

## Coventry Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers

### Minutes of the Guild Meeting held in Allesley on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2019 beginning at 4.30pm.

1. Andrew Alldrick(AA) opened the meeting by welcoming so many members, 75, in total and also welcoming the Church Warden from Snitterfield.
2. The results of the 8 bell inter district Striking Competition are as follows.

Team	Score	Position
Rugby B	3.5	1st
Warwick Bashers	4.5	2nd
Coventry 1	8	3rd
Warwick Crashers	10.5	4th
Youth Team	19	5th
Coventry 2	25	6th
Rugby A	31.5	7th

- a. Mark Sayers and Nathan Gould(judges) said how rewarding it had been to see a full complement of teams from across the Guild and how well the teams had rung.
  - b. Chris Mew thanked the judges and presented them with a small token of thanks.
3. Apologies for absence were received from John and June Slack of Rugby; Roger Howes of Lillington; Kathryn McCarthy of Tredington; Clarke Walters and Catherine Jamieson of Clifton on Dunsmore and Clare Gould of Leek Wootton.
  4. The minutes of the AGM held on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April at Ryton on Dunsmore had been published on the website and the meeting agreed they could be taken as read. Joy Pluckrose(JP) proposed and seconded by John Newbold, the minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting which was agreed unanimously by the members.
  5. Matters arising out of the minutes
    - a. On the 12<sup>th</sup> October a First Aid course had been run at Ryton on Dunsmore aimed at helping ringers cope with medical emergencies in the ringing room. Avril Harris and Mark Chaplin said how much they had learned from the course and how much they had enjoyed it. Mark Butler, a ringer at Leamington Spa, was the tutor and he was

presented with a small gift and a Guild badge on behalf of the Guild. AA also thanked Mark and encouraged other members with specific skills to see if they could run workshops to help fellow ringers.

6. Three members had passed away since the last meeting.
  - a. Sue Marshall
  - b. Frank Spiers
  - c. Jill Roberts.
    - i. The meeting stood in respect to the memory of the departed and AA read a prayer. (Obituaries in App 1.)

7. New members appointed at District meetings

- a. The following members had been appointed at District Meetings.

Sylvia Branion	Monks Kirby	David Townshend	Dunchurch
Lauren Fowler	Dunchurch	Maddison Pratt	Dunchurch

- b. Non-resident life members appointed:

Richard Thumwood	Swindon	Rose Horton	Smethwick
Nicholas Wilson	Maidwell	Jonathon Pawley	Leighton Buzzard
Daniel Illiffe	Market Harborough	Alison Molyneux	Derby

8. New members appointed at the meeting: Bill Haynes of Brinklow.
9. JP gave a brief outline of the Central Council meeting which was held in London 6-8 September. Reports are on the website and also in the newsletter. (see APP2). AA congratulated Chris Mew on having achieved 50 years on the council, although for different associations. AA also questioned whether the Guild still needed to send 4 representatives. JP said it was only official Guild reps who could vote, although the meetings were open to everyone to attend. As the changes to the CC continue to develop it will be possible for individuals to be members for which they will pay a fee.
  - a. Mike Chester asked Chris Mew as a member of the old CC before the reforms, how he saw the changes. The committees are now work groups and the head of each group is appointed by the Exec.

Experts can be brought into the work group, who are not necessarily CC reps. The Exec meets more frequently, often by skype, and makes decisions affecting the council. Information flows more easily through email, newsletter and social media.

- b. The CC remains the focus for PR, for Government when they want the bells rung and as a mouth piece for ringers as a whole.

#### 10. Guild Officers

- a. David Leafe, the Guild's Independent Examiner has given notice he wishes this to be the last year he fulfils the role. The Guild are grateful for David's contribution and wish to appoint a successor. The role has been advertised in the newsletter and on the website and it is hoped a member will come forward. (App3)
- b. New CC Reps will need appointing at the next AGM. Chris Mew and Becki Johnson have resigned and Annie Hall and JP will have completed 3 years on the council. Next years meeting will be held on 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> September in Nottingham.
- c. Richard Spray from Studley was presented with his 50 year membership certificate.

