

DRAFT Minutes of the East Grinstead & District Guild Annual General Meeting held at St Swithun's Church, East Grinstead on Saturday 11 March 2017

The meeting commenced at 6:35 pm

The Chairman, David Threlfall, welcomed everybody to the 90th Guild AGM. He expressed regret that Margaret Large was no longer with us, saying she would be missed. He was pleased to see Ray Large at the meeting, and invited members to welcome Ray in the usual way.

The Chairman also welcomed Milica Reardon. He then thanked the incumbent, Andrew Harken, for permitting the Guild the use of the bells, and for conducting the service. Andrew Brock was thanked for playing the piano to accompany the hymns.

David also thanked those responsible for providing a wonderful tea.

1. Apologies for absence

These were received from Andrew Howell, Mary Ayres, Sheila Marsh, Ruth Goodsir, Louise Pink, Eric Roughley, Anthony and Karol Leaves, and Chris Funnell.

2. Minutes of the AGM held on 12th March 2016 at Bletchingley

Copies of the Minutes had been distributed to the members prior to tea, so that they had the opportunity to read these before the meeting had commenced. The following amendments were raised:

Item 1 – Apologies for Absence: should read Jane Wroe (not Rowe).

Item 6 – Election of New Members: should read Helen Goldstraw (not Goldsmith).

Item 5 – Statements of Accounts for 2016: line 2 should read “ .. and therefore the subscription *income* had increased”.

Item 8 – Programme of Meetings: December should read “It was proposed that the Guild *joined* the Kent County Association ...”

All the amendments were proposed for adoption by David Tomsett and seconded by David Finch. The meeting was in favour.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes (not covered by the Agenda)

Both Mike Bullett and Margaret Funnell concurred that with regard to Item 2 the threshold for audit was now £500,000, and that any income over £25,000 gave rise to a requirement for an independent examination.

4. Chairman's Report for 2016

This was to be found on pages 2 and 3 of the Annual Report that had been circulated to members at the meeting prior to tea.

It was pointed out that the bells at Fletching had been unavailable rather than out of action (top of page 2).

Adoption of the Report was proposed by Mike Bullett and seconded by David Tomsett. The meeting voted in favour of adoption.

5. Statement of Accounts for 2016

The accounts were to be found in the Annual Report. No questions were raised. Adoption of the accounts was proposed by Margaret Funnell, seconded by Roger Cowsill, and all voted in favour.

6. Adoption of Annual Report for 2016

This was proposed by David Tomsett and seconded by David Finch, and duly accepted by the meeting.

Mike Bullett advised that the Rope Fund accounts had been made available to the meeting, but no approval from the meeting was sought. The Trustees had already approved the same. There had been a grant of £200 to Bletchingley during 2016.

7. Election of new members

Betty Green was proposed by Lynda Johnson and seconded by Iain Davey.

Milica Reardon was proposed by Robin Grant and seconded by Yvonne Cooper.

The meeting voted to elect these two ringers, and they were greeted in the usual way.

8. Election of Officers for 2017-2018

President – David Threlfall pointed out that this office was currently vacant due to the death of Margaret Large, who had been the President for a good many years. Andrew Brock proposed Ray Large, saying his election would maintain continuity. The proposal was seconded by David Threlfall. All voted in favour, and Ray was duly applauded.

Ray addressed the meeting, saying he had been overwhelmed when Andrew Brock had asked if he was prepared to be elected; Ray felt honoured to have been asked to become President, and Margaret would have been thrilled; he had illustrious predecessors, and knew Ernie Ladd very well, saying he was Pyke to Ernie's Mr Mannering. He thanked the members on behalf of both himself and his children for the support provided to him by the Guild over the last three months; the ringing as Margaret's coffin came out of church was very much appreciated.

The newly elected President took the chair. He thanked David Threlfall and the Guild Officers for all their hard work.

Vice-Presidents: Andrew Brock, Robin Grant, Roger Cowsill, and Rosalind Cowsill were all proposed by Robert Everest, seconded by Patrick Wills, and elected by the meeting.

Chairman: David Threlfall was proposed by Iain Davey, seconded by David Tomsett, and elected by the meeting. David Threlfall took the chair again.

