

Society of Cambridge Youths AGM

Monday 22nd February 2016, 8.05pm in the Ringing Chamber with the president in the chair

MINUTES

Chair: Rev'd Dr John Binns, President

Present:

Joanathan Agg, Oliver Bardsley, Susan B Binns, Will Bosworth, Alison Brooke, Patrick Brooke, Megan Corless, Stephen Croxall, Barry Johnson, June Mackay, Liz Orme, Phillip Orme, Alf Pipe, Cecilia Pipe, David Pipe, Henry Pipe, Ben Ricketts, David Richards, Jonathan Shanklin, Catriona Shearer, Richard A Smith, George Unsworth

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from: Claire Barlow, Dorothy Brooke, Michael O'Callaghan, Camilla Haggett, John Sherwood and Luke Smith. Phil Wilding joined the meeting during agenda item 4.

Frank King is noted as absent, and the Society conveys its best wishes from the meeting.

2. Minutes of AGM 2015

3. Minutes of EGM held July 2015

These items were taken together. It was confirmed that several typographical errors were not present in the minute book. Both sets of minutes were proposed by Phillip Orme, seconded by Richard A Smith and accepted by the meeting.

4. Matters Arising from 2015 AGM

Item 3 - Matters arising from 2014 which are ongoing.

Child Protection Policy

New Safeguarding guidance has been issued by the CCCBR in conjunction with the Church of England as of December 2015. The main points are that tower captains and those directly teaching children should be recruited in accordance with the Church of England Safer Recruitment Practice guidance and must also be checked via the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Phil Orme confirms that he became DBS checked. Emma Dunn in the church office is co-ordinating DBS checks.

ACTION: Ensure that the new master and those working with children are DBS checked. The secretary will give John the names of those to be DBS checked.

ACTION: Attach CCCBR guidance notes to the minutes.

John Binns states that a review of the Great St Mary's Child Protection document has taken place, but the officer names have not been updated. A member of the congregation, Veronica McDouall,

has been appointed as the person to handle specific questions on individual cases, and her contact details can be found on the main church noticeboard.

Keys and access

During the year a moveable screen has been placed at the south end of the narthex, which John Binns confirms should be moved at times of need (for example, access on Sundays and in the event of fire).

There has also been a review of all keys to the church and the result is that all of the church locks are to be replaced. Patrick has been liaising with the church and Phil Orme to establish access requirements. Robert Smyth will be able to clarify who will have access to which parts, and the changes are expected to be implemented soon. The main driving force behind the change is for fire brigade access. The bell chamber is expected to remain separate as it is currently.

Fire safety

There was a hanging question over fire escape signage in the ringing room. David Richards points out that escape signage is not a requirement if there are trained individuals available to direct people to fire escape routes and assembly locations.

Jonathan Shanklin says there may be occasions on which there may be a strong majority of people without training in the ringing room (for example, visiting bands). It was countered that these are unusual circumstances, and it is more relevant that the regular members of the band are not clear on the fire procedures.

It is confirmed in the meeting that the main exit route is via the choir vestry and West door, with an alternative route via the font. Will Bosworth asks whether there is a chance that the glass doors will fail to open in an emergency, Patrick Brooke comments that he thinks they are designed to open on loss of power. Richard A Smith also has documented a procedure to escape via the nave roof.

The issue of fire evacuation will be referred to the Head Verger and will be on the agenda for the PCC meeting at the start of March. The fire officer has also been asked to be vigilant to look for sources of ignition on the tower staircase.

Jonathan Shanklin asks whether there is an evacuation plan for either medical or accident in the ringing chamber. Phil Orme says there was a smoke test several years back, but there was also a test exercise last autumn to evacuate a casualty from the top of the tower or the ringing chamber.

Item 6 – Quark Peal board

David Pipe reports there is no progress, but it will move forward before the next AGM.

Item 7 – Rebushing of the clappers

There is now scheduled downtime for this and the details are covered in the Belfry Maintenance Officer's report (item 8 this year).

Item 7 – Tidyness of ringing chamber and belfry

The state of the belfry and ringing chamber has improved considerably and John Binns offers his thanks to those who keep it in good order.

From 11b – Tower hoover

Sue Binns updates us that several hoovers have been tried, but many were not suitable. George has loaned a Hoover to the tower and it has done a good job. The ringers will investigate replacing the Hoover. Patrick Brooke says that he may have one available – that will be taken into consideration.

5. Election of New Members

The following were proposed by Phil Orme and seconded by George Unsworth.