- 11. Simon Rogers presented the following claims for grants from the BRF. The applications had all been discussed at the General Committee meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> September..

Name	Tower	Total	Amt claimed	Work to be carried out	Suggested Grant	Proposal at the meeting
Richard Spray	Studley	2397.6	2397.6	Rebush clappers. Install bell rope roller boxes. Overhaul and new bearings on 2nd 4th 5th and tenor	£1000	Seconded by John Newbold, agreed unanimously
				new roller boxes		
Jane Rogers	St Nicks Warwick	3200	3200	Painting the frame	£1600	Seconded by Peter Hollings, agreed by meeting

John Foster, Church Warden at **Snitterfield** addressed the meeting about the rehangng of the bells at his church. Although not a ringer, his late wife was and

he will be giving one of the bells in her memory. The faculty was obtained in April and the fund raising is going well. They are hoping the Guild will also help with local labour to reduce costs. The bells were cast in 1888, rehung in 1946. Mark Sayers asked that on one of the head stocks, an inscription could be included to Michael Grey, a past President and General Secretary of the Guild.

John Foster	Snitterfield	49465	38000	rehanging	£25,000	
						Seconded by Chris Mew, agreed by meeting

Graham Nabb addressed the meeting regarding the application to augment **Radway** to 6 in memory of his wife, Sue Marshall. In addition, they are hoping to put in a balcony from where the bells will be rung. Again, they are hoping to make use of local labour to reduce costs and the Kelteck trust have donated £6,500. The faculty for the work was still to be granted, but Keith Chambers(KC) was confident this would be shortly. Taylors will accept the order to cast the bell when the notice is put on the church door giving parishioners 28 days to comment.

JP commented we had never had a Guild member from Radway and asked who would ring the new bells? Graham responded it was a joint band with Kineton and they ring for services and special occasions.

Chris Mew informed the meeting he had taught a band at Radway in the 1980s.

Brian Douthwaite	Radway	15000	9000	augmenting to 6	£4,500	Seconded by Chris Mew, agreed by meeting
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Two further applications had been received from Warwick. Bob Taylor commented there were a lot of requests from these two towers. Simon Rogers and Annie Hall declared their interest as ringers at both towers, but said the BRF was available to all towers.

Geoff Randall	St Marys Warwick	424.8	424.8	Rebushing clappers, overhauling 2 clappers	£215	Seconded by John Newbold, agreed unanimously
Simon Rogers	St Nicks Warwick	1020	500	Rebushing clappers and work on reshaping clapper balls for 1-5+tenor.	£500	Seconded by Peter Hollings, agreed by meeting

Two late applications had been received, since the Guild Committee meeting. There was discussion whether they should be submitted as they had not been scrutinised by the trustees. Mike Chester asked for a rule change so the Trustees could consider individual claims, below a certain figure, and pay them without the agreement of the General meeting. **Action Trustees before AGM**

Mary Sue Statie	Barford	658.8	658.8	overhauling bushes, 6 garter sleeves	250	Seconded by Bob Taylor and agreed by the meeting.
Gerald Trevor	Wolvey	1009	1009	rebushing cappers, replacement of stop block.	500	Seconded by Chris Worley and agreed by the meeting

The amount claimed by Barford was dependent on the amount of labour the Guild supplied. It was agreed Mark Sayers would help take out and replace the clappers, if Barford arranged to transport them to Taylors.

12. Youth Team. Annie Hall informed the meeting the Guild Youth Team, Coventry Spires, had performed well at the RWNYC held in Liverpool during July. The team meet regularly, and Alec Chaplin and Sammi Brett are arranging monthly practices on Sunday afternoon which are proving very popular. Next year's competition is being held in York on 5<sup>th</sup> July.

