**Middlesex County Association and London Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers**

**Annual General Meeting at St Stephen’s, Westminster, Napier Hall**

**Saturday 22 April 2017 at 6.25pm, following tea**

**MINUTES**

1. Apologies for absence, and record of attendance

The meeting opened at 6.25pm, with the Vice President, Stephen Jakeman in the chair.

The Association’s Annual Report for 2016-2017 was distributed to members present.

Forty four members signed the record of attendance.

Apologies for absence were received from Sarah Taylor, Tom Lawrance, Bridget Campbell, Ruth Darton, Caroline Stockmann, Frank Blagrove, Rachel Titmuss, Dennis Brock, Ainsley Gilbert, Emily Vallow, Jan Morgan, Tony Faulkner, Muffie King, Peter King, Alan Rix, Otto Benz, Peter Kemp, Susan Mills, Betty Sutcliffe, Geoff Willis, Margaret Willis, Debbie Malin, Helen Udal.

2. Votes of thanks

The chair proposed votes of thanks;

* To Father Matthew Catterick of St Saviour Pimlico for the use of the church and bells, for the inter-district striking competition earlier in the day
* To Stephanie Pattenden and James Belshaw for organising the striking competition at St Saviour Pimlico and St Stephen’s Westminster for the use of the restored bells.
* To Paul and Kate Flavell for judging the 8 bell inter-district striking competition for the ‘Roger Bailey Cup’.
* To Rev’d Catherine Duce for conducting the service of at St Stephen’s, Westminster, and to Michael Royalton-Kisch for playing the organ.
* To Lucy Chandhial, Janet Drake and helpers from the N&E District for a splendid tea

3. Remembrance of members of the Association known to have died since the previous General Meeting

The Chair asked the meeting to stand in memory of Ruth Foreman, Reginald Renn and Sylvia Anthony, members who were known to had died since the previous General Meeting in October 2016. Also, from the Annual Report 2016-2017, Philip Vracas, Dianne Stilwell, John Chilcott, Edward Mould and Richard Blagrove. The Chair reported that a peal of Yorkshire Surprise Major had been rung at St Mary Finchley in memory of Miss Ruth Foreman, Master of the Association 1996-1999, earlier in the day. The band included three former Masters, the current Master and the Master being put forward for election in 2017.

4. 200 Club Prize Draw

The 200 Club Prize draw took place and the winners were: Ball number 38 – Ginny Johnson £50; Ball number 30 – South Hackney £50; Ball number 126 – Kathleen Newton £1000.

Lucy Chandhial thanked Stephen Jakeman for promoting the 200 Club which had encouraged some more members.

5. Results of the inter-district striking competition for the ‘Roger Bailey Cup’

The judges, Paul and Kate Flavell presented the results of the 8 bell inter-district striking competition for the ‘Roger Bailey Cup’ held at St Saviour Pimlico, earlier in the day.

The set piece was a touch of 210 changes of Grandsire Triples that contained a lot of 468’s, set by the Master, Geraldine Forster. Paul said all the teams settled down and rang well, with no method mistakes.

Results;

1st S&W District, conducted by James White – 86%

2nd N&E District, conducted by Stephen Jakeman – 78%

3rd N&E District, conducted by Martin Clode – 77%

4th S&W District, conducted by Mike Palmer – 75%

Paul presented the Cup to the conductor of the winning team.

6. Minutes of the Autumn General Meeting, held at Ealing on Saturday 15 October 2016

These were circulated to member’s present; they were approved as an accurate record subject to one correction. Item 13, ‘Ringing at Middlesex towers in memory of ringers who died in the war’ should read Northaw and not Tottenham.

The adoption of the minutes was approved by the meeting as a correct record.

7. Matters arising from the minutes of the Autumn General Meeting not otherwise on the agenda

There were none.

8. Notice of any additional business for Item 17

Notice was given of two matters of other business.

From the Agenda – Item 12 – Grant applications made to the BRF, and grants proposed by the BRC for Association approval: iii SS Peter & Paul, Harlington (possible additional grant) was removed, as no application had yet been made.

From the Agenda – Item 15 – Election of Officers: Bell Restoration Committee members (2) *(subject to Rule Change)* was removed, the Rule Change having been effected in 2017.