Megan Corless (Student)
Alban Forster (German-speaking customer adviser)
Ben Ricketts (Teaching Assistant)
Catriona Shearer (Teacher)

They were elected en bloc with no need to count votes.

June Mackay asks if there is a requirement for a minimum number of services. It is confirmed that there is guidance but no requirements. Liz Orme also says it is important for building a centre of 12-bell excellence.

6. Master's Report [Phil Orme]

Phil started by saying he was very pleased that there seems to have been a response to the request to be early to ringing sessions. Phil feels that sometimes it seems to be near a cliff-edge - we can go from not being able to ring on 12 to Bristol Max and that is a difficult situation for those needing to progress. Paying attention to the CAS output is important and thanks go to David Pipe for preparing it.

The Society is reminded it should aim for mistake-free touches. There is a stark difference between Sunday morning ringing and evening ringing. For evening ringing there isn't the same focus, often not ringing on 12-bell and relying on support from the Guild. Attendance has been gauged from Frank's ever-useful figures. Frank's absence at this meeting is missed.

The post-Mattins ringing slot has been very popular and there have been a wide variety of people to use the bells.

Teaching has been a success and thanks go to Jonathan Shanklin and Oliver Bardsley. It has dovetailed with Bene't's ringing nicely.

There were three competitions this year. Thanks go to David Pipe for managing the 12-bell entry in which the band did really well in the eliminator. There was a short-notice entry to ring in the Worthington Cup 10-bell competition, held at Duffield. Barry Johnson organised the band for the Ely DA entry to the Ridgman Trophy which was well-supported by the Youths, providing the second ever win for the Association.

Personal thanks also go to the band for ringing for Cathy's wedding. It was also very special to ring for Rosie Brooke's wedding.

Thanks also go to David Richards for organising a stupendous dinner at Sidney Sussex.

There were some notable handbell performances by the society during the year. Henry Pipe became the youngest person to ring a long-length in hand. Also Alf Pipe has rung a handbell peal of treble-dodging minor.

Several of the Society performed at Utrecht Festival *Oude Muziek* – taking our sport to Europe.

Thanks go to the other officers, David Richards, George Unsworth and Richard A Smith.

7. Treasurer's Report [George Unsworth]

a. Accounts

The Society reported a loss of £528 over the year, mainly due to ropes which were due to be paid last year which came into this year. Miscellaneous expenditure is for the touch book and compositions.

Will Bosworth asks how easy it is for ringers to donate in bulk and apply GiftAid to the donation. George says that it isn't possible to GiftAid to the ringers directly, but bulk donation is possible. John Binns says that it may be possible to GiftAid to the church which could grant back an equivalent amount to the ringers. It may be possible to organise something like that on an ad hoc basis.

The vote to accept the accounts was proposed by Sue Binns and seconded Barry Johnson, passed nem. con.

b. MCF Bell Fund

Tom Culver should become the new church fund manager for the Faulkes fund.

8. Belfry Maintenance Officer's Report [Richard Smith]

Fitting and replacing ropes has been the main business of the year. There have been no new rope orders since the last AGM.

The orders from Ellis had become very long at round 18 months and the quality of the last batch was very disappointing. There are several Mendip and Avon ropes currently on the tower in a deliberate attempt to test the market. A new tenor rope will be required in the next year and, so far, there is a slight preference for Mendip over Avon.

The budget should include £900 for 5 ropes, but we may not need to spend that much as we will want to replace the full set the next year in preparation for the 12-bell final in 2018.

The proposed date for rebushing is 31st May to 10th June. Richard will be looking for a volunteer to drive up on the Tuesday. There will be no service ringing on 5th June or practice on 6th June. Expenses should be paid for the transport.

The stay on the 4th was cracked before Christmas. There are 4 spare stays for the front and one for the back bells. There is also a proposal to replace the slider on the 10th which was damaged when the clapper came out.

The simulator is slightly temperamental and we should consider a service or full replacement. Patrick Brooke asks how long has it been there. The consensus seems to be that it has been there about 15 years ago - £1000 was spent at that time. One of the reasons a simulator box was purchased was to make it clear that it wasn't a computer to help reduce the risk of theft.

9. Election of Officers

| Post | Nominee |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Belfry Maintenance Officer | Richard A Smith |
| Independent Examiner | Michael O'Callaghan |
| Master | Jonathan Agg |
| Secretary | David Richards |
| Treasurer | George Unsworth |

There being no contest for the election, the President moved that the new officers were returned without vote. There was no dissent.

John Binns offers his thanks to those willing to stand.