13. Dates for the diary,

- a. 31st October: Youth team Halloween outing.
- b. 2nd November: Warwick District Quiz and supper at Aston Cantlow. Ringing will be at Alcester and Aston.
- c. 23rd November: Guild Training Morning.
- d. 9th November Improvers workshop Ryton on Dunsmore

- e. 14th December Guild Carol service in the Rugby Deanery.
    - i. It had been hoped to hold the carol service at Newbold on Avon. However, it could not begin until 6.00 and the meeting thought this was too late. A new venue to be sought.
  - f. 11th January 2020 Guild Social in the Rugby Deanery
  - g. 21st March Guild 6 bell striking competition in Henley in Arden.
  - h. 25<sup>th</sup> April Guild AGM will be held at Bidford on Avon,
14. Correspondence had been received from the following towers:
- a. Ashow. Bob Taylor has been working with the Church warden to establish the state of the bells and how they could be repaired. Taylors carried out a report a few years ago and they are being contacted to review the situation.
  - b. Ullenhall. John Newbold had inspected the bells, which were found to be a poor condition. The church are very keen to fit an electronic ringing machine which will warrant the bells unringable. John and a number of volunteers were hoping to do some remedial work, and will be keeping a keen watch on progress. He was advised to gain some professional help to ensure his, and the bells safety.
  - c. Long Itchington. Keith Chambers had visited Taylors with Mark Carver Smith, who is very keen to promote the restoration and augmentation of the bells to 6. The issue is the Vicar has many more pressing matters to attend. The cost would be in the region of £70,000. Full details in App 4
15. AOB. Sally Idle thanked the ringers at Allesley for the excellent refreshments which had been available during the afternoon.
16. The meeting closed at 6.15 and the draw club took place.

App 1.

**Susan Elizabeth Marshall**

**15th February 1960- 7th July 2019**



Sue and Graham on their wedding day in Stratford Upon Avon, 18<sup>th</sup> July 2019.

Without doubt, Sue was one of the most talented ringers of her generation. Equally capable on tower bells and handbells, with an immaculate handling style, precision striking and a natural sense of rhythm, she was confident ringing anywhere in the circle and an asset to any band. Sue was one of only a tiny handful of people to have rung over 2000 peals, over 2000 quarter peals and at over 5500 different towers. She was very competitive, had boundless energy and enthusiasm, was highly organised and was incredibly focused on achieving the targets that she set for herself in life. Much has been written about Sue's contribution to ringing but I will focus on her time in our area.

Sue and Graham moved to Kineton in 2006 and invigorated ringing in their area of the Guild. She taught at the junior school for Warwick School until she took early retirement in 2015. Sue was much loved by her pupils, not just for her caring and imaginative teaching style but also for the wide range of extra-curricular activities that she organised for them, including bell ringing (both tower bells and handbells), playing various musical instruments, horse riding, cross-country running and residential trips to the Pembrokeshire coast.

During their time in Warwickshire, Sue rang on average 120 quarter peals per year, with about 400 of those recording a first performance of one sort or another. She rang over 1400 with Graham, over 500 with John and Lucy Gwynne and 340 with Becki Johnson.

In November 2018, she received the news she had terminal breast cancer and took the brave decision to forgo chemotherapy and make the most of the time she had left. Her pink fizz list became legendary as she fulfilled many of her ambitions. She continued to remain well and the original pink fizz list became a second list and then a third.

In June, her energy began to drain and she moved to Myton Hospice, which she loved. So many people wanted to visit her, Graham had to carefully schedule the visits to help Sue preserve her energy. It was here on 7<sup>th</sup> July, surrounded by her family, Sue finally slipped away. Her funeral was held on 26<sup>th</sup> July in Kineton church, which was full to capacity.

We miss you Sue, but I think you have just gone ahead to get the bells up

**Jill Roberts.**

**23rd August 1933-18th August 2019.**

Jill was known to many ringers from across the Midlands, and beyond, because of her ability and enjoyment in arranging tower grabs. No one knows how many towers she visited, but she had arranged outings of 29 towers in one day.

