



Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of The Surrey Association of Church Bellringers held on Saturday 12 May 2018

Kate Flavell, Master, welcomed the members to the meeting. She thanked Kirsty Anderson for taking the service, Nick MacMahon for playing the organ and Ann Beirne and her team of Merstham ringers for organising the Ringers' Tea.

1 Apologies for absence

These were received from Sheila Marsh (Lingfield), David & Marianne Bell (Limpsfield), Jill Wigney (Barnes), Mike Bangham (Kingston), Malcolm McAlister (Mortlake), David & Sarah Gilmore, Andrew Hamilton (Reigate), Margaret Zandona (Ockley), Sarah Percival (Richmond), Ed & Val Muller (Bletchingley), Colin Friend, Louise Booth (Bermondsey), Hilary Brooks (Walton), Gavin Bennett (Southwark), John Young (Ockham), David Wallis (Godstone), Sandie Hooper (Bletchingley), Matt Cousins (Merstham), Vicky Williams (Nutfield), Sarah Hughes, Gerard Ryan, Dorcas Johnson (Putney), Anne Anthony (Banstead).

2 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Merton on Saturday 13 May 2017

These had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. They were approved unanimously, and the Master signed them as being an accurate record.

Kate asked for a minute silence to remember the ringers who had died since the last meeting; Jean Kimber, George Swallow, Michael Chase, Don Fitzgerald, Charles Turnbull, Colin Yandle, Wilfred Dunn and Ron Napper.

3 Matters arising

15.6 The last item under AOB Anne Rueff asked the same question that she asked last year about the Hub in the Southern District being on the ART website although nothing was present on the Surrey Association website. Chris Baldwin replied that nothing had been submitted by the organiser for inclusion on the Association's website.

15.3 Michael Shelley asked about the Ecclesiastical Insurance cover for those members over 65 years old, working above the ringing chamber. Kate Flavell asked Robin Grant for some clarification as he had asked the same question last year and Kate had replied to him later. Robin stated that he was unaware of restrictions on the insurance. Kate said that she would investigate this again.

Action: Kate Flavell (Post-meeting note: This had been resolved in 2017, when Kate had been assured by those on the Central Council who meet regularly with Ecclesiastical Insurance that their standard church personal accident insurance policy covers those aged between 3 and 80 with no restriction on location. Public Liability insurance does not have any age limits. They have not heard of any reference to "above ringing chamber level".)

4 General Committee Report and General Fund Accounts

The new Annual Report had been issued that day and the relevant pages for today's meeting published on the website about a fortnight ago. Richard Wallis said that the General Fund Accounts (pages 18 & 19) now have the Libby LeBihan Legacy separated from the rest of the accounts. For another year there had been a deficit after payment of the Fellowship Grants. Page 16 lists this year's recipients and how to apply for such a grant. The adoption of the accounts and report were proposed by Jeremy Cheesman and seconded by Susan Gibbin. The meeting voted unanimously to accept them.

5 Belfry Repair Fund Report and Accounts

5.1 It was commented that a grant of £250 had been awarded to Ewhurst. Jeremy Cheesman said that Ewhurst was in the ancient county of Surrey and, therefore, eligible to apply for a grant.

Given it was outside our active area, the General Committee had agreed the BRF's recommendation to offer a nominal sum. The Report and Accounts were proposed by Jeremy Cheesman and seconded by Kate Wills. The meeting voted unanimously to accept the Report.

5.2 The Numbers Club including the quarterly and annual draws were then made. The winning number 20 for the quarterly draw of £126.10 belonged to Anne Rueff. The winning number 79 for the annual draw of £385.94 belonged to Judy Couperthwaite.

5.3 Jeremy Cheesman then explained that the amount distributed in the draws was not changing but the number of prizes would change with two prizes each month. There would be more opportunity of winning, but the size of the prizes would be reduced.

5.4 The BRF were looking for someone to take over the running of the clothing sales. Frances Clementi, who had run the sale of for many years, said she would be willing to speak to anyone who would consider taking over the role. Kate Wills stated that she would take over the role once she retired. However, the Committee was still looking for someone who would take on the role in the short term. **Action: BRF Committee**

6 Training Group Report and Accounts

Lawrence Davis said that as people did not return to the centre at the end of the two Association Training Days, it meant that very few people were coming back to look at the books and other items that are on sale at the central point.

There was nothing to add to the Training Group Report and Accounts were proposed by Paul Flavell and seconded by Martin Crick. The members voted unanimously to accept them.

7 Communications Officer's Report

Chris Baldwin reminded the ringers of the various ways of staying in touch with the Association; Yahoo groups, Twitter, Website and Facebook. The Report was proposed by Chris Baldwin and seconded by Caroline Prescott. This was accepted unanimously by the members.

8 Central Council 2018 - Major changes proposed

Kate Flavell outlined the major changes to the CC which will be discussed at Lancaster later this month. She explained CRAG and its importance to the Association. Kate Flavell's report is included as an Appendix. There were no questions from those present.

