

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION HELD IN
THE VILLAGE HALL, BISHOPS LYDEARD ON EASTER MONDAY 9th APRIL 2012**

Present: The Attendance Book records 109 people. Branches were represented as follows: Axbridge 21, Bath 3, Bridgwater 6, Cary 6, Chew 11, Crewkerne 6, Dunster 4, Frome 10, Glaston 1, Ilchester 9, Taunton 30, Visitors 2.

1. The Master opened the meeting with a moment of quiet and prayer at 3.05 pm.
2. Members who had died since the last AGM were remembered.
3. **Apologies for Absence** Apologies were recorded from: Jenny Astridge, Marjorie Legg, June Legg, Andrew Howard, Nellie Calascione, Albert Winter, Jenny Alderson, Peter Alderson, Chris Cawood, Derek Livsey, Stephen Powell, Eddie Hancock, Brian Wylde, Barbara Wylde, Brian Matthews, Keith Prime, Valerie Stone
4. **Young Ringer of the Year and Young Ringer Awards** The George Wareham trophy was presented to the Association Young Ringer of the Year Tobias Dando. Krystyna Masny was second and Saffron Prior third. All three received cheques from the Edna Grabham Memorial Education Fund. Jill Hansford introduced the Young Ringer Awards scheme and the Master commented that it was great to have so many youngsters here today and in the Association as a whole. He congratulated Jill Hansford and the Branch Education officers on their hard work during the past year. Monetary prizes and certificates were presented to those who had achieved stages in the Young Ringer Awards scheme.
5. **Notification of Any Other Business**
 - a. David Purnell - annual report
 - b. Michael Horseman - Association 125th anniversary
 - c. Keith Beale - Education, Bell Fund, Tower Advisory Service and Honorary Life membership
6. **Minutes of the 2011 Annual General Meeting** The minutes as printed in the 2011 Annual Report were unanimously approved and signed by the Master.
7. **Matters Arising** - Under 8 (e) Keith Beale asked what progress had been made with the new Association CD. Janet Wyatt apologised for the delays but had experienced difficulties making the recordings. Under 8 (f) Keith congratulated David Bromwich on his achievement in bringing George Massey's Bells of Somerset to print.
8. **Officers' Reports**
 - a. The Master asked for any imaginative ideas for ringing to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the Olympics. John Gilbert asked why ringing for the Olympics at 8 am had been suggested. It was pointed out that this proposal had come from a non-ringer and was not supported by the Central Council.
 - b. Keith Beale asked if further information was available on leavers, e.g. how long they had been a member before leaving/lapsing. This information is not currently available.
 - c. John Hallett thanked his Assistant Tower Advisers for their input. The Master noted that at the General Committee meeting concern had been expressed at the overall state of bell maintenance. Towers unable to carry out routine maintenance should seek help from their branch Bell Maintenance Contact. Courses are available at various levels and good maintenance handbooks are available. Keith Beale asked if Roland Backhurst and Mike Hansford would be organising presentations/training over the next 12 months. It was confirmed that this was planned.
 - d. Librarian - Copies of the Bells of Somerset were available for sale after the meeting. The Master warmly thanked David Bromwich for putting this book together. Ongoing updating will be required and at the general Committee meeting, Mathew Higby had offered to co-ordinate this.
 - e. Education Officer. Jill Hansford had nothing to add to her report and the Master thanked her for all her efforts in getting the Branch Education officers together, running new courses and expanding the Young Ringer of the Year programme.
 - f. Peal Secretary - 2011 had been a record year for peals and an extra 6 pages were required in the annual report. As a correction to the first peal listed on page 68, the ringer of the seventh was Donald B Carter.
 - g. Quarter Peal Secretary. A list of peals and quarters was shown on pages 91/92 of the annual report. Conductors should be aware that only performances published in the Ringing World are included in the listings.

All reports were accepted on the proposal of Michael Horseman, seconded by Pam Ebsworth and carried without dissent.

9. **Election of Officers for 2012-2013**

Proposed by Michael Horseman, seconded by Matthew Higby, that the General Committee recommendations for officers be accepted. Carried with abstentions from the listed officers and the following were therefore elected:

Master	Tim Hawkings
Deputy Master	Fred Sage
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
Bell Funds Officer	Margaret Lee
Web Maintainer	David Floyd
Independent Examiner	Paul Treby

Roger Fox then handed over the Deputy Master's chain of office to Fred Sage, commenting that he had attended 3 funerals and a Committee meeting during his term of office.