Jill learned to ring at Wellesbourne in the early 1980s. The bells from Winderton church, an unusual three, the notes being D, B and G were ringable, and were occasionally rung for services by the Brailes band until the church was closed. The bells were taken down in February 1981. The metal was used to provide two trebles each at Harbury and Wellesbourne with some left over to provide one of the four new trebles at Wolston. The church warden at Sutton under Brailes, Victor Smith, was so impressed with the work Taylors did at Wellesbourne, he invited them to rehang Sutton Bells and invited members of the congregation to learn to ring, and Jill came forward.

The bells in Sutton were rehung in 1983 and they sounded glorious 36 years later as we met to lay Jill to rest on the warm Warwickshire afternoon of 17th September. Most villagers attended the service and their numbers swelled by ringers from across the country. 2 of her grandchildren addressed the congregation and talked of their loss of a beloved grandmother. The coverage Jill received in the Daily Telegraph in March following her drenching by the Severn bore made us all chuckle as we remembered Jill and her boundless energy. She was a great friend to Sue Marshall and felt her passing keenly.

May she rest in peace and rise in glory.

**Frank Spiers.**

Frank Spiers was a member of the Guild for over 50 years and he always said that it was Doris Randall on a visit to Bidford who encouraged him and Bidford to become members. Whilst he did not take office he would try and support the Warwick District whenever possible. He was not a big

method ringer the 5th or the Tenor to Grandsire Doubles or Plan Bob would suit him very nicely. Frank will be remembered as always having a smile on his face, for the stories he would regale, some of us can recall these as having heard them a few times but that was the Frank we knew and loved.

## App 2

### **Report of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers' Annual Meeting held in London on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2019.**

This year's meeting was held in London at Goldsmiths College. It was the first of the new format of CC meetings. Rather than a 2-day event held on May Bank holiday, it is now a weekend event around the first Saturday in September. The formal business meetings are scheduled for the Saturday, a mini road show on the Sunday and open ringing to welcome people on Friday evening.

66 ringing societies are affiliated to the Central Council, but the Devon Association will lapse at the end of the year. There are 177 representatives on the council with 21 vacancies (1 in our G

uild). With the new structure, it is important as many members as possible attend to hold the new executive to account. In fact, there were 149 members present at the meeting and a further 30 observers, who are not CC members. Chris Mew received a special mention at the beginning of the meeting as it is 50 years since he was first elected to the council, representing a different society.

The usual meeting formalities were quickly addressed and reports adopted. Interesting points:

1. The Council still has £15,000 left of the £20,000 grant they received for Ringing Remembers.
2. The cost of the Council meetings is covered by contributions from members.
3. The Council has £159,000 in the General fund.
4. The library collection is valued at £88,000
5. Total funds in the Council are £444,438.

Joy has written about the work of the Workgroups, so I will focus on other points of interest.

1. There were 4617 peals rung in 2018, with Church Lawford (The Plantagenet Ring) recording the 9<sup>th</sup> highest tower scoring 25 peals.
2. The Robert Kilby memorial peal will be attempted in the Coventry Guild, following the inaugural peal in Leicester last year. Robert bequeathed £10,000 to the Council on the condition a peal of Stedman Caters was rung each year with 1 person ringing SC for the first time. (Incidentally, Robert only rang one peal of SC at Chilvers Coton).

3. The new website is still being developed but there was concern much of the old information has disappeared. The webmaster said, all the existing content is still there but clearer signposting was being developed.
4. Universityringing.org; is a new website aimed at young people going to college.
5. The council is working to ensure there is a common plan for VE 75 to avoid some of the issues with Ringing Remembers.
6. The direct membership of the council is still being planned
7. More Tower Leadership courses are in the pipeline.
8. The Council was reminded of the excellent publication, 'Bells in your care', which is aimed at incumbents. It addresses many of the challenges posed in churches with a peal of bells.
9. The PRO is developing, 'An event in a box' which is aimed at those planning a recruitment event to attract more ringers.
10. Chris Mew is standing down from the Safeguarding advisor to the Council and his replacement was being sought.