9 Motions received from members:

a) It is proposed that a change to the rules of the Association is made to remove the requirement for a resident ringing member or non-resident member to be elected by Ordinary Resolution of the Association or of a District. Membership to be confirmed instead, on receipt of a completed membership form and payment of subscriptions.

Proposed by Chris Baldwin (Croydon Minster), seconded by Martin Crick (Richmond).

Chris Baldwin presented the motion. The current membership of the Association is approximately 600. He said many members are disengaged and take no part in the wider activities of the Association beyond their own tower. It is an objective of the Association to improve the engagement of the membership. Chris stated that there is currently no membership list and it was felt that this prevents the Association from fully engaging with the membership. The more recent online membership application had resulted in the capture of email addresses for the new members.

Martin Crick seconded the motion and added that he absolutely felt that the approach of having a formal vote is a bit of a barrier to members joining.

Jeremy Cheesman, on a point of clarification, stated that we do have a list of members however we do not have all members' email or postal addresses so that we can contact them directly.

Trisha Shannon asked about what would happen at a nomination meeting? It was explained that the proposal does not affect the nomination and election of officers.

Richard Wallis felt that the Association does not offer members anything that non-members do not

get. He wished to state that the proposal had not been agreed by the General Committee.

Charlotte Kirwan felt that communication via email was difficult for a person that does not have email access and that someone within the tower would need to take responsibility for disseminating information.

Robin Grant recounted how honoured he felt when he was voted in to the Association.

Shirley McGill stated that new members usually do not attend meetings and therefore do not feel they want to hear their names read out.

Jan Herd asked about people who don't want to be part of the Yahoo group, how would they find out what was going on in the Association?

Alan Cooke asked why this rule was put in the first place. Chris believed that when the Association was founded that was how most organisations organised their membership.

David Bassford felt that it is more than just a change of the rules. Our objective is to build fellowship.

The motion was put to an ordinary resolution and during the count, Daniel Hughes and Margaret Brueton (non- members) acted as tellers. There were 49 in favour, 3 against and 5 abstentions.

It was agreed that the practice of reading out new members' names at a meeting would continue.

b) Mindful of the unusual circumstances prevailing this year with the introduction of complex and wide-reaching data protection legislation (commonly referred to as GDPR) the General Committee requests a change to rule 39 so that the General Committee could make changes to the rules to enable the Association to comply with new laws.

Proposed by Chris Baldwin (Croydon Minster), seconded by Martin Crick (Richmond).

Martin explained that it was a technical issue. The General Committee needs to be able to make temporary technical changes to the rules to comply with new laws on behalf of the Association then get them ratified at a meeting.

Simon Beirne felt that there was a lack of debate and he felt that the proposal to a rule change needed to be brought to the next meeting. It needs to be widely circulated.

Robin Grant felt that the changes should be brought to the next Annual General Meeting for a vote.

Jeremy Cheesman asked under what circumstances could an EGM be raised. Richard Wallis read out rule 33 which covered the circumstances of raising an EGM when a Master or 12 members could request one.

Chris Baldwin felt that it was better to have the General Committee make the decisions on behalf of the Association, rather than have something imposed by whoever turned up to the EGM.

Caroline Prescott said that if members felt strongly about an issue then they will turn up to the EGM.

Michael Shelley suggested that if General Committee needed to put a rule change in place then this could be ratified by members at an AGM/EGM but if there was something that needed the Association members to change a rule then the General Committee already had the authority to call an EGM.

Jack Pease stated that if a proposal was circulated and there were 12 people who do not agree with it, then they can call an EGM.

Kate Flavell suggested that any proposed rule change be circulated via email and website to give members 30 days' notice in which they could object to the change and make comments. This would give a notice period before the rule change came into effect. The General Committee would vote on any rule change, this will then be advertised via web site and email and if there is no objection then the rule can be ratified at the next AGM. **Action: General Committee**

Daniel Hughes (non-member) counted the votes for the ordinary resolution and the motion was carried unanimously.

10 Forthcoming Events

The Quarter Peal Week had started, and ringers were asked to put successes on BellBoard and link to the event, so they could be published together.

The Call Change Striking Competition is to be held at Barnes on 16 June.

The Ringing Remembers initiative would include Alan Regin giving a short talk about the ringers who lost their lives during the two world wars at an event at Barnes on 20 October.

Forthcoming training opportunities were advertised.

On 21 July, there will be a taster session for a potential new band at Mitcham.

11 Election of New Members

Honorary Life Members – Andrew Robinson (Merton Park) was elected under the 30 year rule.

Resident Members - Ingrid Rolland (Outwood), Stuart Brett (Oxted), Tony Green (Bletchingley), David Bath (Croydon Minster), Emily Pie (Dorking), Daniel Hughes (Junior Member, Addington) were all elected – subject to imminent receipt of membership application forms in three cases.

