resident members were elected: Carol Hornsby (Mitcham), Jimmy May and Sophie Jermine (Barnes), Barbara Taylor (Coulsdon), Heather Brooks and PK Van De Meure (Lingfield).

11.3 There were no ratifications required and no non-resident members proposed.

12. Election of Officers

The President, Bob Cooles, took the chair.

Bob said that there has been some contention as to how elections have been managed in the past and this needs to be resolved. He proposed that a person should be identified for a role, and then proposed and duly seconded by members. General Master – Kate Flavell was proposed by Caroline Prescott and seconded by Lawrence Davies.

General Secretary – Richard Wallis was proposed by Matthew Rose and seconded by Chris Ridley.

Assistant Secretary – Simon Beirne was proposed by Richard Wallis and seconded by Chris Baldwin.

BRF Secretary and Treasurer – Robin Leale is standing down after many years and was thanked for his hard work. Malcolm McAlister was proposed by Kate Desbottes and seconded by Simon Beirne.

Training Officer – Paul Flavell was proposed by Mike Bangham and seconded by Noel Gibbin.

Communications Officer – Chris Baldwin was proposed by Michael Uphill and seconded by Paul Flavell.

All of the above nominees were declared elected.

Andrew Robinson had been nominated as the Independent Examiner, but this post did not require to be nominated and seconded, so Andrew was also declared elected.

13. **Election of Central Council Representatives 2017-2019**

13.1 The Master reported that Representatives had to be elected every three years. It is necessary to elect our Representatives now for the new triennium which is due to commence in May 2017. The current representatives are: Jeremy Cheesman, Kate and Paul Flavell and Richard Wallis.

13.2 Mike Bangham said that there are a number of contentious issues to be considered, to include the future of the Central Council. The membership did not know what the current and proposed Representatives' views are on these various issues which meant that the members were unable to make an informed decision on whom to elect. Jeremy Cheesman pointed out that Central Council papers were published before the AGM and perhaps it would be useful to bring those to the AGM to have future discussions. Kate Flavell indicated that she would be happy to talk around Central Council issues afterwards but Council members had only just received the papers for the meeting so will not yet have had time to form a view. Consideration could be given as to how Central Council issues can be aired and discussed in the future.

13.3 The existing Representatives that had been nominated to stand again were elected nem con.

14. **Future Annual General Meeting on Saturday 13th May 2017**

This is due to take place in the Northern District, and Northern District Towers were invited to host the meeting.

15. **Any other business**

15.1 Kate Flavell said that there was an e-mail from Roger Booth to the Northern District Yahoo Group, involving St Peter, Walworth, which she duly read out. See attached annex. Kate said that this was an exciting opportunity and the Association should help with this. It involved mass recruitment and teaching, although the notice given by Roger was short.

15.2 Noel mentioned the annual Caterham Festival and Street Party. The Charmborough Ring has been booked for this event by Milica and help is required in setting the Ring up. It is taking place from 1 p.m. on Sunday 5th June 2016 and helpers to man the ring are required. Offers of help should go to Milica Reardon.

15.3 Sheila Cheesman again referred to the re-hang project at Southwark Cathedral and reminded the meeting that the BRF had made a grant of £20,000 to Southwark. Sheila is raising further funds for the work by abseiling down the Spinnaker Tower at Portsmouth over the Central Council weekend at the end of May. She has a sponsorship form with her but was not pushing members to sponsor her because she felt that Surrey had already been very generous in its grant.

15.4 Lawrence Davies reported that he had the bookstall with him today.

15.5 Richard Wallis reported that, according to David Underdown, there were eight members of the Surrey Association who died in 1916 in the Great War, and details of these ringers are on the Association website and in the latest Newsletter.

15.6 Caroline Prescott reported that she has enough under-18 members to sign up for the Ringing World National Youth contest in July. The team will be ringing call changes. There are 24 bands entering from across the country. Caroline is arranging more young ringers events in the Association and will alternate the venues between both Districts. She feels that she is slowly getting the young ringers to gel as a group: She organised a session for them at Kingston followed by 10 pin bowling and a meal, which was funded by a Fellowship Grant obtained from the General Committee

15.7 Chris Ridley proposed a vote of thanks to Richard Wallis for producing the Annual Report again.

15.8 Jeremy Cheesman asked those members present to assist with distribution of the current year's Annual Reports that he had brought with him.

The meeting closed at 6.02 pm.

Confirmed as an accurate record:

Richard Wallis, Secretary