The current President of the Council, Christopher O'Mahony, elected for 3 years in Edinburgh in 2017, has resigned and a new President needed electing. The Current Vice President, David Kirkcaldy, had not sought election and will complete his 3 years in the role.

Simon Linford was elected, unopposed, to the role as President for 1 year, but was not at the meeting. He attended the dinner in the evening, where he officially accepted the position.

The meeting concluded at 4.40, lasting 2 hours 40 minutes.

Observations.

Joy and I agree this was the best meeting we had been to so far mainly because there was very little acrimony, despite criticism to the contrary from certain directions. The various groups were trying hard to establish themselves in the new format and most have a clear vision of what they wish to achieve.

With Chris retiring from the Council, there will be two vacancies within the Guild for Central Council Reps. Why not put your name forward for election? You can stand for as little as one year.

The next meeting will be held in Nottingham University, Jubilee Campus on 4-6 September 2020.

## App 3

### Independent Examiner

'Ask not what your Guild can do for you, rather what can you do for your Guild?'

For the past 8 years, the Guild has been honoured to have David Leafe perform the duties as Independent Examiner. This year David has indicated he wishes to resign from the post and has advised us to look for a replacement.

We are grateful to David for all his help and guidance over the previous years, which was extremely valuable especially when we were negotiating with the Diocese over the Phil Faulks Memorial Fund.

With David's imminent retirement we need to identify a Guild member who might be willing to take over from him. Is this something you could help with, or do you know anyone you could nominate to help?

The Guild has receipts and payments accounts and the examiner should have financial awareness and numeracy skills and ideally have experience of the charity sector. It is not necessary to be an accountant to carry out this duty. The role is mainly carried out in February, when the annual accounts are prepared. It generally involves scrutinising, over a cup of coffee or perhaps a beer, the prepared accounts and associated paperwork/evidence with the Treasurer, Simon Rogers, to check for accuracy and challenge any findings.

The role is different from that of an auditor in that the independent examiner is only required to confirm whether any material matters of concern have come to their attention, whilst an auditor is required to provide an opinion on whether a charity's accounts give a 'true and fair view'. <p> p>

If you think you can help, or know someone who can, please contact [annie.hall@sky.com](mailto:annie.hall@sky.com).

More details on the role of the Independent Examiner can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-examination-of-charity-accounts-examiners-cc32>

App 4

Subject: Holy Trinity, Long Itchington

23<sup>rd</sup> September 2019.

Dear All,

I attended a meeting at Taylor's on Friday with Mark Carver-Smith from LI with Simon Adams to discuss the way forward with the restoration and augmentation to six. Restoration was first mooted in 1950 when Taylor's first visited (met by Harry Windsor who lived opposite the church) and also on numerous times since but as you know nothing happened. There are some heritage issues with the installation but nothing which cannot be overcome. As you know there is interest in the village but the vicar has other matters which is considered to be more important than bells. With Mark not being a ringer (I did give him a quick bell handling session at the foundry) how to approach the vicar and persuade the PCC to allow fund-raising is difficult, we are able to give a Guild grant but the parish needs further advice and encouragement to even consider restoration (do they need a ring of bells etc.), quite difficult where there is no history of ringing/chiming in living memory and the cost is in the region of £70K at today's prices.

First objection was the usual when bells haven't been rung in living memory the tower will fall down and a costly structural engineers report is required. In Taylor's records there is a copy of a comprehensive favourable structural report when restoration was considered for the millennium by Frank Haywood structural engineer in 1996, Frank is now deceased but the practice has been taken by his son and is known to Mark Carver-Smith. In fact exterior stone repairs were undertaken in recent years post 1996.

Ringers, there is a need for organised teaching of a new team to be ready to ring at least rounds for the dedication.

Where do we go from here as a Guild to encourage a restoration and to augment to six when it seems the interest is mainly in the village and the church finds bells low on their priorities or gives it only a thought every 10 years and comes to nothing?

Anyway I will leave you to discuss the matter.

Regards

Keith