

Minutes of the AGM held at Headcorn

Easter Monday 9 April 2012

(Subject to adoption by the AGM to be held at Birchington in 2013)

The meeting was hosted by the Ashford District. The service was held in the parish church of SS. Peter & Paul Headcorn and attended by over 50 members and friends. The Rev Dr Brian Curnew officiated at the service and the sermon was preached by Rev David Cawley, Honorary Life Member, and the lessons were read by Peter Sims, the Chairman of the Association and Margaret Funnell, Hon Gen Sec of the Association. Rev Stanley Evans was unable to attend. Twelve towers were open before the service and 11 towers were open after the meeting. A really excellent lunch was served to approximately 60 people in the Village Hall before the General Meeting commenced at 2.45 p.m.

1. Welcome. The Chairman welcomed 96 members and visitors, including two Vice Presidents. The Chairman invited Rev David Cawley to open the meeting with a prayer.

2. Apologies for absence. Apologies were received from David Earl (Barming), Tom Barlow and Jackie Barlow (St. Michael's Maidstone), Neil Jones (Rochester Cathedral), Douglas Davis (Rainham), Isabel Pearce and Doris Colgate (Sevenoaks), Hazel Basford and Hedley Basford (Canterbury Cathedral), Janice Brown (Life Member), Mary Lambert (Wye), Donald Holden, Alice Holden, Jennifer Holden and Rosemary Holden (Willesborough), Dickon Love (Bromley), Tessa van der Vliet and Hilary Hazell (Dover), Richard Wilsner (Cheriton), Dennis Cox (Upchurch), Rev Stanley Evans (Vice President), Marie Evans (Associate Member St Laurence in Thanet), Diana Wraight, Sven Wraight and Paul Thompson (Rainham), Graham Long (Greenwich), Martin Marshall and Helen Marshall (Willesborough) and Hugo Tracey (Tunbridge Wells).

3. Minutes of the AGM held at Speldhurst on Easter Monday, 25 April 2011

The minutes were taken as read having been printed, displayed on the website and copies handed out at the meeting. There being no objections, the Chairman signed them as a true record.

4. Matters arising from the minutes. An Independent Examiner, Caroline Stockmann, has been appointed. Quarter peal week is now 1 to 10 June 2012 and the intention is for all towers to ring a quarter peal to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

5. General Secretary's report. The General Secretary moved the adoption of her report, which had been distributed to the meeting. Motion carried.

6. Treasurer's report. The Treasurer Mrs P Phipps advised the accounts, copies of which had been distributed to the meeting, had been seen by the Examiner but had not been signed off. The Trustees have to provide some further information which will be given to the Examiner as soon as possible.

i) Subscriptions for 2012

The Treasurer proposed there should be no increase in subscriptions for the current year. This was seconded by Daniel Brady and agreed by the meeting.

ii) Division of subscriptions for 2012

It had been agreed at the AGM last year that this year's subscriptions should go 100% to the General Fund.

Mrs Phipps proposed that this should occur, seconded by Doug Snoswell and all agreed.

Mrs Phipps asked the meeting to accept the accounts as seen by the meeting, and all agreed.

7. Peal Secretary's report. Dr Phillip Barnes said his report, save for the details of the peals, had been distributed to the meeting and proposed adoption, seconded by Lesley Barclay and the meeting agreed.

8. Quarter Peal Secretary's report. Mr Leeves advised his report, save for the full details, had been distributed to the meeting and moved its adoption. This was seconded by Daniel Brady and the meeting agreed.

9. Librarian's report. Mrs Basford was unable to attend the meeting but had advised that she had been able to assist Tonbridge District Secretary with a query and thanked those people who alerted her to the ebay auction of the subscription notebook (early 1900s) from Hayes which she was able to purchase for the Association. Margaret Funnell proposed adoption of the report, seconded by Jo Horton and agreed by the meeting.

10. Officers' reports

Bell Restoration. Mr Butcher said his report had been circulated. He advised that there had been three further matters, namely the six bells at Otham were now ringing, the tenor at Great Chart was now back in action and work would be commencing at Seal Chart in January next year. He proposed adoption of his report. This was seconded by Nick Wilkins, and the meeting agreed.

Webmaster. Mr Lewis said the website was his report.

Child Protection. Mr Spencer said his report had been circulated. This year no instances have been reported. All dioceses are now in agreement but Canterbury has separate instructions on their website. A Central Council leaflet is now available. All towers have to be run safely and in a welcoming manner. All ringing masters need to be CRB checked. He proposed acceptance of his report, seconded by David Manger and all agreed.