9. General Treasurer’s report and adoption of the Central Fund accounts

The General Treasurer, Mark Harris spoke to the report printed in the 2016-2017 Association Annual Report which showed the subscription income for the year at £5090, which was up on prior years with a net increase of 28 new ordinary members. Overall income after interest was £5150, compared to £5,050 in 2015.

The three main recurring costs continued to be the Annual Report, Bell News and the personal accident insurance.

Mark said the Association agreed a grant of £2000, at the Autumn General Meeting in October 2016, to Kensington, St Mary Abbotts to assist with the funding of a new dumbbell facility. Total expenditure was £4,489. In the light of this, the annual contribution to the Bell Restoration Fund for 2016 was £750, which represented a reduction to half the level of that in 2015.

In February 2017 the Association had been awarded a grant of £1000 from the Aviva Community Awards. Lucy Chandhial had taken forward plans to hold a London Bell Ringing Summer School in August 2017, based at Kensington, St Mary Abbotts.

The Chair thanked Mark Harris for his work on the Association’s finances.

The adoption of the minutes was proposed by Mark Harris, seconded by Monica Trow, and approved by the meeting.

10. Bell Restoration Fund Treasurer’s report and adoption of the BRF accounts

The Bell Restoration Fund Treasurer, Sarah Taylor sent her apologies to the meeting, the Chair asked the General Secretary to speak to the report printed in the 2016-2017 Association Annual Report. The BRF continued to be well supported. The fund had benefitted from significant donations during the year including a £2,500 bequest from Mary Piper. Also £705 from St Paul’s Cathedral for the Ordination Services for the previous two years, and £700 for ringing at St Mary le Bow for the Lord Major’s Show in November 2015. Fundraising was broadly in line with the previous year, and total income was £16,890 including interest and Gift Aid. The 200 Club was a key contributor, raising £5000.

One new grant was awarded to Great Stanmore, with two grant payments of £10,000 made to Norwood Green and Westminster St Stephen’s, Rochester Row.

Taking account of liabilities, including outstanding grants, the funds available for new grants had increased to £29,139.

The adoption of the minutes was proposed by Sarah Taylor in her absence, seconded by Lucy Chandhial and approved by the meeting.

11. Officers’ Reports (General Secretary, Membership Secretary, Librarian, Bell Restoration Officer, Training Officer and Peal Recorder)

The Chair informed the meeting that the reports of the General Secretary, Membership Secretary, Librarian, Bell Restoration Officer, Training Officer and peal Recorder were all included in the 2016-2017 Association Annual report. Stephen Jakeman thanked James White for producing the 2016-2017 Association Annual Reports in time for the Annual General Meeting.

The adoption of the reports was proposed by the Chair and seconded by the General Secretary and approved by the meeting.

12.Grant applications made to the BRF, and grants proposed by the BRC for Association approval:

Two applications for grants had been received and considered at the March 2017 meeting of the Bell Restoration Committee. The Chair and Bell Restoration Officer, Stephen Jakeman, invited the Secretary of the St Pauls Cathedral Guild, David Bassford, and the Secretary of St Giles-in-the-Fields, Holborn, Adrian Udal, to speak to the meeting in support of their applications.

1. St Paul’s Cathedral – Dave Bassford said that in that was a survey undertaken for the City of London Corporation; the bells of St Paul’s Cathedral were voted one of the best sounds of London, which people expected to hear rung for Royal occasions such as weddings and funerals, and on other significant occasions in the City. There had ringing by the MCA&LDG for the Ordination of Deacons Service in June/July for the last 17 years. The anticipated cost of the work to restore the bell installation at St Paul’s was £360,000, and funding to cover this was close to being raised. Dave said the plan was to take the bells out of the tower to Loughborough for cleaning and then to rehang them with restored fittings in a cleaned frame. Removal and return of the bells would involve closing roads in the City of London and would generate a lot of public interest. There were also plans for work to restore the ‘Great Paul’ bell, subject to sufficient funds being available

The Bell Restoration Officer reported that the Bell Restoration Committee had considered this application at its recent meeting and decided to recommend a grant of £10,000, subject to endorsement by the Association at the Annual General Meeting. John Thorp (Trustee) suggested that given the status of St Paul’s Cathedral is its diocesan cathedral, the Association could make more of a contribution, and proposed a higher grant of £12,000. This was seconded by James White.

After a vote the meeting agreed to approve a grant of £12,000.