Ringling Master: Robin Grant was proposed by Mike Bullett, seconded by Ian Cochrane, and elected by the meeting.

Margaret Funnell then proposed that the remaining Officers nominated in the Agenda should be elected *en bloc*. This proposal was seconded by Gavin Bennett, and approved by members.

The meeting then duly elected the following: Mike Bullett as Treasurer; Patrick Wills as Secretary; Kate Wills as Assistant Secretary, and Central Council Representative for 2017 to 2019; Iain Davey, Sheila Marsh, and Candy O'Donovan as General Committee Members; and Andrew Brock and Candy O'Donovan as the E J Oliver Memorial Fund Trustees

9. Programme of Meetings for 2017 – 2018

Patrick Wills addressed the meeting and drew members' attention to the fixture cards that had been circulated prior to tea. He pointed out a few amendments that had been made since the suggested programme considered at the Quarterly Meeting at Limpsfield in January. The June meeting is fixed for the day after the 90th Anniversary Dinner, and this was now proposed as an evening meeting at Limpsfield Chart. The July meeting would be at Maresfield. The next Quarterly Meeting will take place in September, meaning that there would be four evening meetings in a row (April to July inclusive). All the tower fixtures in 2017 had been confirmed. The four tower fixtures in 2018 were provisional.

With the exception of Slaugham (visited in 2012) none of the other towers had been visited for a good many years.

David Threlfall thanked Patrick for his hard work in arranging the programme.

10. 90th Anniversary Dinner – Friday 9th June 2017

Patrick advised the meeting that the Felbridge Hotel was now called the Crown Plaza Felbridge. Flyers had been circulated prior to tea for members to view the chosen menu. There will be a choice of three dishes for each course, but Mike Bullett said he would endeavour to arrange another option to be added to the starter menu. There will be no tickets issued for the dinner, as Patrick had experienced difficulties with distributing the tickets for the Whitechapel foundry tour in February. Instead he will make a note of people's names, and how they have paid. He would prefer members to pay for their dinner by electronic bank transfer. An email will be sent out to members with full details. It is a condition of the booking that a minimum of 40 diners must be paid for, so there needs to be plenty of support for this event. The guest speaker is to be Christopher O'Mahoney, who will be the President of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers by the date of the dinner.

Choices from menu must be made and indicated to the hotel two weeks in advance of the dinner. Patrick will, however, accept provisional bookings with payment without choices being made.

The £100 room booking fee has been paid by the Guild.

11. The Rope Fund

Andrew Brock said that he had asked for the Rope Fund to be put on the agenda because there was a need for the balance in the fund to be maintained. Mike Bullett immediately produced the Rope Fund collection box – which is in the form of a duck. Mike said that any money collected in the duck would go direct to the Rope Fund. He said that the fund had made a grant in the last 12 months (£200 to Bletchingley). He asked that we keep prompting towers who are thinking of having ropes to apply.

12. Guild Library

Patrick had put the item on the AGM agenda in case the larger attendance might produce a new suggestion for the location of the library, which is temporarily located at Dave Threlfall's home. Roger Cowsill said he would look at the possibility of housing the library in the ringing chamber at Colemans Hatch.

13. Guild Clothing

Dave Threlfall had suggested that the Guild should produce 90th anniversary special edition clothing. A few members were in favour of the proposal, with none against. Roger Cowsill expressed the view that it would be better for the clothing not to have a year on it! However, a majority of those who expressed a view were in favour of the dates 1927 – 2017 appearing. Milica Reardon agreed to come up with some possible designs. 15 people indicated that they would buy 90th Anniversary clothing. Nobody wanted an ordinary logo.

14. Any Other Business

Patrick said that he will not be standing as Secretary next year. He will, however, carry on looking after the website. Dave Threlfall said he thought Patrick had made a good job of the website.

David Finch said rumblings from couple of towers we have visited that £10 not enough donation for length of time we have been ringing. £20 reasonable. Those who turn up pay a £1 supplement?

David has 8 ringers for the 90th Anniversary peal attempt. He said he did not know about the issue of a tower inspection at Colemans hatch.

Patrick announced that ringing would continue until 8.15 pm.

The meeting closed at 7:20 pm.