

# **LDGCBR Eastern Branch Annual General Meeting**

**04 February 2023 / 1:30 PM / St Peter Church Hall, Ingoldmells.**

## **Attendees**

Josie Trewin, Judy Lumb, Colin Simpson, Russell Green, Sue Stevenson, Judith Quincey, Greg Harrison, Val Wild, Tess Rowland, Lynda Hankin, Sally Sivil, Barbara Rand, Jo French, Yvonne Smith, Diana Povah, Phil Ford, James Barker, Isabel Barker, Tony Barker, Helen Brotherton.

## **Welcome**

The president opened the meeting with a welcome and thanked those attending for doing so.

## **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Caitlin Mayer, Chris Turner, David Bennett, Ronnie Crighton, Tom Freeston, Don Hare, Sam Napper, Audrey Harrison, Edward Vear, Richard Willoughby, Michael Evans and Steve Lumb.

## **Obituary**

The branch president remarked on the passing during 2022 of branch member and BEM award holder, Joan Simpson of Coningsby, A minute silence was observed. It is noted that her son, Trevor is now a new learner at Coningsby, and so carrying forward a long tradition of bellringing in Joan's family.

## **Minutes of the previous AGM**

Minutes of the previous (online) AGM held in February 2022 had been circulated. Phil Ford proposed, and Val Wild seconded that the minutes were an accurate record of that meeting and this was passed unanimously. There were no matters arising from those minutes.

## **President's Report**

Tony presented a written report which had been circulated prior to the AGM. Val Wild commented that this was, in her opinion, a good report. Those present at the meeting were in agreement.

## Guild Update

In his absence, Guild Master Chris Turner had sent a written report, which was read to the meeting by Branch Secretary, Colin Simpson. In the report Chris announced that the level of grant from the Guild Bell Restoration Fund is to increase to 25% for qualifying work. He stated that the Guild membership database was now working well after a few initial problems and urged guild members to ensure that their details are kept up to date.

The Guild AGM is to be held on 29th April in Lincoln. Chris listed all of the posts which will need to be filled at the AGM, in particular Master, Secretary, Report Secretary, and Librarian.

## Ringling Master's Report

In Kate's absence, deputy ringing master, Jo French outlined the variety of ringing events held during 2022, with more activity following the pandemic. Jo was enthusiastic about the adoption of the ART training scheme, and announced that she was looking to run additional ART courses, particularly the course which trains new conductors.

## Secretary's Report

A written report was presented to the meeting outlining Branch activities during 2022. Colin expressed his thanks in particular to the other members of the branch executive committee, who have been most helpful and supportive, making his task as secretary much less onerous. Branch membership stood at 67 at the end of 2022 as opposed to 72 at the end of 2021, but it was noted that there are a considerable number of new learners who will become members in the not too distant future. A discussion was held concerning what the requirements are for a ringer to become a full member of the Guild. Tony subsequently clarified this by email:

Any competent\* ringer residing within the Diocese, or actively ringing for Sunday service at a tower within the Diocese, shall be eligible for election as a Ringing Member of the Guild. A Ringing Member shall pay an Annual Subscription, the value of which shall be set at the previous Annual General Meeting of the Guild. The subscription rate for Ringing Members under the age of 16 or in full time education may be set at a lesser amount than that for adults. Subscriptions shall be due on the first of January each year. Any member whose subscription for the current year remains unpaid on 31st March shall be deemed to have withdrawn from the Guild. Such a ringer wishing to rejoin the Guild must submit to re-election, such re-election to be subject to confirmation at a Branch Meeting.

Rule 2a "Competent" shall mean having demonstrated an ability to ring rounds safely and unassisted, and actively supporting a tower within the Diocese. It has been noted that the race night or similar fundraiser event should be earlier in the year.

## Treasurer's Report

A written report and balance sheet had been distributed in advance of the meeting. Tess reported that electronic banking was now in place with herself and Colin Simpson having access to this facility. Signatories for signing cheques are currently herself, Colin Simpson, and / or Caitlin Meyer.