10. Feasibility study for a new ring of bells in Cambridge

Barry Johnson has been looking for a host tower for the last three years. It was discussed at the Society AGM two years ago. A proposal for work at St Clement's (on Bridge Street) has been brought to the meeting. There was a request for any questions about the proposal.

June Mackay for a report on the handbell session after the service at St Clement's on 21 Feb 2016. Barry replied that it went well and Gareth Davies gave a talk about the history about ringing. There is a link between the Cambridge Youths and St Clement's - William Anderson was a founder member of the Youths and is buried at St Clement's.

George Unsworth has reservations about the project from a fundraising point of view. We have heard Frank King say that raising money for bells is 'no problem', however, George thinks that St Clement's is in a particularly difficult situation.

The church is trying to build an application for restoration. This is one reason that it is a good time to progress as it could be part of a Heritage Lottery Grant.

Sue Binns asks if the Russian Orthodox church would be using the site. The concern is about the stability of the current congregation. If there's a significant shift in the congregation, would access to the bells be maintained. Barry replied that the likelihood of the Russian Orthodox taking services in the church was quite low.

Alison Brooke asks what the approximate total fund would be required? The estimate is around £250k total and Barry Johnson indicates that he is personally willing to give money to the project – he says that he has had a lot out of ringing and would like to put something back.

Jonathan Agg clarifies that we're proposing to put somewhere between a quarter and third of the Youths funds towards an early stage investigation. That was confirmed.

Patrick Brooke asks if we spend the money on St Clement's, does that compromise our ability to get involved in another project? There is no direct answer to that point.

Cecilia Pipe asks whether there is any EDA funding available. Barry responds that the Recruitment and Training Subcommittee (RATS) doesn't envisage this type of expenditure. The Stretham Ringing Centre is going well, but it's a small project in terms of expenditure.

Will Bosworth asks what other potential uses are for the Society's capital. The reply is that It's mainly a rainy day fund, but there is also backup for the bells at GSM from the Faulkes fund.

Jonathan Shanklin points out that the SCY numbers are declining, so it is good to have a local teaching centre. Phil Orme points out that the location of St Clement's is ideal.

Barry Johnson proposes the motion "The Society is willing to fund a feasibility study for installing a ring of 6 bells in St Clement's Church, Cambridge, with appropriate facilities and access for use as a centre for promoting and teaching bell ringing, up to a maximum cost to the Society of £6000."

The motion was carried nem. con. with 16 votes in favour.

11. Donation to the Ely DA

Last year a donation went to the RATS fund. Barry Johnson speaks about the Training Fund. It was successful at raising funds in its first two years and has a few thousand in the bank.

There is no proposal for a donation this year.

12. Future events

a. Peals

Phil comments that Surprise Maximus attempts have been difficult to organise and some have had included members from outside. Peal slots for 2016 have been booked and will be left with the Master to organise.

b. Other events

2018 12-bell

There was a thought we might need to use the Guildhall which would have been expensive. It has been confirmed that we will have access to Senate House Yard and the Combination Room, although we will not be able to use the latter for food. We are looking to see what will be able to do in the Church. It is a shame that Michaelhouse cannot be used, but that is a definite condition of the catering franchise.

Society Dinner

The dinner this year was planned at relatively short notice this year. There is a proposal to plan further ahead for the next dinner, with a request to hold it in 2017.

Ridgman Trophy

There is a question as to whether the Ridgman will be held at GSM in 2017. Is there a date agreed? If not, then it is a good chance to move the date to better suit the Guild (normally it clashes with exams).

Southern Universities Association

The SUA will be in Cambridge in November 2016.

13. AOB

a. Sunday ringing

Dave Richards to ask whether the society would like to consider any way to focus on Sunday evensong ringing. Broad suggestions will either be invitation ringing every other weekend, focus methods (non-invitation) or going out to the wider EDA to encourage ringing on Sunday afternoons.

Turning over the slots to invitation ringing is difficult because people might not be able to attend and therefore could be a net loss. Inviting other bands to ring may increase turnout.

John Binns confirms that service timings to stay as they are for the foreseeable future.

Cecilia Pipe notes that it is a long way to come in for two sessions on a Sunday. Will Bosworth proposes the St Paul's plan, whereby people sign up for a session on a Sunday (morning or afternoon) so you know who is coming (and when a particular time is 'full').

John Binns confirms there is an equivalent problem in the congregations and choirs. There is a proposal to move all evensongs back to GSM.

New item

The EDA Programme for this year has been published and is on the noticeboard.

John Binns asks us to minute that the PCC wants to thank the ringers for the ringing over the last year as it enhances the mission of the church.

Closed at 9.48pm

Minutes taken by David Richards