1. St Giles-in-the-Fields, Holborn – Adrian Udal reported that 2016 was the 10th anniversary of the rehanging of the bells of St Giles. This grant application was to support the refurbishment of the clappers, which would cost £5,800. Adrian said the order had been placed at the beginning of December 2016, just before Whitechapel Bell Foundry made its intentions known to close down in May 2017. At present, the clappers were at Whitechapel and the plan was to return them to St Giles by the first week in May 2017.

The Bell Restoration Committee had considered this application at its recent meeting and decided to recommend a grant of £3,000. A grant of £3000 was proposed by Adrian Udal, seconded by Stephen Mitchell and approved by a vote of the meeting.

13. Master’s Report on Association ringing activities since the previous General Meeting, and plans for 2017-18, including Association 12 bell practices, quarter peal at St Paul’s Cathedral (1July), and participation in the London 12 Bell Competition at Shoreditch (28 October).

The Master, Geraldine Forster reported that attendance at the 12 bell practices at St Magnus had been variable over the last 12 months. After peaking in May 2016, with four leads of Bristol Maximus being rung, only nine or ten ringers had attended the practices throughout the summer months. Some practices were useful for brushing up on 10 bells but this was not the object. There were no practices in August, October or December due to holidays and other conflicting events. Geraldine was pleased to report that, following a special plea for people to attend, the three practices in 2017 had been better supported and methods from Stedman Cinques to Treble Bob Hunting to Yorkshire Maximus had been rung. The April practice fell on Good Friday so the next practice would be in May, under the new Master. Geraldine asked people to support this practice as it was the only open practice in central London at which people could learn to ring methods on 12 bells.

Geraldine said it was tradition for the out-going Master to organise the quarter peal at St Paul’s Cathedral for the Ordination of Deacons on Saturday 1 July, and arrangements were well in hand, including for two practice quarter peals at St Mary le Bow in May and June.

On Saturday 22 October 2016, the Association came **fourth** in the London 12 bell competition, beating the impressive fifth place achieved in 2015. In 2017 the London 12 bell competition would be on Saturday 28 October at Shoreditch, and the responsibility for organising the Middlesex band for this would fall to the new Master.

The Association also rang for the Lord Major’s Show on Saturday 12 November 2016.

Geraldine thanked everyone for their support over the last three years: it was a great shock losing Philip Vracas, the President, through his sudden death just two days after the Annual General Meeting in 2016, and she thanked Stephen Jakeman for stepping into the Chair for the Central Committee and General Meetings. Geraldine said she had thoroughly enjoyed her time as Master. Stephen Jakeman thanked Geraldine for all her hard work throughout her term as Master, and the meeting applauded her.

14. Aviva Bell Ringing Summer School, August 2017 – progress report

Lucy Chandhial had prepared a brochure detailing the Aviva Bell Ringing Summer School from 21-25 August 2017 at St Mary Abbotts Kensington, supported from the Aviva Community Fund.

Lucy spoke to the meeting about this exciting project, covering how to find participants, registration, finding helpers, support already offered, support needed, expected costs, the draft daily agenda, and the possible use of a mini ring.

The detailed information sheet made available at the meeting had a proposed timetable of events throughout the day. Lucy said that she welcomed any feedback and further ideas for the Summer school, to be received by 26 May by email at londonsummerbells17@yahoo.com

15. Election of Officers:

The officers elected were:

**President – Geraldine Forster** was proposed by Stephen Mitchell, seconded by Helen Porter

**Master – John Manley** was proposed by James White, seconded by Mike Palmer

**General Secretary – Stephen Mitchell** was proposed by Stephen Jakeman, seconded by

Margaret Peirce

**Assistant Secretary – Linda Foddering** was proposed by Geraldine Forster, seconded by

Louise Booth

**General Treasurer – Mark Harris** was proposed by Janet Drake, seconded by Paul Norman

**Bell Restoration Officer – Stephen Jakeman** was proposed by Lucy Chandhial, seconded by

James White

**Bell Restoration Fund Treasurer – Sarah Taylor** (who was prepared to stand for one further year) – proposed by Stephen Mitchell, seconded by Mark Harris

