

GUILD OF DEVONSHIRE RINGERS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held at Tiverton on Saturday 21st June 2014

- A14/1 Lester Yeo (President) opened the meeting with a welcome to the 66 members present, on this, the 140th anniversary of the Guild of Devonshire Ringers. He warmly thanked the NE Branch for their organisation, and particularly congratulated all those involved with ringing the 140 bells, commenting on such imaginative and significant ringing. Thanks were also made to the Rector of Tiverton St. Peter, Robert Gordon, for taking the service, and organist Andrew Curtis, as well as the ringers taking part in the service touch afterwards. Lester confirmed the meeting was quorate, and led the members in an opening prayer.
- A14/2 Apologies for absence were received from: Roy Berry, Mike Burrow, John Foster, Sylvia Johns, Roger King, Margot LeVesconte, Matt Pym (Aylesbeare); Richard Coley (East Devon); Ian & Wendy Campbell, Michael Cannon, Matthew Hilling, Sue Sawyer, Graham & Lesley Tucker (Exeter); Alan Furse, Sharon Lawrence, Mary Mears, Janet Ritterman, Fiona Rock-Evans, Philip Stevens, Michael Tompsett (Mid-Devon); Richard Baker, Ann Barrow, Simon Bartlett, Chris Bolt, Pauline Champion, Carla Dawes, Libby Ford, Eve Grosse, Pat Hatchett, Tony Trigg, Jack Ward, Mike Weight (NE); Elaine Filer, Don Lawson, Stuart McDonald, Mike Rose, Jeanette Squire, Mike Squire, Andy Vincent (N/NW); Richard Bowden (VP) & Liz Bowden, Ron Trickey (VP).
- A14/3 Losses by death since the last AGM: James Rich (VP – N/NW), Grace Carter (Honiton), John Woods (Stoke Canon), Alison McDonald (N/NW). Members stood in silence to remember them.
- A14/4 Minutes of the 2013 meeting were signed as a correct record (p: Lynne Hughes, s: Don Roberts).
- A14/5 Matters arising from the minutes:
A13/14: Lester Yeo confirmed that he had invited Amy Gill to take on the role of Young Ringers Coordinator, which she had accepted. He thanked her for all her good work in her first year.
A13/17: Lester updated members on proposals to invite the Central Council to hold their Annual Meeting in Devon in 2024. Whilst no substantive offer needs to be made yet, he would now like to invite and receive confirmation from the Devon Association to join us in hosting the meeting.
A13/19: The new Guild of Devonshire Ringers website is now up and running. Lester commented on the cleaner appearance, ease of use, and the facility for Officers to update. He encouraged members to look at and use the website, warmly thanking Matthew Hilling for all his hard work in setting up the website, and forthcoming training sessions for Officers.
- A14/6 Election of new members: No new members were elected.
- A14/7 Officers' Reports: These were received as printed in the annual report, and John Foster was thanked for producing the report. Lester Yeo raised the suggestion of renaming the report, to better indicate its use as a members' handbook, and invited feedback on this for the committee meeting. One or two inevitable errors were raised: the calendar on p.79 is last years; Bells of Devon costs £6 + £1 p+p not as published on p.32; the Junior Member subs were also incorrect.
- A14/8 Adoption of accounts: As published in the annual report and examined by Ruth Rockey, Adoption of the accounts was proposed by Tim Bayton, seconded by David Hird and carried nem con. Lester Yeo advised the meeting that the proposal of transfer of monies to the DCBRF be moved to Agenda item 14, to be included simultaneously with any debate on donations to the Ringing Foundation.
- A14/9 Subscription Review (rule 3.1) Sue Sawyer (Treasurer) proposed that the subscriptions for 2015 should remain unaltered at £6.00. This was proposed by John Langabeer, seconded by Tim King and carried nem con.
- A14/10 Election of Officers: Lester Yeo thanked all the Guild Officers for their hard work over the past year.
a) Master 2014/15: Anne Bailey (p: Laurie Palmer, s: Jeff Bailey) Leslie Boyce then presented Anne with the Master's insignia, and she gave a short speech of thanks. Leslie Boyce also spoke briefly, thanking everyone who had been involved with ringing 140 bells today, particularly Tim Bayton for all his help arranging quarter peals, for the welcome he had received everywhere, and appreciation for help in reaching his own personal ringing goals this year. Anne then took the chair to take nominations for President.
b) President: Lester Yeo (p: Ian Smith, s: Jennifer Sparling)
c) Master Elect: Geoff Hill (p: John Steere, s: Ian Smith)
d) Vice-President: James Clarke (p: Ken Edwards, s: Mike Rose). He was elected nem con, with warm support.
e) Secretary: Clare Griffiths (p: Lynne Hughes, s: Wendy Campbell)
f) Treasurer: Sue Sawyer (p: Clare Griffiths, s: Reg McKenzie)
g) Peal Secretary: Mike Mears (p: Ian Campbell, s: Ian Smith)
h) Quarter Peal Secretary: Tim Bayton (p: Charlotte Boyce, s: Pauline Champion)

