

# GUILD OF DEVONSHIRE RINGERS

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

*Held at Withycombe Raleigh on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2012*

- A12/1 Lester Yeo (President) opened the meeting with a welcome to the 58 members and 2 visitors who signed the register of attendance, in particular the Bowden family (Richard, Lis and Nick) from Bristol. He ascertained that the meeting was therefore quorate and gave an opening prayer.
- A12/2 Apologies for absence were received from: Nigel Birt (Mid), Michael Cannon (Exeter), Russell and Caroline Chamberlain (Mid), Janet Coles (Guild Secretary), Roger Compton (SW), Martin Dodd (Mid), Jason Dowling (Mid), Faith Elford (Aylesbeare), Bill Ford (VP/Exeter), Rob Franklin (Exeter), Gill Furse (Mid), Derek and Maureen Hawkins (Exeter), Geoff Hill (SW), Matthew Hilling (Exeter), Susan Illing (Exeter), Richard Johnston (NE), Tim King (Mid), George Mudge (SW), Robert Perry (Aylesbeare), Don Roberts (Mid), David Robertson (Mid), Clare Stagg (SW), Andy Stevens (Exeter), David and Christine Sworder (SW), Terry Summers (Aylesbeare), Lesley Tucker (Exeter), Bryan Tuckett (Mid), Ken Vingoe (Exeter) and David Willis (N/NW)
- A12/3 Losses by death since the last AGM: Emily Aird (Thorverton), Denis Beresford (unattached N/NW Branch), Colin Davey (Halberton), David Huntingford (Cotleigh), Richard Jones (Silverton), Jack Sage (VP/Luppitt), Heather Shorten (unattached N/NW Branch), Ronald Street (Bramford Speke) and Alan Tucker (Farway). We stood in silence for a moment to remember them.
- A12/4 Minutes of the 2011 meeting were signed as a correct record once two small typographical errors had been rectified (p: James Clarke, s: Lynne Hughes)  
The minutes of the EGM held at Lifton parish church on Saturday 15th October 2011 were also signed as a correct record (p: Richard Shere, s: John Martin)
- A12/5 Matters arising from the Minutes: from the AGM minutes the following points were raised:  
A11/8: clarification on the use of the Instruction Fund and what claims may be made on it had been discussed by senior Guild officers over the past months but no decisions had yet been formalised;  
A11/15: Public Liability insurance was now in place for all Guild members, with any questions concerning this to be directed to Janet Coles;  
A11/21(a): the Devon Ringers' Carol Service had been held at Cullompton and not Buckfast Abbey as hoped. Thanks were expressed to the Cullompton ringers for their warm welcome, with the tea following the service being the first event to be held in the brand new church hall. Peter Bill reported that the tower at Buckfast Abbey was currently scaffolded and the repaired clapper for the tenor had yet to be fitted, so it was unlikely that the bells would be back in action for some time to come.
- A12/6 Election of new members: Hatherleigh was elected to membership, together with ten members (Claire Brussel, Peter Emling, Steve Fawcett, Simon Squire, Diane Stamp, Phillip Thompson, Isabella Whitworth, Lucy Wonnacott, Mark Wonnacott, Natalie Wonnacott) (p: Richard Harrison, s: Sadie Harrison); also Greta Phillips (Bramford Speke) and Mary Quicke and Alexandra Robertson (unattached, Exeter Branch) (p: Lynette Costello, s: Andrew Digby).
- A12/7 Officers' reports: these were received as printed in the annual report. Thanks were given to John Foster for producing the report, to branch officers for their work in gathering the material and to all those who advertised in the report. John apologised to the SW Branch for inadvertently omitting the names of their unattached members, and Daisy Atkin apologised for lack of an Exeter Colleges Guild report the year. Leslie Boyce updated his Librarian's report by adding that the latest edition of Dove's Guide was now on sale, and he had purchased a selection of Whiting Society publications for the library.
- A12/8 Adoption of accounts: the report of Ruth Rockey, the Independent Examiner, as published in the annual report was incorrect as it referred to the year ended 31st December 2010 and not 2011. However, the correct information was posted on the Guild website. The adoption of the accounts was then proposed by Leslie Boyce, seconded by Daisy Atkin, and carried nem con.  
Sue Sawyer (Treasurer) proposed that £1,200 should be donated to the DCBRF and the Education Fund topped up to £500. The subscriptions for 2013 should continue to stand at £6 per member. All proposals were carried nem.con.
- A12/9 Election of Officers:
- Master 2012/13: Ian Campbell (p: John Foster, s: John Langabeer). John Foster then presented Ian with the Master's insignia. Ian took the chair to take nominations for President.
  - President: Lester Yeo (p: Lynne Hughes, s: James Clarke)
  - Master Elect 2013/14: Leslie Boyce (p: Michael Mears, s: Alan Furse)