**Membership Secretary – Jill Wigney** was proposed by James White, seconded by Linda Foddering

**Peal Recorder – Martin Sutcliffe** was proposed by Mark Harris, seconded by Louise Palmer

**Librarian – Paul Norman** was proposed by John Manley, seconded by Martin Clode

**Training Officer – Clyde Whittaker** was proposed by Helen Porter, seconded by Louise Booth

**Report Editor – James White** was proposed by Jill Wigney, seconded by Monica Trow

**Independent Examiner – Mike Trimm** was proposed by Stephen Mitchell, seconded by Lucy Chandhial

**Trustees (3) – John Thorp, James White and Peter Kemp** were proposed by Martin Clode, seconded by Mike Palmer

**Central Council Representatives (4 to be elected to serve from 2017 to 2020) -** Linda Foddering spoke to the meeting of why she wanted to represent MCA&LDG as a Central Council Representative. Linda mentioned the new CC website – there was an option to subscribe and receive regular news updates. The new President to be elected in May would be Christopher O’Mahony, who lived, worked and rang in Middlesex at Harrow on the Hill. As Chairman of the Library committee Linda wanted to continue the good work of the previous Chairman. In the next three-year period, Linda wanted to set up a national database of peal boards, a project started in the Middlesex Association by Valerie Payne over 30 years previously.

**Linda Foddering** was proposed by Adrian Udal, seconded by James White, and elected

**Clyde Whittaker** was proposed by Louise Booth, seconded by Margaret Peirce, and elected

There were two further vacancies which were kept open.

16. Notice of future Association meetings:

1. Autumn General Meeting: Saturday 21 October 2017 at Stepney, St Dunstan.

Stephen Jakeman informed the meeting the 6-bell striking competition for ‘The Association Plate’ and ‘The Rhodesia Plate’ would take place on the front 6 bells of Stepney, St Dunstan.

1. Annual General Meeting: Saturday 28 April 201, hosted by S&W District, venue to be decided

17. Any Other Business:

There were three items of additional business to be discussed:

1. The Membership Secretary, Jill Wigney asked the meeting to ratify the belfry elections of the following members:

David L Richards prior to a peal on 17.9.16 at Isleworth

Rachel Johnson prior to a peal on 3.3.17 at Old Woking

Paul Feast prior to a peal on 10.3.17 at St Dunstan-in-the-West

Rachel Mitchell prior to a peal on 20.4.17 at St Katharine, Cree

Stephen Burr prior to a peal on 20.4.17 at St Katharine Cree

These members were all elected, and it was confirmed that they had paid their subscriptions.

1. Secretary N&E District, Janet Drake reported the Church collection, raffle and tea had raised £288 for the BRF.
2. The new Master, John Manley reported that he wanted to continue the good work Geraldine Forster had achieved with the monthly 12 bell practices in London. John said the next 12 bell practice would be on Friday 12 May 2017 at St Magnus the Martyr; it would start with a quarter peal (on 12 bells) at 6.30pm, to be organised by Stephen Mitchell. If successful this would be the normal format for the monthly London 12 bell practices, with a view to ensuring that experienced ringers were available to ring and support others at practices starting at around 7.30pm.
3. Adrian Udal reported the National 12 Bell Competition would be on Saturday 24 June at Southwark Cathedral. This would be an ideal opportunity to hear these newly restored bells, to which the Middlesex Association had made a grant of £5000, rung by top class bands.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 7.46pm

Signed…………………………………………

Date…………………………………………….

Ringers who entered the 8 bell Inter-District Striking Competition at St Saviour Pimlico earlier today and band placement:

First Place S&W District Second Place N&E District

1. Michael Sprackling 1. Angela McLellan

2. Geraldine Forster 2. Debbie Malin

3. Louise Palmer 3. Pauline Dingley

4. Christine Dringer 4. Lucy Chandhial

5. Mary Gow 5. Jinny Kufluk

6. James White © 6. Martin Sutcliffe

7. Stephen Mitchell 7. Stephen Jakeman ©

8. John Manley 8. Linda Foddering

Third Place N&E District Fourth Place S&W District

1. Paul Norman 1. Monica Trow

2. Janet Drake 2. Jill Wigney

3. Louise Booth 3. Richard Jones

4. Helen Porter 4. Otto Benz

5. Tony Faulkner 5. Peter Kemp

6. Mark Harris 6. Roger Forster

7. Martin Clode 7. Mike Palmer ©

8. Adrian Udal 8. Eddie Heath