- i) Education Officer: Lynne Hughes (p: Chris Wardle, s: Neville Gibbings)
 - j) Librarian: Leslie Boyce (p: Rachel Taylor, s: Lynne Hughes)
 - k) Report Secretary: John Foster (p: Graham Tucker, s: Martin Mansley)
 - l) Bells and Belfries Advisors: Ian Campbell (p: Michael Mears, s: Charlotte Boyce), Ian Smith (p: Phil Dunn, s: Martin Mansley)
 - m) Publicity Officer: Daisy Atkin did not wish to stand for re-election, and as no candidate was proposed, the post was held open until someone could be found.
 - n) Ringing Round Devon Editor: Ian Campbell (p: Michael Mears, s: Reg McKenzie)
 - o) Safeguarding Officer: With clear legislation now in place, Robert Brown indicated the role of safeguarding officer could now be formalised, and he was willing to stand. Robert Brown (p: Graham Tucker, s: Michael Tompsett)
- A14/11 Election of DCBRF Trustees (3): Mary Mears (p: Sue Sparling, s: Pauline Champion), Ian Campbell (p: Neville Gibbings, s: Michael Mears), Ian Smith (p: Alena Wardle, s: Phil Dunn)
- A14/12 Appointment of Independent Examiner of Accounts: Ruth Rockey (p: Lester Yeo)
- A14/13 Report from the Central Council Meeting at Bearsted, Kent: Leslie Boyce presented his report on the attendance of the Guild representatives. He commented on the positive roles Devon members play on Central Council committees, with Les Boyce serving on Ringing Centres, Lynne Hughes on Public Relations, James Clarke on Towers and Belfries, and Fergus Stracey in his first year hoping to be co-opted onto the Compositions Committee.
- The Ringing Foundation meeting was held on the Sunday, but despite recent criticism, a constructive debate on funding took place, with all agreeing that the Foundation needs to find the next big initiative to justify continued financial support from both within and outside the ringing community.
- At the main Council meeting on the Bank Holiday Monday, there were several substantial pieces of business. A post of Public Relations Officer was created. The complex issue of “non-method blocks” was discussed, and Chairman of The Ringing World, Nigel Herriott, addressed the continuing decline in revenue, and ways to deliver content in a digital age. Finally, Kate Flavell installed Chris Mew as President for the next three years.
- A14/14 Support for the Ringing Foundation: Clare Griffiths had received correspondence from Brian Meads, Chairman of the Ringing Foundation, requesting donations on their behalf. At the committee meeting in January, members had recommended a donation to the Ringing Foundation be proposed at the AGM, pending financial advice from Sue Sawyer (Treasurer). Sue Sawyer had sent financial recommendations to the meeting, including proposals of fund transfers to the DCBRF and Education Fund, as well as a donation to the Ringing Foundation. These proposals were considered simultaneously.
- A lengthy discussion then took place, with some members debating the legality of financial support being given by the Guild to educational ringing charities outside the county. Others questioned the necessity and value of the Ringing Foundation, whilst support was heard from many quarters of the undoubted benefits seen locally from Ringing Foundation funded projects and ITTS courses.
- The financial proposals were then made as follows: £1,500.00 to be transferred to the DCBRF; the Guild Education Fund be topped up by £21.94 to reach £500 again. This was proposed by Don Roberts, seconded by Richard Johnston and carried nem con.
- Two differing proposals to fund the Ringing Foundation were voted out.
- A proposal to give £100.00 to the Guild Education Fund, specifically and solely to be used to finance local ringers attending ITTS courses in Devon was proposed by Janet Coles, seconded by Richard Johnston, and carried with a majority.
- A14/15 DenMisch Simulator: Ian Campbell had provided a written report detailing progress on work to house the dumbbells at Exeter Cathedral School. Their new home will be adapted during the summer holidays, and it is hoped the simulator and dumbbells will be ready for installation by Christmas at the latest. The dumbbells will remain the property of the Guild, with independent access to the tower by prior arrangement any time outside school hours; there are also possibilities for lunchtime teaching of pupils. With such excellent facilities there is clearly a potential opportunity for the Guild to create an Exeter based ringing school, and a development plan for the dumbbells use will be set up. As the simulators will be such a positive training resource for the future, Geoff Hill noted that some official recognition and thanks should be made to Mischa Thompson at the next committee meeting, with nomination for Vice-President suggested.
- A14/16 Guild Review – Assessment: Five years ago the Guild conducted a review of activities, focussing on three topics; recruitment and publicity, support and development of ringing skills, and bell restoration and tower maintenance. Lester Yeo proposed to assess the effectiveness of the review, and suggested that a meeting be convened to which members of the working parties would be invited, with a preliminary date of the morning of 15th November proposed. Copies of the Guild Review are available,