- d) Vice Presidents: Donna Baker (p: Geoff Hill, s: Ian Smith); Geoff Hill (p: John Steere, s: Alena Wardle); Henry Trewin (p: Joan Clarke, s: Mike Rose). All were elected nem con.
- e) Secretary: Janet Coles did not wish to stand for re-election. Fergus Stracey proposed a vote of thanks for the excellent work carried out by Janet during her tenure and suggested she be presented with a suitable retirement gift. Lester then explained that feelers had been put out for a volunteer to take over, it traditionally being a difficult post to fill, and that Clare Griffiths was willing to stand for office but she was already committed to her role as Hon General Secretary of the Winchester & Portsmouth Diocesan Guild for one final year. It was therefore suggested that a caretaker secretary might be found to cover this period, to be given all help where necessary, whereupon Margot le Vesconte offered to do this and was duly elected, nem con (p: Derek Ballard, s: Martin Mansley).
- f) Treasurer: Sue Sawyer (p: Derek Ballard, s: Ian Smith)
- g) Librarian: Leslie Boyce (p: Lynne Hughes s: Derek Ballard)
- h) Bells and Belfries Advisors: Ian Smith (p: James Clarke, s: John Steere) and Ian Campbell (p: James Clarke, s: David Hird)
- i) Report Secretary: John Foster (p: Martin Mansley, s: Leslie Boyce)
- j) Publicity Officer: Roger King did not seek re-election and was warmly thanked for all his work during his time in office. After some discussion as to whether the posts of PRO and editor of *Ringling Round Devon* could be separated from each other, Ian Campbell was elected as editor of RRD (p: Derek Ballard, s: Paul Pascoe), but the post of Publicity Officer was put in abeyance, there being no volunteers.
- k) Peal Secretary: Michael Mears (p: John Foster, s: Roger King)
- l) Quarter Peal Secretary: Tim Bayton (p: John Steere, s: Charlotte Boyce)
- m) Education Officer: Lynne Hughes (p: Anne Bailey, s: Sheila Scofield)
- n) Safeguarding Officer: Robert Brown is currently fulfilling this role, although not in a formal capacity, until such time as new legislation is put in place.

A12/10 Election of DCBRF Trustees: Mary Mears, Ian Campbell and Ian Smith (p: Donna Baker, s: Daisy Atkin). Ian Smith reported that David Hird had recently been appointed as assistant to James Clarke by the DAC.

A12/11 Appointment of Independent Examiner of Accounts: Ruth Rockey (p: Tim Bayton, s: Lynne Hughes)

A12/12 Review of expenses for Central Council representatives: this had been discussed at great length on previous occasions and a rate of 40p per mile was agreed at the 2011 AGM and subsequently reduced to 30p per mile at the 2011 EGM at the wish of the CC reps themselves. The topic was now aired further, the concerns being that reps claimed for mileage alone and not for accommodation, and that this might be a deterrent to future prospective reps who could not afford to do this. After further lengthy discussion, Leslie Boyce (current CC rep) proposed (s: Paul Pascoe) that the 30p mileage allowance should stand. Laurie Palmer counter-proposed (s: Mike Hatchett) that all of the reps' expenses should be met, subject to these being reasonable and receipts provided. The meeting was reminded that the reps do valuable work at the behest of the Guild and they should be suitably recompensed and not left out of pocket. The Guild has suitable funds at the present time to cover these expenses, but it was essential that the situation was reviewed on an annual basis. On a vote, Laurie Palmer's amendment was carried by a large majority.

A12/13 Report from the Central Council meeting at Chester: Ian Smith presented his report on the attendance of the Guild representatives:

Despite being held over the Diamond Jubilee weekend the attendance was 184 out of a total of 220 members. At the Annual Meeting of the Ringing Foundation on Sunday, several valid points were made:

- Half of all ringers will have given up in 20 years time;
- We need to teach 500 ringers annually just to stand still;
- The staple fare for many towers is poor call changes;
- The learning experience is often not good;
- We still need need to be more efficient at producing competent ringers from our recruits.

It was suggested that the actual cost of training a new ringer up to Plain Bob Minor standard through the ITTS/ART training scheme is about £200. To teach 500 annually would therefore cost in the region of £100,000. The RF accounts were accepted and the directors reappointed.

At the business meeting on Monday members who had died in the last year were remembered, including Denis Beresford of Petrockstowe, and also Harold Rogers who amazingly had attended 64 meetings.

The accounts showed a deficit of £10,700, mainly due to reduced income. The Council had received no legacies during the year, investment income had been very low and the Publications Committee had had no major new title for sale. Economies had been effected though and, by distributing the meeting papers

electronically, the postage had been only £12.80 as compared with £300 last year. It was emphasised that each Guild's affiliation fee to the Council equated to only 14 pence per ringing member.

Bill Butler from Thatcham was elected a Life Member. Lynne Hughes was elected to the Public Relations Committee, Leslie Boyce was re-elected to the Ringing Centres Committee and James Clarke remains chairman of the Towers and Belfries Committee.

