

Minutes of St Martin's Guild Annual General Meeting

Held on Saturday 11 January 2020 at St Mary's, Handsworth.

The meeting began at 13.34, the Master, Simon Linford, in the chair.

1. Attendance and apologies for absence

There were 70 members present.

Apologies for absence were received from:

Jeremy Bates, Daniel Calvert, Sandra Cooper, Luke Daniel, Clive Day, Mike and Cynthia Dodson, David Flint, Steve Maddox, Bob Mayne, Paul McEvilly, Sara Paulson, Richard Postill, Mike Rigby, Tim Sunter, Sharon Wall, Jeff Webb, Linda Whitehead and Ruth Wilson.

2. Remembering members who have died

The meeting stood in memory of Andy Carr, Susan Marshall and Janice Anderson.

3. Minutes of the business meeting held on 29.9.2019

The minutes of the business meeting were agreed to be an accurate record: proposed by Jane Aykroyd and seconded by Elaine Cheeseman.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes

4.1 *Handsworth redecoration*

The redecoration of the ringing room at Handsworth is now complete.

4.2 *Edgbaston maintenance plan*

The Edgbaston maintenance plan is in progress.

4.3 *Castle Bromwich*

The Master reported that sway monitoring equipment was being installed but that a delicate balance was being sought between commercial and risk management.

4.4 *Shifnal Peal Board restoration*

Richard Jones reported that all of the money had been raised and that the work had been programmed.

5. Reports

Written reports had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

5.1 *Financial reports*

5.1.1 *Treasurer*

Tracy Stevens (Treasurer) presented the Guild's accounts and a written report.

Income:

Tracy highlighted that subscriptions for all members bar one were paid up the end of 2019. There had been a drop in income from merchandise sales and she urged members to consider ordering. She planned to reduce the apportionment to the Library Fund from £75 to £50. The BRF had benefitted from the 100 Club with a greater uptake of numbers yielding a profit of over £1300. She thanked life members for donations in lieu of subscriptions. Donations via Amazon Smile had yielded a small but significant amount.

Expenditure:

A £300 donation was made from the General Fund to the Shifnal Peal Board project.

There were no questions for the Treasurer.

5.1.2 **Independent Examiners**

On behalf of both of the Independent Examiners, Steve Horton stated that the accounts were a true representation of the Guild's finances and that they were very happy with the way the Treasurer maintains them. He said that they had struggled to make any recommendations to Tracy, however suggested she investigate dual authorisation of electronic payments. In addition Steve suggested that the welcome email sent out to new members could include an invitation to join the 100 Club and information about nominating St Martin's Guild for Amazon Smile purchases.

5.1.3 **Treasurer's proposals**

- **Annual subscriptions remain £10.00 (£5.00 for concessions)**
- **New members elected in the last quarter of the year 50% reduction in subscription**
- **Associate membership remains a single payment of £10 (£5 for concessions)**
- **Apportionment of subscriptions to the BRF remain at 25%**
- **£50 apportionment to the Library Fund**
- **Peal fee to remain at 0p per rope/seat**

The proposal was seconded by John Gwynne and the motion was carried.

The Master thanked Tracy for her work during the year.

5.1.4 **100 Club**

Clare McArdle reported that the 100 Club was almost fully subscribed with 92 numbers sold. The monthly draws were now being streamed live on the Guild's Facebook page. She thanked members for supporting the 100 Club and said that renewal notices would be arriving in their inboxes shortly.

5.2 **Ringling Master**

Arthur Reeves (Guild Ringing Master) had submitted a written report. He said that the Guild was living up to its aim to be inclusive, evidenced by the sheer number of members involved in running and attending Guild events. He said no Guild events had been cancelled this year. Both the York outing and the Guild Challenge Day had attracted in excess of 50 members and the workshops to be held after the AGM were well subscribed. In addition to weekly BSoBR sessions and weekly Brumdingers practices there are a minimum of 4 Guild-run practices per month.

Arthur thanked members for supporting Guild events and urged them to continue to talk to the leadership team about what events they would like to be run. In addition he thanked the many members who had facilitated the great number of opportunities on offer.

Looking forward to this year Arthur said he wanted to encourage greater support for the 6-bell Striking Contest in May and would be looking at ways to do this. He felt the X-practices had been of benefit to towers, however he wanted to improve on this and would be looking at ways to offer more focus on particular skills.