and should also be online. Any comments from members on the implementation of the Review should be sent to Lester or Clare before the meeting.

- A14/17 Central Council 'Have Your Say' seminar – 19th July 2014: Clare Griffiths drew members' attention to the seminar, requesting that they book their places soon to assist with the catering. Leslie Boyce outlined some of the speakers and the benefits of the day, with Lester urging all Branch Officers, Guild Committee members and Tower Captains make it a priority to attend.
- A14/18 Ringling Roadshow – 6th September 2014: Devon ringers will be represented at the Roadshow, and on behalf of Ian Avery, Clare Griffiths requested any members available to help with setting up on the Friday night, or staffing the stands on the day, should contact Ian directly. John Martin (Mid-Devon Branch Secretary) spoke about the joint Mid-Devon and Exeter Branch coach trip to the Roadshow; with a few places still available for the outing, he requested anyone interested in joining them should either contact Phil Stevens, or speak to him after the meeting. Tim King spoke of the plans to create a new CD of Devon Bells to sell at the Roadshow, asking for recordings of bells old and new, particularly those that had been improved or augmented.
- A14/19 Fundraising: Date of Quarter Peal Week – 31st October – 9th November 2014: Tim Bayton confirmed the date, and particularly asked that branches make sure as many members as possible take part in quarter peal attempts.
- A14/20 Guild 6 and 8 Bell Striking Competitions: Lester Yeo confirmed that the Guild Striking competitions would be held on Saturday 18th October and hosted by the Mid-Devon Branch, with the methods for the 8-Bell competition being either a touch of Plain Bob Major, or a plain course of Oxford Treble Bob Major. The touch would be published shortly on the Guild website and in Ringing Round Devon. John Martin told the meeting that Berry Pomeroy was to be tower headquarters for the day, hosting the 8-Bell competition, Stokeinteignhead would host the Novice competition, and Marldon the 6-Bell competition, although this last tower was pending final confirmation.
- A14/21 Guild Festival and Annual General Meeting 2015: Wendy Gill (Exeter Branch Chairman) told the meeting that the Exeter Branch would be hosting the event on Saturday 20th June 2015, based at Crediton. She detailed the programme to include open ringing and Guild service at Crediton, lunch in the Boniface Centre, followed by the AGM, and a chance to ring on the new DenMisch simulator in Exeter Cathedral School, before joining the open practice at Exeter Cathedral to close the day.
- A14/22 Any other business:
- a) Janet Coles pointed out that her name was still listed in this years' Ringing World Diary as Guild Secretary, which meant she still had to answer some calls and queries on the Guild's behalf. Clare Griffiths confirmed that the correct details would appear in the 2015 diary.
 - b) Janet Coles returned to earlier discussion regarding a number of inaccuracies in the Guild Report, and questioned whether John Foster would welcome more assistance in his role, as this point was raised every year. Everyone agreed that whilst it was a demanding role, better proof reading was still needed, and John should be offered more help. Many members supported the suggestion that the final draft of the Guild Report be published initially on the Guild website, thus giving Officers and Tower Captains the chance to proof read the copy before printing.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 5:19pm.

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Lester Yeo (President)

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(Date)

GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING

Held at Tiverton on Saturday 21 June 2014

The President, Lester Yeo, opened the meeting that followed the Annual General Meeting of the Guild. It was agreed that all business should be deferred to the next meeting of the General Committee on Saturday 17 January 2015. (p: Mike Mears, s: Charlotte Boyce). Meeting closed at 5.25pm.

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Lester Yeo (President)

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(Date)