

GUILD OF DEVONSHIRE RINGERS

GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING

Held at Newton St Cyres Village Hall, Saturday 21 January 2017

- CO17/1 Alison Waterson (President) opened the meeting by welcoming all committee members, especially those attending for the first time; there were 33 members present. Nigel Birt (Master) led us in an opening prayer.
- CO17/2 Apologies for absence were received from Marion Baker (VP), Brenda Coley (East Devon Sec), Janet Deem (Insurance Officer), John Foster (Report Editor), Rodney Horder (Mid-Devon Chair), Mary Mack (VP), Norman Mallett (VP), Matt Pym (Aylesbeare Branch Sec), Cath Saunders (Mid-Devon Branch Sec), Fergus Stracey (VP), Lester Yeo (VP).
- CO17/3 The Secretary was asked to convey the best wishes of the members to Cath Saunders (Mid-Devon Sec) who was prevented from attending by illness.
- CO17/4 Losses by death: John Clifton (Crediton), Jan Earle (Exeter, St David), Margaret Egglestone (Crediton), Julie House (Laira), Nigel Stroud (Upton). The meeting stood in silence to remember them.
- CO17/5 Minutes of the January 2016 meeting were approved and signed as a true record. (p: Lynne Hughes, s: Ian Smith, carried nem con).
- CO17/6 Matters arising from the minutes: John Martin (Secretary) reported that the Recruitment & Teaching Working Party had been unclear about the scope of any updates needed to the Welcome Leaflets (CO16/5). Leslie Boyce (Librarian) agreed to identify the updates needed and pass this information on to John Martin and Tim Bayton (Education Officer) for implementation.
- CO17/7 John Martin reported that the proposed discussion regarding electronic publication of the Guild Annual Report (CO16/10) had not taken place at the 2016 AGM. John noted that John Foster (Report Editor) had again proposed this for formal discussion and after some discussion it was agreed that as an initial step John Martin would explore the possibility of publishing the draft report in its entirety online to allow proof reading and checking.
- CO17/8 John Martin reported that some concern had been expressed about relocating the Guild library to St Marychurch (CO16/11(c)) because of damp conditions and that the search was continuing.
- CO17/9 John Martin reported that the proposed discussion regarding increasing the price of a subscription to Ringing Round Devon (CO16/11(g)) had not taken place at the 2016 AGM. Both Sue Sawyer (Treasurer) and Ian Campbell (RRD Editor) advised that the production costs are currently being covered although a continuing watch would need to be kept particularly with regard to copies distributed by post.
- CO17/10 John Martin reported that the constitution proposed for the DenMisch simulator (CO16/16) had not been considered at the 2016 AGM and that this would now be brought forward at the 2017 AGM.
- CO17/11 Secretary's Report: John Martin had circulated his report prior to the meeting. Alison Waterson invited comments and questions.

- CO17/12 Treasurer's Report: Draft accounts had been circulated in advance of the meeting and Sue Sawyer presented a summary.
- Alison Waterson thanked Sue for preparing the accounts and invited comments and questions.
- Leslie Boyce suggested that a sum of £300 be transferred to the Education Fund but Tim Bayton felt this was too much and after a short discussion the proposal to be put to the AGM was revised such that the Education Fund be topped up to reach a total of £500.
- John McKee (N/NW Branch Sec) proposed acceptance of the draft accounts, seconded by Michael Cannon and (Exeter Branch rep) carried nem con.
- CO17/13 Subscriptions: Sue Sawyer recommended that subscriptions should remain unaltered at £6.00 for 2018.
- CO17/14 Expenses for Central Council Representatives: These were once again reviewed by the meeting. It was felt by all that the current level, covering reasonable expenses, was working well. John Martin drew attention to the fact that this year's meeting would be held in Scotland and so the level of expenses this year would therefore be higher than in recent years.
- CO17/15 Production of Guild Annual Report: John Foster had produced a report which was circulated prior to the meeting. There was a discussion about publishing and distributing the report so that members may receive a copy prior to the Guild AGM; this suggests a target distribution date of the third Saturday in May so that the printed copies may be distributed at the Cathedral practice. John Martin agreed to discuss this timetable with John Foster.
- CO17/16 Reports by other Officers: Alison Waterson thanked everyone for their work during the year.
- (a) Peal Secretary: Mike Mears (Peal Secretary) reported that the Guild rang 220 peals in 2016; 8 more than in 2015 and included 15 on handbells, an increase of 11 on 2015. It is the 10th consecutive year that we have rung 200 and at end of 2016 Guild total stood at 6657. Thorverton was the leading tower for 26th consecutive year, followed by Kings-Ting-Tong, Wobbly Bob's Campanile and Exeter St Mark. During 2016 Thorverton passed the 1100 mark and its Guild total now stands at over 900. Seven Surprise Minor was at the top of the method list followed by 41 Spliced S Minor and Bristol S Major. Only one first pealer: Oliver Bates, but one of the first peelers from 2015, Rebecca Harrison, has now rung her first of Bristol S Major, Yorkshire S Royal and Cambridge S Maximus. Lester Yeo at last scored his first peal as conductor and we were all impressed by his heavy bell skills on the tenor at Wobbly Bobs Campanile. David Hird and Ian Fielding enter the leading conductors list for the first time and John Martin became the 9th person to reach 100 as conductor for the Guild. Peals of note include the ladies peals of Yorkshire and Cambridge Maximus at South Petherton and the married couples peals of Royal and Maximus at Lyme Regis and Withycombe Raleigh respectively.
- (b) Quarter Peal Secretary: James Kirkcaldy (Quarter Peal Secretary) had already circulated his report prior to the meeting and members were invited to make observations or ask questions.
- (c) Librarian: Leslie Boyce had already circulated his report prior to the meeting, and members were invited to make observations or ask questions.
- (d) Towers and Belfries Advisers: Ian Smith and Ian Campbell had already circulated their report prior to the meeting and members were invited to make observations or ask questions.

