

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION HELD IN
THE PARISH HALL, MARTOCK ON EASTER MONDAY 25th APRIL 2011**

Present: The Attendance Book records 105 people. Branches were represented as follows: Axbridge 23, Bath 3, Bridgwater 8, Cary 7, Chew 12, Crewkerne 5, Dunster 3, Frome 14, Glaston 3, Ilchester 12, Taunton 11, Visitors 4.

1. The Master opened the meeting with a moment of quiet and prayer at 3 pm.
2. Members who had died since the last AGM had been remembered at the service but Hubert Baker of Meare and Peggy Dyce of Porlock were now added to the list.
3. **Apologies for Absence** Apologies were recorded from: Edric Ovens, James Taylor, Ann & Anthony Hodgson, Susan Mew, Margaret Astridge, Valerie Stone, Helen Beaufoy.
4. **Notification of Any Other Business** Andrew Howard - EGMT/YROY (to be taken after Treasurer's report), Michael Horseman - service collection, Master - Support for Christchurch NZ. By assent, each item for AOB would be limited to a maximum of 5 minutes.
5. **Young Ringer of the Year Award** The George Wareham trophy, together with cheques from the Association and the Edna Grabham Memorial Educational Trust, was presented to the Association Young Ringers of the Year joint winners - Krystyna Masny of Shipham and Matthew Martin of South Petherton. Kris Martin, also from South Petherton, was third.
6. **Minutes of the 2010 Annual General Meeting** The minutes as printed in the 2010 Annual Report were approved and signed by the Master.
7. **Matters Arising** - none.
8. **Officers' Reports**

- a. The Master reminded the meeting of the great heritage handed on by those who had died, including 4 Honorary Life Members. They had been great characters who had made a lasting contribution to the Association.
- b. The General Secretary drew the attention of members to the new Child Protection regulations, circulated to Branch Secretaries for further dissemination.
- c. The Treasurer pointed out anomalies in the figures and confirmed that Public Liability insurance had been paid, but after the accounting period was closed. Michael Horseman queried the figure for carpeting and it was explained that this was for the library, now in the former clock chamber at St Mary's Bridgwater.

Keith Beale asked why no figure was shown for the Young Ringer of the Year awards and it was confirmed that these had been paid out of the Bell Fund.

Andrew Howard congratulated the Treasurer on figures that were easy to read. He had three points to raise:

- i. He had been asked by his fellow trustees of the Edna Grabham Memorial Education Trust to query the decision not to award 2 first prizes to the joint winners of the Young Ringer of the Year competition rather than dividing the sum of first and second prizes. The trustees felt that this was not in keeping with the remit of the Association and wished to leave the point open for comment. A lively discussion ensued and this concluded with Matthew Martin, joint winner, stating that he was very happy with the sum received.
- ii. £682 had been shown as expenditure on recruitment - was this enough? The Treasurer responded by pointing out that the Recruitment Week costs would be spread over 2 financial years and now stood at £910, in addition to expenditure on education. A new Education Officer had been appointed and would be the person to deal with this in future.
- iii. It grieved him to note that 30% of the Association's income was spent on administration and the annual report. Surely other associations did not spend as much? David Floyd pointed out that the figures quoted were for printing the previous report. By taking on much of the initial layout and design he had reduced the cost of the current report by £900. He had contacted 5 other large associations and our costs were comparable. The Master stressed that the web discussions on the report showed that people really value the report - if we didn't have one, what would we get for our subscription? The meeting recorded its appreciation of David Floyd's hard work on both the annual report and the website.
- d. The Tower Adviser reminded members that lack of regular maintenance at local level was the cause of many problems and that bells need to be properly looked after.
- e. The Bell Funds Officer confirmed that the new Bells of Somerset CD was now well under way. She was using ringers from each relevant branch to get the best possible bands.
- f. The Librarian reported that George Massey's Bells of Somerset should be published in June. The Master congratulated David Bromwich on completing this extraordinary work, especially on bringing it up to date at George's death. He also urged members to make full use of the library.
- g. Quarter Peal Secretary - the Master pointed out that it was harder to get an accurate list of quarter peals as many were not sent to the Ringing World for publication. He thanked Clifford Nicholls for his hard work. David Floyd confirmed that no quarter peal totals were shown by tower in the annual report. When he sent out

the proofs many towers said the figures given were incorrect - mainly for the reason given above, though each tower has the opportunity to supply accurate figures direct to the Quarter Peal Secretary.

