

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD of CHURCH BELLRINGERS

Chipping Norton Branch

Minutes of the AGM held at Chadlington on Saturday 24th March 2018

1. Chairman's welcome

Ken Wakefield welcomed 14 Branch members. A minute of silence was observed for the two branch members who had died recently, Betty Hawtin, of Chipping Norton, and Victor Merry, of Charlbury.

2. Vote of thanks

Thanks were expressed to the Revd. Mark Abrey for the use of the church and for leading the service, and the Chadlington ringers and others for the refreshments.

3. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from the Guild Master, the Deputy Master, the General Treasurer, the Guild Steward and 5 branch members. All are recorded in the attendance book.

4. Notification of items of Any Other Business

There would be a Branch Representative's report in addition to those listed.

5. Presentation of the Claire Tarrant Award

The winner of the 2018 Award was Daniel Glyde. Nigel Harrison would present the award to Daniel the next day. It was encouraging that several nominations had been made for the award. A reminder was given that nominations for the award should be sent to the chairman by 31st December. Nicki Unwin suggested that the criteria considered for the award should be included on the website.

6. Minutes of the October Branch Meeting 2017

These were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

7. Matters arising

Special practices would be discussed later in the meeting.

8. Correspondence

This is emailed to tower captains and branch members as appropriate.

9. New members

Karen Roberts and John Taylor, both of Burford tower were elected (prop. Nigel Harrison, sec. Jo Cook).

10. Secretary's report

The 2017 CN Branch AGM was held at Charlbury, where all of the Branch officers were re-elected.

A Tower Captains' meeting was held in June, the Branch Autumn meeting followed the October practice at Kingham and a Branch Officers' meeting took place in January.

No further members have been elected since the Branch AGM. We had 85 members in 2017 and six honorary members, five of these no longer ring.

The number attending Branch practices has ranged from 10 to 21. With a few exceptions, it is mainly the same people who attend these. The particular weekday evening and venue also influence those attending.

As before, practices have been arranged across the whole of the Branch with the intention of encouraging those from the home tower and local benefice to join in.

Branch news has been reported in the ODG newsletter Odd Bob, published in May and November.

Ten Branch newsletters were sent out in 2017. The Guild report for 2017 has now been distributed.

Fund-raising has been taking place at Ascott-under-Wychwood for the repairs needed to the tenor bell and the frame. Shipton-u-Wychwood tower has major work planned. It is hoped that there will be updates on Burford and Taynton later.

I would like to thank the Branch officers for their help, Mike Summers for his technical expertise, Les for keeping the information up to date on the website and all our tower contacts and members who have helped in various ways. C.H.

The following tower updates were given.

Shipton-u-Wychwood

Joy Brooks reported that the restoration work to be carried out by Taylors at Shipton-u-Wychwood was scheduled to begin in September with completion expected in the first week of December. £55,000 had been raised, with £15,000 more needed to reach the total. Two grants are still outstanding.

Ascott-u-Wychwood

Work to the frame would include shot-blasting.

11. Chairman's report

Ken referred to the recent deaths of Betty Hawtin and Victor Merry who had both loyally supported their respective towers for many years. He also mentioned that other members were unwell and undergoing medical procedures. He congratulated Mike and Denise Summers and Bob and Verity Calderan on their Golden Wedding anniversaries, also Mick and Sally Austin on their Silver Wedding anniversary.

He thanked the Branch officers for their work and those who support Sunday service ringing.

12. Treasurer's report

GENERAL ACCOUNT

85 subscriptions were received in 2017. £100.00 was transferred into the Branch Bell Fund and a donation of £100.00 was given to the ODBF which was acknowledged with gratitude by the General Treasurer.

The balance at the end of 2017 was £767.57 and with the income from this year's subs it now stands at £1031.57.

BRANCH BELL FUND

The end of year balance was £4349.90

There is an accumulation of interest of £426.06 although £300 of this has already been allocated for the projects at Ascott-u-Wychwood and Shipton-u-Wychwood (£150 each tower) upon the completion of the work. No applications for further grants from the Bell Fund have been made.

I would like to record my thanks to Gavin Southwell, who has examined these accounts.

Chris Harris proposed that the accounts should be approved. Seconded by Mike Summers. All in favour.

Branch Bell Fund

Last year we transferred £100.00 to the Branch Bell Fund.

Mike Summers proposed that £100.00 should be transferred to the Branch Bell Fund.

Seconded by Jo Cook. All in favour.

Oxford Diocesan Bell Fund

Last year the branch gave a donation of £100.00 to the Oxford Diocesan Bell Fund.

Sally Austin proposed that £100.00 should be donated to the ODBF. Seconded by Peter Kenrick. All in favour.

Thank you to all who have helped with the collection of this year's subs.

So far 82 subscriptions have been forwarded to the Assistant General Treasurer for 2018

13. Branch Ringing Master's report (Nigel Harrison)

Branch practices

Most of the monthly branch practices have again been held on the usual practice night of the host tower, with a meeting in October after the practice at Kingham. We have continued to ask that those coming to practices write down what methods they would like to ring, and generally this has helped the organization of the practices.