(e) Education Officer: A report detailing the Education programme carried out over the year had been circulated by Tim Bayton before the meeting. Lily Neal (Aylesbeare Branch rep) asked for clarification of the date for the next Young Ringers' event.

(f) Clerk to the Devon Ringers' Council: Ian Avery (DRC Clerk) had already circulated his report prior to the meeting. John Martin noted that a previous minute had recorded the issuing of a provisional invitation to the Central Council to visit Devon in 2024 and that Robert Brown had begun a preliminary discussion with the Association representatives on the DRC. Lynne Hughes (CC rep) pointed out that the Central Council arrangements may change markedly between now and 2024 but that engagement with the DRC was to be welcomed; Robert Brown would already be aware of the proposals for change in the Central Council.

(g) Ringing Round Devon Editor: Ian Campbell had previously circulated his report as RRD Editor and members were invited to make observations or ask questions.

(h) Central Council reps': Fergus Stracey had previously circulated his report from the 2016 Central Council meeting at Portsmouth and members were invited to make observations or ask questions.

(i) Publicity Officer: Lynne Hughes had previously circulated her report as publicity officer and members were invited to make observations or ask questions.

CO17/17 Devon Church Bell Restoration Fund: A report had been circulated prior to the meeting, although the accounts had yet to be finalised. Members were invited to make observations or ask questions.

CO17/18 Frank Mack Bells Report: Ian Avery had already circulated a report and members were invited to make observations or ask questions.

CO17/19 Proposals for new Vice-Presidents: Martin Mansley was proposed by Nigel Birt and seconded by Mike Mears on behalf of the Mid-Devon Branch. The meeting unanimously endorsed this proposal which will be considered at the AGM.

CO17/20 Vacant Guild Posts: Alison Waterson reminded members that Sue Sawyer would be standing down as Treasurer at the AGM and asked people to consider seriously taking on this Guild office.

CO17/21 DenMisch Simulator: Ian Campbell had circulated a report prior to the meeting and members were invited to make observations or ask questions.

CO17/22 Recruitment & Teaching Working Party: Tim Bayton had circulated a report prior to the meeting and Nigel Birt thanked Tim and the other members of the working party for their efforts which had resulted in the production of a useful set of models for recruitment purposes. In their report the group had expressed their opinion that any follow-on activities be passed to the Education Officer and this was agreed by the committee members.

CO17/23 Special ringing for 2017: Mike Mears noted that HM Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip would be celebrating their 70th wedding anniversary in November 2017.

CO17/24 Rolls of Honour: David Willis (CC rep) elaborated on the paper circulated prior to the meeting. Leslie Boyce offered to investigate making membership information from early Guild reports available on the Guild website for research purposes.

CO17/25 Arrangements for 2017 Guild Festival and AGM – 17 June (North / North West Branch): Mike Rose (NNW Branch Chair) spoke about arrangements for the 2017 Guild AGM which would be focussed around Braunton. Towers in the area would be available to ring on request

and refreshments would be laid on at Braunton. It was also proposed that a seminar entitled “Running a Successful Practice” be held with the aim of sharing and promoting best practice between Tower Captains and those who are aspiring tower leaders.

CO17/26 Guild Striking Competitions – 15 October 2017 (North East Branch): Leslie Boyce announced that the towers to host this year’s striking competitions are Stoodleigh (6-bell), Bampton (Novice 6-bell) and Silverton (8-bell). After some discussion the methods for the 8-bell competition were decided: Grandsire Triples and London Bob Triples. It was noted that the Education committee suggested staging a practice session at which the unfamiliar method (London Bob) could be practiced in advance of the competition.

CO17/27 Alena Wardle (SW Branch Chair) proposed the introduction of a novice section to the 8-bell competition in order to provide an introductory stage to 8-bell competition ringing. After some discussion a revised proposal (p: Tim Bayton s: Mike Hatchett) was agreed to instigate a separate novice 8-bell competition. Draft rules would be put together by Nigel Birt for consideration at the Guild AGM with the intention of launching the new competition in 2018.

CO17/28 Fund-raising for DCBRF – Guild Quarter Peal Festival: James Kirkcaldy announced the dates for this year’s Quarter Peal Festival and advised that he would create a BellBoard event to which successful quarter peals could be linked.

CO17/29 Date and venue of next meeting: Confirmed as Saturday 17th June, immediately after the AGM.

CO17/30 AOB:

(a) Leslie Boyce announced that ART had recently issued a “Raising and Lowering” DVD incorporating advice received from Devon ringers and also that a new “Learning the Ropes” book had been published.

(b) Ian Avery announced that the John Scott 10-bell striking contest would be held at Crediton on Saturday 22nd April 2017.

(c) John Martin encouraged Branch Secretaries to make use of the Guild website to publicise Branch events.

(d) Alison Waterson thanked everyone involved in organising the meeting, especially all those who had provided and served the tea.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 4.30pm.

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Alison Waterson (President)

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Date