

Minutes of the East Grinstead and District Guild Annual General Meeting held at Bletchingley on Saturday 12 March 2016

The meeting commenced at 6.13pm.

The Guild's Chairman, David Threlfall, thanked Patrick Wills and all other members who had helped with tea. He also thanked: the organist and choir master, Barry Williams; the choir; and the Rector, Fr Peter Moseling, for providing a very special service of choral evensong.

Patrick proposed that the proceeds from tea should be donated to the Bletchingley Church House Appeal and this was agreed.

1. Apologies for Absence

Robert Everest
Lynda Johnson
Chris Funnell
Eric Roughley
Anthony & Karol Leeves
Trevor Crowhurst
Sonia & John Harriyott
Jean Kimber
John Verity
John & Jackie Warner
Jane Wroe
Sheila Marsh

It was noted that Robert Everest had said that after 35 years as Vice President, he wished to stand down from this post but remain a Guild member. David Threlfall has already thanked him for his efforts as Vice President.

It was also noted that Robert had indicated that he wanted to give up as Vice President during Roger Cowsill's chairmanship and, further, Andrew Brock commented that he had made it clear to Robert that being a Vice President was a titular post only but notwithstanding that advice Robert still wished to stand down.

2. Minutes of the AGM on 14th March 2015

Re: Matters Arising, second paragraph, the figure of £25,000, being the annual income of a charity account which requires an audit, was questioned. Mike Bullett said that he would check this but subject to that point, the Minutes were approved.

David Tomsett proposed acceptance of the 2015 Minutes and David Finch seconded that proposal.

3. Matters Arising

None.

4. Chairman's Report for 2015

David Threlfall had circulated the draft of his Report for 2015 to the members prior to the meeting. Various amendments were suggested and incorporated (see attached draft Report with manuscript amendments, Appendix 1).

5. Statement of Accounts for 2015

Mike Bullett had circulated financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2015 to the members prior to the meeting. He reported that there were more members and therefore the

subscription had increased. The profit from the 2014 AGM had been donated to the E J Oliver Memorial Fund.

There had been a surplus of £64 for the year. In Mike Bullett's view there was no need to raise subscriptions.

With regard to the 2015 annual dinner, the surplus had arisen from the proceeds of the raffle.

Turning to the balance sheet, the Guild has £2,745 in the bank. The Guild Committee should perhaps think about what could be done with these funds.

Patrick Wills raised a query as to the number of members as at 31st December 2015. Last year's members had numbered 65. For the purposes of maintaining a Central Council representative, we needed to have a minimum of 50 members at the start of the next triennium. We were considerably short of the 65 members achieved last year.

David Finch proposed acceptance of the accounts and David Tomsett seconded.

Mike Bullett then turned to the E J Oliver Memorial Fund accounts. These had been approved by the Trustees already. The war loan had been redeemed during 2015 and the balance at the bank was £1,482. Donations amounted to £30. There is only a small income received now that the war loan has gone. There was a surplus of £43 and there had been no applications for grants. The members need to think of ways of drawing the existence of the Fund to the attention of the Guild Towers. The last grant was made in 2009 to Crawley.

6. Election of New Members

Ros Cowsill proposed Alan Millidge from Lingfield. Helen Goldstraw seconded this proposal and all were in favour. Alan was duly elected and welcomed to the Guild.

7. Election of Officers

David Finch proposed Margaret Large as President for 2016/2017 and this was seconded by Mike Bullett. The members were unanimously in favour of Margaret being re-elected. Margaret then took the chair.

The Guild Vice Presidents were currently Robert Everest, Andrew Brock, Robin Grant and Roger Cowsill. The last three were happy to continue and as the meeting was already aware, Robert Everest had declined. Kate Desbottes nominated Ros Cowsill as Vice President and this was seconded by Mike Bullett. No other nominations were received. David Threlfall moved that all four nominees should be elected en-bloc, which was seconded by David Finch. The members voted unanimously for such election.

Margaret Large thanked David Threlfall for his hard work as Chairman and also for the assistance of the other Guild Officers.

David Threlfall was nominated for the post of Chairman by Mike Bullett, seconded by Candy O'Donovan, and was duly elected. He then re-took the chair.

Kate Desbottes nominated Robin Grant as Ringing Master and this proposal was seconded by Gail Terry. Robin was duly elected.

Iain Davey proposed Mike Bullett as Treasurer, seconded by Roger Cowsill, and Mike was duly elected.

Robin Grant proposed Patrick Wills as Guild Secretary, seconded by David Tomsett, and Patrick was duly elected.

Iain Davey proposed Kate Desbottes as the Assistant Secretary, seconded by David Finch, and Kate was duly elected.