Three motions were discussed and all were carried: one merely related to the terms of reference of the Publications Committee and was carried; the second was to clarify when a newly elected representative actually became a member of Council; the third motion, somewhat controversially, was regarding performances using simulators and suggested that such 'peals' should be recorded by the Council as 'non-compliant peals'.

A paper was presented on Change Ringing for the Future, arising from the Wellesbourne Conference last year. The point was made that twenty years ago ringers aged 10 to 19 represented 20% of the total (now only 10%); also ringers aged 20 to 39 had reduced from 20% to 12%. By 2038 we will be 10,000 ringers short of the number required. It was further noted that only three guilds have Youth Officers or specific youth groups.

At the Ringing World AGM, a presentation was made to Jackie Roberts, standing down as chairman of the company. Although only eight subscribers had been lost during the year the paper was still making a loss of about £7,000 annually. It was suggested that the time was coming when it would cease to be a weekly production, but that time had not been reached yet and it was considered that to increase the cover price would be counter-productive. An agreement had been reached with Tony Parry that material from 'Campanophile' could be copied to 'Bell-Board'. Conversely the Board were strongly questioned as to whether Andrew Craddock should be permitted to lift so much information from *The Ringing World* free of charge for inclusion in 'PealBase'. The board agreed to consider whether a charge would be appropriate.

It was confirmed that next year's meeting will be held in Guildford, with the following years in Kent, Beverley & District and Winchester & Portsmouth.

A12/14 Guild AGM format and date: owing lack of time, it was agreed that this agenda item should be deferred to a future meeting date.

A12/15 Support for the Ringing Foundation: Lynne Hughes spoke to a motion to give a one-off donation of £100 to the RF (s: Leslie Boyce), which has been set up by the Central Council to support ringing projects and which now has charity status. The motion was carried.

Leslie Boyce then spoke to the meeting: following on from the Guild's decision to support the Ringing Foundation financially, a key plank of the Foundation's programme is to support and promote the Integrated Teacher Training Scheme (ITTS). The aim of the Scheme is to improve the standard of ringing teaching by training up new teachers of ringing and thereby aid the development and retention of new ringers through better teaching.

Key features of the Scheme are:

- Use of up to date research based methods in the areas of skills acquisition, teaching skills, coaching skills;
- A Moodle on line site with resources for teachers and learners;
- Training day one - Teaching Bell Handling;
- Use of mentors to support new teachers following the day courses;
- Collection of data regarding teaching activities;
- Training day two - Teaching Elementary Change Ringing;
- Teacher accreditation and membership of the newly-formed Association of Ringing Teachers.

It is planned to hold an ITTS Module One course in Devon in the autumn, a probable second Module One course in early spring and a Module Two course in the summer of 2013. The likely date for the first course is Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> November. Potential mentors, who are existing experienced teachers of ringing, will be contacted shortly and invited to join the Scheme.

A12/16 Fund raising and quarter peal week: to be held from Friday 26th October to Sunday 4th November inclusive, with Tim Bayton collating the information for publication in *The Ringing World*. John Martin asked whether quarter peals should be regarded as an effective training and retention aid, and if so, should

quarter peal week be more about training and less about fund raising? Lester Yeo felt it should be possible to combine both elements and Tim reminded members that they should work together at branch level where possible. He was willing once again to try and help individuals wanting to attempt a quarter peal to advance their ringing but not able to find an opportunity to do so.

A12/17 Striking competitions: to be held on Saturday 20th October in the East Devon Branch: 8-bell at Luppitt, 6-bell at Feniton, novice 6-bell at Farway. The methods for the 8-bell competition will be a choice of Double Norwich CB Major or Plain Bob Major.

A12/18 2013 Festival and Annual General Meeting: to be held on Saturday 15th June in the East Devon Branch, with a proposal to use Axminster as a base. Steve Coleman has accepted an invitation to speak and there will also be a couple of workshops offered.

A12/19 Any other business:

- (a) Daisy Atkin (Master, Exeter Colleges Guild) reported that the University of Exeter was now charging VAT at 20% on all subscriptions that the students paid. She therefore sought the Guild's help by maintaining the subs at the rate of £6 for the next three years so that students would not be unnecessarily burdened by any increase. Lynne Hughes asked whether there was a case for the Guild to waive subs for all undergraduates, but it was immediately pointed out that the implications of this had not been worked through. The matter was therefore referred to the next committee meeting for consideration.
- (b) Ian Smith reported that the next Ringing Roadshow was being planned for 2014 at the Newbury Racecourse. The proposed date was 6th September, although there was a small chance that this might be changed to 13th.
- (c) Lester Yeo rounded off the meeting by sending congratulations to former student and ECG member David Maynard on becoming Master of the Ancient Society of College Youths, sending good wishes to the Exeter Cathedral band who were competing in the final of the National 12-bell the following Saturday, and giving a vote of thanks to all the members of the Aylesbeare Branch who had hosted today's meeting so well.

The meeting closed at approximately 4.40 pm.

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Lester Yeo (President)

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(Date)