The Master thanked Arthur and said that the number and variety of training opportunities on offer was commendable and was a reflection on the Ringing Master's efforts. A recent Facebook post giving a list of the Yorkshire Association's training practices for the whole year paled in comparison to what was on offer to St Martin's Guild members.

5.3 **Henry Johnson Dinner Secretary**

Jenny Sunter (Henry Johnson Dinner Secretary) had submitted a written report. She urged members to attend the Dinner in support of Gill Postill who would be in the Chair. In a change from

previous years, she informed members that the Banqueting Suite would be operating a cashless bar. Tickets were available through Jenny or Clare.

5.3.1 **2021 Chairman**

The Master announced that in a departure from tradition Steve and Janet Horton had been asked to jointly chair the 2021 Dinner. This was met by approval by the meeting and a generous round of applause.

5.4 **Archivist**

Mark Eccleston (Archivist) had submitted a written report. He said that this year, amongst other things, acquisitions had included library material from the WDCRA library which had been sold as surplus to requirements. The new bookbinders for *The Ringing World*, in Newent, had proved to be satisfactory so he would continue to use them.

Mark thanked donors to the library for their contributions.

Mark ended by saying that although users of the library were relatively few, they valued the resource highly. He said that the Ringing World DVDs were most in demand for research.

The Master thanked Mark for his work as Archivist. He spoke about the CCCBR Historical and Archive workgroup focussing on the four great ringing libraries and was pleased to note that the St Martin's Guild Library was one of the four.

5.5 **Safeguarding Officer**

Trish Everett (Safeguarding Officer) had submitted a written report. She highlighted that changes had been made to CCCBR safeguarding guidance and that the Church of England had revised all training.

She advised members that a Leadership Safeguarding training course specifically tailored to bell ringers was planned for the autumn. In the meantime she advised that the C of E recommends that all bell ringers complete Awareness and Foundation training online or face-to-face. All training is free of charge and can be accessed via the diocese's training portal.

Trish reported that best practice is to keep a register of attendance at all ringing events (practices, service ringing etc.). Registers should be signed by participants as proof of attendance. It is a mandatory requirement where any participants are under 18. She stated that a register would be supplied at all Guild events.

She finished by saying that she would repeat the Safeguarding audit of Guild towers.

5.6 **Central Council Reps**

Richard Andrew and James Ramsbottom had submitted a detailed written report. They highlighted the Mini Roadshow that will be held as part of the CCCBR weekend in Nottingham on Sunday 6 September 2020 and recommended it to members. They reminded members that CCCBR events are open to anyone, not just Council members.

6. **Election of members**

6.1 **Full members**

The following full members were elected:

Name	Tower	Proposed	Seconded
Tony Rowan	(Ratification)	Phil Ramsbottom	Tony Daw
Sarah King	Shirley	Phil Ramsbottom	Tony Daw
Jeffrey Carr	Northfield	Phil Ramsbottom	Tony Daw
Denise Carr	Northfield	Phil Ramsbottom	Tony Daw
David Roberts	Coleshill	Phil Ramsbottom	Tony Daw

Lesley Roberts	Coleshill	Phil Ramsbottom	Tony Daw
Helen Surr	Harborne	Phil Ramsbottom	Tony Daw
Rachel Oakes	Harborne	Phil Ramsbottom	Tony Daw
Liz Oakes	Harborne	Phil Ramsbottom	Tony Daw
Joanne Goodall	Selly Oak	Phil Ramsbottom	Tony Daw

6.2 **Associate members:**

The following students from BSoBR and Brumdingers were made Associate Members:

Anna Shortt (BUSCR/BSoBR)
Hannah Cawthorn (BUSCR/BSoBR)
Emily Walker (BUSCR/BSoBR)
Elliot Daniel (BSoBR/Brumdingers)
Elizabeth Wilby (BSoBR)
Harvey Butler (BSoBR)

7. **Rule changes**

Notice of proposed changes to Guild rules had been given at the September business meeting. The Master reported that the proposed changes were adjustments that took into account the practicalities of application.

Graham Kelly proposed that the alterations to the rules be accepted, seconded by Steve Horton. The motion was carried.