Health & Safety. Mr Sims said his report had been circulated. There had been a problem at Northfleet with carbon monoxide poisoning whereby 5 ringers had to be taken to hospital and were kept in for 4 hours. This had been reported to the Environment Department of the Council but they had decided not to prosecute. Carbon monoxide alarms are essential and not expensive. It is essential that ringers are advised if workmen are likely to visit towers to ensure no damage is caused. He proposed adoption of his report, seconded by Daniel Lavender and all agreed.

Handbook Editor. Mr Huxley apologised for the delay in the Handbook being printed this year. This was due to some Districts not returning their reports on time and also for his time being spent on personal matters. The details of peals and associated matters that were omitted from the report last year have been included in this year's report. The Handbook Editor has a bird's eye view of what is going on in the Association. He thanked everyone for their support and especially Frank Lewis for proofreading. He gave his best wishes to his successor and hoped that everyone will give him their support. He proposed his report seconded by Frank Lewis and all agreed. The Chairman said the Handbook will be distributed as soon as it is received from the printers and Mr Huxley said this should be at the end of April or beginning of May.

The Chairman thanked all officers for their hard work especially as it is all done on a voluntary basis.

11. Rule changes

Details of the four proposals were set out on the agenda

1. The proposal by Doug Snoswell and seconded by Tim Wraight that "Students' half subscriptions revert back to full price from 2013". Doug Snoswell said he had made enquiries of other organisations, e.g. vergers and organists and both were over £50 per year. Dr Barnes enquired if he had made enquiries of other bell ringing organisations. Daniel Brady said we need to keep all Kent students if they go away to university or for other reasons and if they have to pay full subscriptions in their home county and another organisation then we may lose them. Mr Wraight said students go to university and spend their money on entertainment and the subscriptions are very low in comparison. Mr Huxley said we are prejudiced against students; if students come from other areas then they have to pay two subscriptions and if this rule change goes ahead then all members should pay the same subscription. A vote was taken: for 29, against 43, abstentions 3. Motion defeated.

2. The proposal by Tim Wraight and seconded by Tim Lynch that the following sentence in Rule 4: "A Practising Member shall be deemed to be a person who can, without assistance, ring rounds and lower a bell. Such competency shall be confirmed by an elected District Officer". Mr Wraight advised that he had started the two insurance policies when he was Secretary and that loss adjusters only advise on policies and the policies do not say we need competence. This rule is against the aims of the KCACR. We are setting double standards as outside ringers have been elected to the Association (e.g. before peals) without having to comply with the rule. Further this is taking away the authority from the tower captain. Mr Lynch said he felt very perverse, Tonbridge welcome all ringers and if some cannot ring down then we may lose members. Daniel Brady asked that if the rule was removed will insurance not be given. The Chairman advised that the question of competency arose from loss adjusters, in relation to the Northfleet incident, enquiring "what qualifications do your members have to have to become a member". It may be that cover may be excluded if it is felt a member was not competent. It was felt that we should look at competency level and it was felt that we had. Richard Edwards said in years to come it will be teachers (under the ITT scheme) who will decide. Doug Snoswell said we cannot know what insurance companies will require in the future. Kevin Mitchell, an underwriter, said that if it could be proved that a person was not competent then a claim would not be met. A vote was taken: for 10, against majority, abstentions none. Motion defeated.

Mr Manger said he felt the committee should make a decision that once a rule is made it should be kept in place for at least three years. Mr Lynch said this is undemocratic.

3. Mrs Phipps said she wished to make a counter proposal to the proposal by the General Committee in relation to the wording of Rule 4 (i) (b) by changing the last sentence to "The amount to be allocated to the Association's Bell Restoration Fund for the current year of operation shall be resolved at the Annual General Meeting." This is to enable the Association to deal with the year's current finances. Mrs Phipps proposed the counter proposal, seconded by Dr Barnes. A vote took place. For the majority, against none, abstentions 2. Motion carried.

4. The proposal by the General Committee to clarify the wording of Rule 9 (iii) was counter proposed by MRFS that a ";" instead of a "," should be made after the word "Committee" in the last line. This was seconded by Lesley Barclay. A vote was taken. For the majority, against 4, abstentions 4. Motion carried.