12 Election of Officers

Kate Flavell said that it had been a great privilege for her to be the Ringing Master of The Surrey Association. She wished to place on record her huge thanks; to the District Masters who had been responsible for making so many events happen; to all the training group for tirelessly trying to improve the ringing within the Association; to the BRF, those responsible for selling clothing; to those responsible for running the Numbers Club; the Communications Officer, who kept the website and social media up and running and to Richard Wallis, General Secretary, for the fantastic job that he does in keeping all the different elements of the Association on track.

Kate handed the chair over to the President, Bob Cooles, to oversee the election of new Officers of the Association. Bob thanked Kate for the work which she had done over the last 3 years and acting as an ambassador for the Association.

There had been one nomination for each post and he declared them elected:

Master	Noel Gibbin
Secretary	Richard Wallis
Assistant Secretary	Milica Reardon
BRF Secretary	Malcolm McAlister
Training Officer	Paul Flavell
Communications Officer	Chris Baldwin

Also, the election of Independent Examiner, with one nomination received, Andrew Robinson was declared elected.

Noel thanked Kate for the work that she had done over her term of office. He particularly wished to thank her for the wonderful rock cakes that she had provided during the Committee meetings.

13 Future Annual General Meeting

Saturday 11 May 2019: As this year's AGM had been held in the Southern District next year, it would traditionally be the turn of the Northern District to host it. No offers were forthcoming, so the Northern District Committee would investigate. **Action: ND Committee**

14 Any Other Business

Charlotte Kirwan stated that she would like to have an enamel badge. Noel said he would investigate this. **Action: Noel Gibbin**

Ian Griffiths said that during some local training events some of the Oxted stays had been broken and he stated that there seems to be a shortage of 3"x 4" ash from local sources. Sue Dixon said that the Guildford Guild sell ash stays and suggested putting this enquiry out on Yahoo to find a list of useful suppliers. Noel asked the BRF committee to consider obtaining and providing advice.

Action: BRF Committee

David Gilmore had sent an email stating that Reigate have a new service that he would like to ring for tomorrow from 4.30 - 5.15.

Noel thanked Frances Clementi for all the work she had done over the years selling clothing on behalf of the Association. He thanked Richard Wallis for single-handedly organising a highlight of the year - the Quiz Night which involved him arranging the tables and chairs, organising the food, collecting the money, writing the questions and marking the quiz as well as coping with any queries. It was a very well-attended and enjoyable evening.

The meeting closed at 7.50pm with further ringing at Merstham.

APPENDIX

Central Council Reform – Agenda Item 8

Last year Kate explained how the Central Council had set up a review group known as CRAG to carry out a fundamental review of how the Council was structured and operated. The report presented at last year's Council meeting in Edinburgh was adopted. This required certain work to be completed by this May and for new rules to be voted on at the 2018 meeting in Lancaster, with other work to take longer. So, there are to be major rule changes proposed at the meeting later this month. You can see the details online and various summaries have been published in the Ringing World. In today's meeting I can't possibly cover everything, but I will try to give a very brief overview.

- The Executive – As well as the Officers elected last May, four additional individuals were appointed to the transitional Executive team in September 2017. They have been working already in shadow form. The Executive will be the officers of the Council plus four elected members. Five have been nominated and an election will take place at the meeting.
- Workgroups will replace committees, with a Workgroup lead for each. Two rounds of "expressions of interest" took place, and Workgroup Leads were announced in November 2017. These Leads have been working with their Executive "sponsors" to establish initial terms of reference and scope of work. Although working in "shadow" until May 2018, it's important that they are well prepared for their tasks in advance of those crucial enabling votes.

Workgroup	Leader
Volunteer & Leadership Development	Tim Hine (Staffordshire)
Stewardship & Management	Alison Hodge (Worcestershire)
Historical & Archive	Doug Hird (Buckinghamshire)
Technical & Taxonomy	Graham John (Berkshire)
Communications & Marketing	Louise Nightingale (Kent)

No Surrey reps are on any of the new workgroups as far as I know, although I have not been able to find a complete list of all the members anywhere. I am standing down from my involvement with PR and Paul is standing down from his work on compositions. We both feel that we have contributed very many years of our lives to the Council and it is now someone else's turn, although we both remain as Surrey representatives for now and will continue to work for the success of the new Council and for the Surrey Association as an affiliated society.

Rules/Constitution – The work of structural reform requires a complete re-write of the CCCBR "Rules". Two consultation phases have taken place, and circulation of the latest version of the rulebook was in late February.

- Methods/Framework – One of the core CRAG proposals is to replace the methods "decisions" with a "descriptive permissive framework". A group to do this was been established, coordinated by Tim Barnes, and their consultation continues.
- Direct Channel – CRAG proposed that we develop ways for individuals to directly engage with the central ringing organisation – direct communication and direct representation. This requires an enormous shift in our structures but offering great potential for a more cohesive and representative body.

During the period 2018 – 2020, the Council's strategic objectives can be summarised as follows:

1. To recruit and develop new learners and new leaders
2. To engage maturely with the Church and other relevant stakeholders
3. To continue to raise positive public awareness of ringing
4. To celebrate and promote the historical legacy of ringing
5. To promote excellence in standards
6. To increase direct participation in the Central ringing organisation's activities.