For the May practice at Chastleton we concentrated on Plain Bob Minor and St Clements Minor. Generally, however, at branch practices we have adapted the ringing to what ringers present have opted for at the practice. We have aimed to choose as many different towers as possible, but we have this year been slightly handicapped by the towers at Enstone, Taynton and Burford being out of action for repairs. Burford is now fully restored and improved, and Taynton should hopefully be operational again in April, with three new bells and other major restoration works. At Taynton, we are very grateful for help from many local ringers, who have assisted the bellhangers and the volunteer labour force, in particular with the installation of sound control.

In arranging Branch practices (and special practices) we have tried to strike a balance between towers with the most desirable bells and those which provide the most space for those ringing and those wanting to stand behind ringers. In this context, it could be argued that we should try to make more use of eight bell towers for ringing Doubles or Minor methods.

Special practices

As requested, we have increased the number of special practices. These have taken place on the third Tuesday of most months. There has been much demand for Plain Bob Doubles, Grandsire Doubles and Plain Bob Minor. The latest practice at Enstone demonstrated the benefit of these practices, with students having made significant improvement in ringing Grandsire Doubles from the previous such practice. More advanced practices were also arranged: one for Plain Bob Triples and Grandsire Triples, and one for St Clements Minor, Cambridge and Norwich Surprise Minor.

For future special practices, it has been suggested that we might add to this repertoire separate practices for Stedman (Doubles and Triples) and Doubles variations. It is also planned to have a Surprise Major practice jointly with Witney and Woodstock Branch.

Congratulations to Howard Bell and John Evanson of Shipton-under-Wychwood on ringing their first quarter peals. Branch members are requested to contact the Ringing Master, or the Assistant Ringing Masters, if they would like to practise any particular methods or other ringing either at Branch practices or at other special practices.

I would like to thank the Branch Officers and all those who have helped with the practices, in particular the Assistant Ringing Masters, Keith Mitchell and Mick Austin, whose help has been invaluable.

Mike Summers expressed the appreciation of many for the special practices that had been arranged over the year.

Sally Austin stated that she felt that 8 bell-towers should be used to allow those who do not have the opportunity to ring on 8 bells to do so, including plain hunt on 7 or 8 and triples

13a.Branch Representative's report

David Hopewell reported on the recent ODG General Committee meeting that had been held at Little Milton on 10th March. He referred members to the Guild Report that had just been published which contained reports from various sub-committees. All towers with members receive a copy of the report and it is hoped that members will take time to look at this.

The ODG website is undergoing a re-launch and this should be available for a preview at the ODG AGM at Bodicote on 12th May. Other important issues under consideration include safe-guarding in towers and data – protection. Armistice ringing, the procedures to be followed in the event of the death of the sovereign and other members of the Royal Family are also under discussion.

At the AGM, Hilarie Rogers will be standing down as Master as too will the Public Relations Officer. The Safe-guarding Officer is looking to hand over that role to a younger person.

Members will be asked to vote on grants of £1000 each to the ODBF and Restoration Fund, £250 to the Ringing World and £500 to the Association of Ringing Teachers (ART).

There was discussion as to the purpose of the ODG and how to further that purpose.

14. Webmaster's report

The year has been totally uneventful so far as regards the Branch website. I have continued to upload the monthly newsletters which are provided by Chris Harris, together with any other pieces of news that I am aware of. However I am aware that the website is now a little stale, this is almost entirely due to the lack of new information or pictures. It is very disappointing that, although we have twenty towers in the branch, no one ever provides updated information. To outsiders viewing our site it must appear that nothing ever happens apart from bell practices and Sunday ringing.

Tower captains please let me know if any of your ringers go on courses, visit other towers, ring for special occasions, etc. Just a few words will do together with a photograph if at all possible. Send the information to me by email to les@waller-family.com or webmaster@chippy.odg.org.uk and I will do the rest.

I am willing to continue in the role for another year if this is what the branch wants.

Les Waller

15. Election of Officers:

Chairman Ken Wakefield

Vice-Chairman Sally Austin

Secretary Christine Harris

Treasurer Christine Harris

Ringing Master Nigel Harrison

Training Officer Nigel Harrison

Assistant Ringing Masters Mick Austin and Keith Mitchell

Branch Representative David Hopewell

Webmaster Les Waller

Newsletter editor Christine Harris

Branch Contact for PR Tony Merry

17. Future events:

ODBF Ringing Day Monday 7th May 2018

C.H. reported that twenty-two towers would be open for ringing and that offers to help with the stewarding are needed.

18. A.O.B.

There was none.

K.W. said that a Tower Captains' meeting would be arranged most probably in June.

Members were reminded that the next Branch practice would be held at Shipton-u-Wychwood on Wednesday 4th April. The meeting closed at 5.53pm.