10. General Committee decisions

- a. Standing Committee Appointment: Richard Newman was appointed.
- b. David Floyd was elected an Honorary Life Member. David made a short speech saying how much he appreciated this recognition (especially for doing a job he enjoyed) and asked for a volunteer to assist with running the website.
- c. Bell Fund grants were allocated as shown:

Tower	Details	Contractor	Eligible cost	Grant
Timberscombe	Overhaul bearings on 1 & 2. Rehang back 6 on new metal headstocks, refurbish wheels, overhaul bearings, fit new stays, runners & sliders	Robert Parker	£9,000	£1,200
Milborne Port	Rehang all bells on new headstocks & bearings with new fittings. Re-tune. Ameliorate rope noise in intermediate chamber (this work, an additional £3,650, is not eligible for grant aid)	Taylor's	£47,763	£6,000
Crewkerne	Clean/paint frame. Replace clappers 1-6. Drill out cast in staples on 3,4 & 8. Replace bearings, sliders on 1-7, clean running boards. Replace ground pulleys	Robert Parker	£6,100	£800
East Brent	Overhaul pulleys, wheels, clappers and sliders. Tighten wheels on headstocks. Provide chute guides/slapper boards	Colin Freeman	£3,500	£500
Pitney	Rehang with new/refurbished fittings, retune, replace 2nd bell (for re-use as service bell), clean and treat frame.	Robert Parker	£15,137	£2,000

A revised, conservation compliant, application from Wookey was rejected by the Trustees and the previous grant offer withdrawn. John Gilbert asked why. In reply, the General Secretary offered a personal view of the background in that the planned repairs to the frame were not in keeping with recognised good practice. This was endorsed by Roland Backhurst, quoting the PCC's rejection of proposals to install a new frame with the old one retained above or the insertion of metal supporting joists. The General Committee's decision was roundly endorsed by the meeting.

- d. A sub committee has been set up to investigate the provision/purchase of professional looking recruitment material for future use.

11. Financial

a. Subscriptions and fees from 1 November 2012.

The General Committee's recommendation that subscriptions should be kept at £6 was carried.

The Treasurer outlined some thoughts on charging PCCs a higher affiliation fee if they paid by cheque rather than by standing order. A lively discussion followed and when this wandered considerably from the original theme, David Purnell proposed a move to the next business. A vote to leave affiliation fees as they are was carried with 3 abstentions and 2 votes against.

b. Central Council representative's expenses.

The General Committee recommendation was that these increase to £150 per representative. This figure was agreed with 5 abstentions and no votes against. The General Secretary thanked the membership for their generosity.

12. Ratification of election of non resident life members prior to peals

The belfry elections of Adam A Brady, Jonathan P Daniels, Harriet Dodd, E C Gareth Higgs, Cynthia Howells, Anthony J Knox, Karen Le Bon, Julia A Lysaght, Steven Rowe, Clare L Stagg, Ruth Stokes and Christopher Stokes were ratified on the proposal of Christine Andrew, seconded by Clifford Nicholls.

13. Association Striking Competitions

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| 2012 | 6 Bell Competition in Cary Branch on 16th June (heats at Maperton, Horsington and South Cadbury, final at Templecombe) |
| | 8 Bell Competition in Glaston Branch on 29th September (Oxford Bob Triples at Butleigh) |
| 2013 | 6 Bell Competition in Chew Branch on 15th June |
| | 8 Bell Competition in Ilchester Branch on 28th September |

14. 2013 AGM

This will be held in the Axbridge Branch on Easter Monday, 1st April 2013.

15. Any other business

- a. David Purnell felt that the current annual report was difficult to read due to smaller print and a dark cover. David Floyd agreed that the cover was not good. However, smaller print was required to maintain 96 pages, this being the maximum size for stapling.
- b. Michael Horseman asked if there would be a dinner in 2015, this being the 125th anniversary of the Association's foundation. It was confirmed that the General Committee had already flagged this up.
- c. Keith Beale highlighted the need for trainers and asked if there was a register of people willing to help with training. Jill Hansford confirmed that this would be investigated by the Education Committee.
- d. Keith Beale praised the work planned for Milborne Port but was concerned that the Bell Fund Terms of Reference did not cover the scrapping of an old ring such as Wedmore and replacing them with a new ring. Mike Hansford pointed out that a precedent had been set at South Petherton. Keith felt that we should bear in mind the conservation of our bell heritage in Somerset as once a heavy ring goes, it is never replaced. As a county, we are famous for our heavy bells. David Purnell stated that you cannot dispose of listed bells so Wedmore cannot be scrapped. Mike Hansford confirmed that Wedmore have not yet received a faculty for any work and that the CBC could be approached regarding de-listing. Until a further application was received nothing was happening. The DAC examines applications very carefully when listed bells are concerned. Whilst appreciating what had been said, Keith Beale asked that as a ringing association we should preserve our bells and keep them in the county.
- e. Details were given about open days (ringing and non ringing) at Uphill.

16. Votes of thanks

Roger Fox proposed the vote of thanks to:

Rev Tim Hawkins for taking the service and his shawm playing, and to the organist of Bishops Lydeard.

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

The team who have provided the Tea.

The Taunton Branch officers, especially Mike and Jill Hansford, for masterminding the event.

There being no other business the Master closed the meeting with a prayer at 4.32 pm.