12. Certificates for 50 years' membership. The Chairman read out a letter from Lambeth Palace thanking all our members for their service. Three members were presented with their certificates by the Chairman: Elizabeth Todd (Lympe), Judith Rogers (Life Member) and Jenny Robson (Headcorn). Unfortunately Judith de Leeuw (Aldington) and Lydia Terry (Lydd) were unable to attend and their certificates will be presented at an Ashford District Meeting. Damien Smith congratulated all those who have achieved 50 years' membership and said they all deserve applause

13. Election of officers. The following officers were elected, all having agreed to stand:

	Nominee	Proposed	Seconded
Chairman	Mike Little	David Manger	Frank Lewis
Secretary	Margaret Funnell	Diana Wraight	Rupert Cheeseman
Treasurer	Daniel Lavender	Peter Sims (from chair)	
Peal Secretary	Dr Phillip Barnes	Donald Niblett	Claire Larter
Librarian	Hazel Basford	Cathryn Hills	Mike Little
Handbook Editor	Graham Coker	David Manger	Mark Chittenden Pile
Quarter Peal Secretary	Anthony Leves	Eric Roughley	Mike Bullett
Bell Restoration Officer	Brian Butcher	Cleo Hart	Anne Anderson
Webmaster	Frank Lewis	Fraser Clift	Catherine Heathcote
Training	Daniel Brady	Mike Little	Adam Brady
Publicity	Doug Snoswell	Peter Dale	Peter Sims
Health & Safety	Peter Sims	Dan Bishop	Daniel Brady
Child Protection	Nigel Spencer	Brian Butcher	David Wilkinson
Extra 3	Peter Sims	Pam Manger	Brenda Davies
	Rev David Cawley	David Manger	Benjamin Legg
	Allan Chandler	Mike Little	MRFS

In relation to the position of Chairman Mike Little and Daniel Brady were both proposed. Mr Manger outlined why Mr Little should be elected and Richard Barclay gave the case for Daniel Brady. Mike Little and Daniel Brady were asked to leave the meeting whilst a vote was taken. For Mr Little 50 For Mr Brady 35. Mr Little was duly elected. Daniel Lavender agreed to take on the position of Treasurer on one year's trial. Doug Snoswell was elected as Publicity Officer the vote being for, majority, against 1, abstentions 2.

14. Appointment of auditor Mrs Phipps proposed that this be deferred to the General Committee Meeting and this was agreed by the meeting.

15. Forthcoming events. Quarter peal week 1 to 10 June 2012. MRFS has agreed to convene all the quarter peals and remit to *The Ringing World*.

11 August 2012: Mr Little advised a joint meeting at Quex Park of Canterbury and Ashford Districts commencing at 3.00 p.m. and also a barbecue – all welcome.

16. Any other business.

1. Re: Handbook entries: Wye tower had requested that a member of their band wished to be in the Handbook with two entries, one at Wye and one at Chilham as the member had said he could not ring at both towers without his name appearing under both towers. It was explained that many members ring at more than one tower and the ruling has been in place for some time. The member had been told by both District Secretaries and the Association Secretary of the ruling. The Chairman felt no discussion should take place and it was agreed by the meeting that the rule of only one entry will apply.

2. Dr Barnes said he had just sat through over a two hour meeting when no mention of actual ringing had taken place. The Association has huge demographic problems. In 1970 there were 204 junior ringers, in 1980 only 21% of the membership were juniors, in 1990 12% and in 2010 5.6% were juniors. Central Council have looked into this. We need to look after ringing as in the past older ringers assisted trainers; at present 2 in 3 ringers are over 50 and 3 in 4 tower captains are over 50. He feels the way the Association is run does not reflect today's ringing. If anyone has any ideas and wants to change things then please email him – email address is in the current Handbook.

3. Jo Horton advised she still has 11 of the 125 year anniversary large photographs – if anyone would like one then they are £15 each.

4. Rev David Cawley said the new 10th edition of Dove is just about to be issued and will be published by the end of the month. Mrs Lewis advised she had ordered some for the Bookstall and will be collecting them at the Central Council meeting.

17. Votes of thanks. Mr Sims then thanked Tim and Jenny Munt and their helpers for the arrangements for the day and especially the lunch; the Rev Dr Brian Curnew for the use of the church and the bells and for officiating at the service; Revd David Cawley for the sermon; Sue Record for playing the organ and Ashford District for hosting the day. He thanked all officers for their support over the past three years.

David Manger thanked Peter Sims for three difficult years as Chairman

Peter Sims then handed over the Chain of Office to Mike Little.

Meeting closed at 5.05 p.m.

The raffle then took place and raised £155 for the BRF. Tea, coffee and biscuits were served.