The three General Committee Members were currently Iain Davey, Mary Ayres and Sheila Marsh. Of these, Iain and Sheila were prepared to continue. Robin Grant nominated Candy O'Donovan, seconded by David Threlfall. Kate Desbottes nominated Iain Davey and Sheila Marsh, seconded by Yvonne Cooper, and Candy, Iain and Sheila were duly elected.

With regard to the Trustees of the E J Oliver Memorial Fund, in addition to the Chair and Treasurer of the Guild, the other two Trustees were Candy O'Donovan and Andrew Brock. Roger Cowsill proposed re-election of both Candy and Andrew, seconded by David Finch, and they were duly re-elected.

8. Programme of Meetings

Patrick Wills outlined the proposed programme for 2016/2017 as follows:-

April meeting	Buxted
June (quarterly)	Chiddingstone
August	Mayfield
July (outing)	(To be discussed)
September (quarterly)	Fletching had been asked but not confirmed
October	Wivelsfield have been unable to come back with a decision
November	Godstone had been confirmed
December	It was proposed that the Guild join the Kent County Association at Tonbridge for their carol service
January	Limpsfield had been confirmed
February	Ditchling was confirmed but the members should note that the times should be 6.30pm to 8.30pm and not as stated on the programme card
March	East Grinstead had been confirmed but members should note the late start of 3.30pm

Patrick Wills agreed to send out an e-mail to members to advise of the incorrect time for the Ditchling fixture in February on the Fixture Cards that had already been distributed.

On the matter of the outing, David Threlfall will organise this. It had been discussed at the Guild Committee meeting that a trip should be arranged to the Whitechapel Bell Foundry. David Threlfall ascertained there were few available dates this year: the Guild can only visit on a Saturday and the only available dates are in October, November and December. Three groups can attend per Saturday and the cost of £15 per head but no more than 25 persons per group were permitted. In the circumstances, David Threlfall suggested to the meeting that he would phone Whitechapel to suggest a tour in July 2017 and members agreed to this. There was a question raised as to whether the members could be subsidised from Guild funds and this was something that the committee would need to discuss. David Threlfall felt that it was a good thing to do during the Guild's 90th anniversary year and that the foundry trip could be followed by ringing at some City Churches.

David Threlfall then went on to consider a venue for this year's July outing. A trip to Brighton, Guildford (in particular Guildford Cathedral) and Godalming were suggested. David Threlfall invited the members to come up with suggestions as to where they would like to see the Guild visit for the July 2016 outing.

9. 90th Anniversary Dinner 2017

Patrick Wills advised the meeting that the committee had gone for 10th June 2017, this being the nearest Saturday to the foundation of the Guild (6th June). As regards venues for the dinner, both Rowfant and Felbridge Hotel had been suggested. Kate Desbottes agreed to ask Christopher

O'Mahoney to attend the dinner as the Guild's guest. Christopher is due to be elected President of the Central Council of Church Bellringers at their meeting in May 2017.

It was also anticipated that the Guild would attempt a peal on 10th June 2017 and arrangements for this are in hand.

10. Guild Library

This is currently housed by David Threlfall in his own home. Margaret Large commented that members used to borrow books at Guild meetings when she was an active ringer. It was confirmed that Patrick Wills has custody of the Guild Peal books. It was questioned whether the last peal had been entered up.

David Threlfall confirmed that he will donate a Peal Board for the last peal at Buxted in February 2015.

11. Guild Clothing

Kate Desbottes indicated that there had not been a Guild clothing order for a couple of years and she was happy to arrange this if members were interested. At least 10 people said that they would wish to purchase clothing. Kate will arrange to send out details in due course.

12. Guild Website

Patrick Wills explained to the members that the Guild website was woefully out-of-date and not very attractive. He would like start work on creating a new website. He explained that he has some experience in graphic design, that there are many free website authoring packages available, and that he anticipated that the Guild would need to pay a fee for web hosting. The Committee had approved £100 per annum for this purpose.

Patrick Wills had prepared a map of the Guild Towers and this had been circulated to the members prior to commencement of the meeting (see appendix 4). The map clearly showed the 16 mile radius around East Grinstead and although strictly speaking this does not include Dorking, the map shows Dorking as being included (as agreed some years ago).

Andrew Howell and David Finch may be prepared to provide assistance to Patrick should the need arise.

13. Any other Business

Mike Bullett confirmed that the reference in the 2015 Minutes to £25,000 relates to the need to have the accounts considered by an independent examiner. An audit is only required if the annual income of a charity account is in excess of £500,000. The Minutes were accordingly amended to change the wording "audit" in the second paragraph under "Matters Arising" to "independent examiner".

The meeting closed at 7.25pm.