8. **Bell Restoration Fund rule changes**

Notice of proposed changes to the BRF rules had been given at the September business meeting. The Master explained that the alterations were minor alterations to references which linked to the changes in the Guild rules.

Andrew Stubbs commented that some tidying was still required for section 2, but proposed that the alterations be accepted. The proposal was seconded by John Tanner and carried by the meeting.

9. **Election of Officers**

The Master began by asserting that the Guild is one of the most highly respected ringing associations and is the envy of most territorial societies. He stated that he had enjoyed his tenure as Guild Master, but, with his recent election to President of the CCCBR it was now time for him to step down. In addition, one other officer and one official were not seeking re-election: Clare McArdle was standing down as Secretary and Chris Mills as General Fund Trustee. All other officers were willing to stand for re-election.

The following officers and officials were elected:

Office	Name	Proposed	Seconded
Master	Clare McArdle	Stephanie Warboys	Tamsin Lane
Secretary	Stella Tew	Clare McArdle	Arthur Reeves
Treasurer	Tracy Stevens	Stephanie Warboys	Oliver Bouckley
Ringling Master	Arthur Reeves		
Archivist	Mark Eccleston		
Safeguarding Officer	Trish Everett		
Webmaster	Mark Eccleston		
HJ Dinner Secretary	Jenny Sunter		
General Fund Trustee	John Anderson		
General Fund Trustee	John Fielden		
BRF Trustee	Andrew Stubbs		
BRF Trustee	Don Finnemore		
Independent Examiner	Stephen Horton		
Independent Examiner	Thomas Horton		

CC Rep	Richard Andrew	Simon Linford	
CC Rep	James Ramsbottom		

Following the election of officers and officials Simon Linford presented the new Master, Clare McArdle with the insignia of office and Clare assumed the chair of the meeting.

10. 12-bell eliminator Aston

The Master advised members that Aston had been selected as one of the three towers to host this year's eliminators for the National 12-Bell Contest. Six teams are due to compete on Saturday 28 March and the church had requested that the event be jointly hosted by the church and the Guild. The Guild will need to provide stewards for the competition and people to run the bar. She anticipated a requirement of up to 20 volunteers and asked members to keep the date free and consider volunteering to help.

11. 2020 planned events

- Saturday 29 February: Henry Johnson Dinner
- Saturday 2 May: BSoBR Away Day
- 8–10 May 75th anniversary VE Day bank holiday
- Saturday 16 May: 6-bell striking contest
- Saturday 11 July: Walking Tour
- Sunday 6 September: CCCBR Roadshow (Nottingham)
- 28–29 November: Stedman Extravaganza – peals of Stedman (all stages 5–15) by Guild members (no duplication of band members).

12. AOB

12.1 *Simon Linford*

The Master read a tribute to Simon Linford for his time as Master of the Guild (LVP proposal appended). She ended by proposing that he be elected a Life Vice President of the Guild. The proposal was seconded by Arthur Reeves and Simon was duly elected to sustained applause from the membership.

Arthur Reeves presented Simon with a gift as a token of thanks from the Guild.

In his response, Simon said that he felt highly honoured to be elected a Life Vice President – the other LVPs are people who he had long held in high esteem and he was proud to be joining their number.

12.2 *Chris Mills*

The Master read a tribute to Chris Mills who is moving to Hampshire. She highlighted her contribution to the Guild over many years, holding office (Secretary and Northern Area Ringing Master) and sterling work helping the Treasurer collect subs and selling Henry Johnson Dinner tickets for many years. As a token of thanks, the Master invited Chris to this year's dinner as a guest of the Guild.

12.3 *Taylor's appeal*

The Master drew members' attention to flyers from Taylor's Bellfoundry, fundraising to restore and develop the Bellfoundry site.

12.4 *ART Conference*

The Master drew members' attention to flyers for the Association of Ringing Teachers Conference in March. The event is open to all.

12.4 *Thank you for lunch*

The Master thanked Rosemarie Seadon who had made all of the arrangements at Handsworth and had been on hand to help with the lunch. She also thanked Tracy Stevens for co-ordinating the

lunch preparation. The extended applause from members present was an indication of the quality of the lunch.

13. Date of the next meeting

16 May 2020

The meeting closed at 14.55