All reports were accepted on the proposal of Michael Horseman, seconded by Richard Newman and carried without further dissent.

9. Election of Officers for 2011-2012

The role of Bell Funds Officer had been discussed at the General Committee meeting and it was felt that this post could be left vacant for the time being without the need for a rule change. The purpose of this post was discussed and it was agreed that in its present form it was different from when first instituted. Reference was made to the proposals for Roger Fox as Deputy Master (nominated by the Ilchester Branch) and Jill Hansford as Education Officer. Proposed by Richard Newman, seconded by Robert Perry that the General Committee recommendations for Officers be accepted. Carried with abstentions from the listed officers and the following were therefore elected:

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|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Master | Tim Hawkings |
| Deputy Master | Roger Fox |
| General Secretary | Jay Bunyan |
| Report Editor | David Floyd |
| Membership Secretary | Jay Bunyan |
| Treasurer | Charles Pipe-Wolferstan |
| Peal Secretary | Jenny Astridge |
| Quarter Peal Secretary | Clifford Nicholls |
| Tower Adviser | John Hallett |
| Assistant Tower Advisers | Roland Backhurst and Bernard North |
| Librarian | David Bromwich |
| Education Officer | Jill Hansford |
| Deputy Education Officer | Janet Wyatt |
| Web Maintainer | David Floyd |
| Independent Examiner | Paul Treby |

Michael Horseman thanked the Officers for all their hard work. Sheila Jenkins then handed over the Deputy Master's chain of office to Roger Fox.

10. General Committee decisions

- a. Standing Committee Appointment: Richard Newman was appointed
- b. Eddie Hancock and James Taylor were elected an Honorary Life Members. Eddie made a short speech saying how much he appreciated this recognition.
- c. Bell Fund grants were allocated as shown:

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|-------------------------|--|--|
| Nailsea | Rehang on metal headstocks, retune, paint frame Replace access platform | £3,560.00 |
| Bathwick | Rebush clappers and ancillary work | £300.00 |
| Wrington | New pulley sheaves, sealed bearings, rope rollers for treble, flapboard for 2nd, replace main bearings on 5 & 6, reduce odd-struckness, remove all chiming apparatus, paint frame. Service Sanctus bell, install upper walkway | £2,300 pending receipt of amended application/new Faculty (change of Contractor) |
| Bishops Lydeard | Replace bearings, remake wheels, replace pulley boxes, modify insulation packs | £2,000.00 |
| Norton St Philip | Complete overhaul, retune bells, maintenance of wooden frame, rehang | £3,250.00 |
| Woockey | Additional work required - possibly a new frame required | 12.5% to a maximum of £1,225 |

11. Financial

a. Subscriptions and fees from 1 November 2011.

Proposed by Fred Sage and seconded by David Floyd that subscriptions and fees remain unchanged. Carried with 4 abstentions.

b. Central Council representatives expenses.

The General Committee recommendation was that these remain at £120 per representative. This figure was proposed by Christine Andrew and seconded by Michael Horseman with 5 abstentions and no votes against. The General Secretary thanked the membership for their generosity.

12. Proposed Rule Change to Rule 3(i) and Rule 4

Proposed by Michael Horseman, seconded by David James.

Rule 3(i) lines 7/8 to read “Resident members shall subscribe annually and may transfer to non-resident status if they notify the Branch Secretary of their departure and are fully paid up on leaving the Diocese after at least three years of subscriptions have been paid. The Branch Secretary will, in turn, notify the Membership Secretary”

Rule 4 to read “All annual subscriptions shall fall due on 1st November and should be paid to the designated Branch Officer within 5 months. Re-election will be necessary if a lapse in payments exceeds one year. Membership may be suspended.....”