## Maintenance Team Leader's Report

Tony listed work completed during 2022 and into 2023. This included work on the bearings of #5 bell at Old Bolingbroke where the wrong grease had been introduced, making the bell unringable in cold weather. Head bolts had been replaced at Tattershall. Future work included a number of items at Sibsey and investigation at Halton Hologate.

## Bell Restoration Fund / Training grants

One complete new rope and 5 new sallies had been provided at Butterwick, An application for a 50% grant from the branch BRF had been approved during the year and was pending payment at the time of the meeting.

A discussion was held concerning the recent decision by the guild to offer 60% toward the ART training course held in January 2023. It was the feeling of the meeting that for ART level 1 courses, the grant from the guild should be nearer 100% and some consideration given on a contribution towards the cost of heating and hall hire. Phil Ford pointed out that the terms and conditions of the guild training fund are that funding will not be 100%, but it was felt that an amount close to the full cost of the training event would be appropriate. Colin Simpson pointed out that discussions at guild executive level are ongoing on this matter.

## Safeguarding

Tony stated that safeguarding will always be an agenda item at AGMs and other branch meetings. All ringers are asked to complete the online basic awareness course and tower captains and other leaders asked to complete the Foundation (C1) course. While the guild strongly urges all ringers to comply with this requirement, it is the responsibility of the local parish to police whether this request has been followed by all individuals.

## Election of officers

It was proposed by Bruce Talmage and seconded by Sally Sivil that all of the officers of the 2022 branch committee were to be re-elected en bloc. The only exception was that Jo French's and Caitlin Meyer's roles as ringing master and deputy ringing master are to be reversed, and that Edward Vear would like to stand down as Safeguarding Officer. This proposal was adopted unanimously. The post of Safeguarding Officer will be advertised to Branch members and nominations invited.

## **Proposals for monthly meetings and Branch Outings and Striking competitions.**

It was proposed by Val Wild and seconded by Josie Trewin that these decisions are to be deferred to the next Branch Executive Committee meeting and that if possible, dates and venues for successive years might be agreed prior to the year end so that these dates can be presented at the Branch AGM.

The meeting proposed that both local mini tours and an out of guild tour be considered. As there will be no Branch meeting in August, this was the suggested month for a tour.

## **Targeted Training**

Jo French reported that a series of targeted practice sessions had been held during the year to assist towers where the ringers had particular needs, such as plain hunt workshops. The offer to help with future targeted training in 2023 was proposed by Jo. Towers will need to identify their local training needs and Jo will put together a team to assist if possible.

## **Nominations for election / re-election to the Guild**

A nomination for re-election to the guild had been received from Michael Belcher as an unattached member. He was proposed by Jo French and seconded by Greg Harrison. There were no objections to his re-election. Barbara Rand asked if there was an application form, and Colin Simpson confirmed that there wasn't but that once Michael had applied for Guild Membership using MemberMojo via the Guild website, his application would be verified by the branch under the new application system.

## **Any other business**

It was agreed that a letter of thanks be sent to Edward Vear in gratitude for the many years he has held the position of Safeguarding Officer.

Phil Ford presented Barbara Rand with the Betty Collett Trophy as her horse was the overall winner of the race night fundraiser.

Audrey Harrison wished the branch to receive her thanks for being welcomed to the Eastern Branch and for the support she had received for the recent ART training course at Butterwick.

Tony advertised a fundraising circular walk including ringing at two towers on behalf of Jill Day, tower captain at Louth. The start is to be at 10:00 am on 18th Feb at South Elkington church.

Tess announced that a decision had been made that proceeds from branch meetings would be offered to the local tower / church in compensation for the cost of heating, lighting, etc. In support, Tony suggested that we should at least pay our way, and Jo French agreed.

## **Vote of thanks**

Russell Green proposed a vote of thanks to the team at Ingoldmells for allowing us use of the bells and church hall, providing a Ringers' service and hot lunch. This was approved at the meeting by the customary round of applause.

## **Date of the next AGM**

The next branch AGM will be held on the first Saturday in February 2024 (the 3rd) Venue and time to be agreed. Tony emphasized the need to coordinate with other branches as some guild members may wish to attend more than one meeting during the day.

## **Close**

The meeting finished at 2:40 pm and was followed by more ringing at Ingoldmells church.