The section “*unless arrears are paid*” would be deleted, thus preventing the practice of buying back missing years. In proposing the changes, Michael Horseman stated that these two small rule changes would clarify the situation when

- a. someone with at least three years service moves away and would like to transfer to Non Resident Life Membership status - there being no automatic system to facilitate this at the moment.
- b. a member who has missed two or more years subscriptions asks to “buy back” the missing period when they re-join.

The Association cannot know if someone lapsing membership has just given up or moved away. In the latter case, the onus must be on them (or their branch) to ask the Membership Secretary for NRLM (ex resident) status if they would like this to happen.

In the second instance, it seems wrong and to cheapen the privilege of membership when someone doesn't bother to pay for two or more years, then comes back and wants to enhance long service by making a lump sum payment. The slight rule changes suggested would help clarify the situation.

The motion was carried, with one abstention.

13. **Ratification of election of Non Resident Life Members prior to peals**

The belfry elections of Jack Aylward, Martin Bright, William Davidson, Stuart Gibson, Clare McArdle, Edward Marchbank, Simon Percy, Hilarie Rogers, Janice Scull, Deborah Talbot, Simon Webb, Malcolm Evans, Geoffrey Gardener, Ian Hartfield, Alison Leach, Trevor Marchbank, Christopher Poole, and Robert Walters were ratified on the proposal of Christine Andrew, seconded by Clifford Nicholls.

14. **Feedback from Association Recruitment Week**

Axbridge - there had been a popular open day at Banwell and several open practices & 7 new ringers.

Bridgwater - 9 of the 11 original recruits were still being taught as a group. This included some from Bawdrip where for the first time in many years the bells are now being rung by local ringers.

Chew - a mixed response, with some 20 recruits. Some towers made a lot of effort with little to show for it.

Crewkerne - a disappointing response but as all the background information is in place, another session might be organised.

Ilchester - a lot of effort, including an open day at Yeovil, but not a lot to show for it.

Taunton - the branch had held 40 events in 30 towers, including the use of a mobile ring in Taunton town centre. 75 new recruits had been found and since Christmas 12 learner specific courses had been run, as well as Teaching the Teachers. More courses were planned, using 23 branch tutors.

It was generally felt that support from the local press had been poor. Comment was made on the timing of the event and it was felt that the summer might be a better time. The Master recorded our debt of gratitude to David Purnell for kick starting the recruitment process, to David Lingham for his assistance at the workshops and to Tom Longridge for his work on the recruitment website. Recruitment and retention of ringers must stay on the agenda.

15. **Association Striking Competitions**

Dates for 2011

6 bell in Bridgwater Branch on 18th June, 8 bell in Frome Branch on 24th September

Dates for 2012

6 bell in Cary Branch on 16th June, 8 bell in Glaston Branch on 29th September

16. **2012 AGM**

This will be held in the Taunton Branch on Easter Monday, 9th April 2012.

17. **Any other business**

- a. Michael Horseman suggested that as there had not been a collection at the service, a retiring collection could be made after this meeting. Agreed unanimously.
- b. The Master mentioned the possibility of contributing to any appeal for assistance from the Christchurch (NZ) ringers. The General Secretary agreed to report back after the Central Council meeting, where more information should be available. Any assistance is outside the scope of our Bell Fund.

18. **Votes of thanks**

Sheila Jenkins proposed the vote of thanks to:

Rev David Gent for allowing us to meet at All Saints' Martock and Rev Tim Hawkings for assisting with the service.

All those who have allowed their towers to be available on the day and those manning them.

Steve Salisbury, Martock's resident organist.

Those who have made the Parish Hall available on a bank holiday and the Martock Christian Fellowship for allowing the use of the Old George Inn car park.

Yvonne Nicholls and her team who have provided the Tea.

The committee, led by Gordon Rendell, who organised the whole event.

There being no other business the Master closed the meeting with a prayer at 4.23 pm.