

BRISTOL RURAL BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 2019

St. Saviour's Church – Coalpit Heath – 23rd November 2019

32 persons present with 15 towers represented.

1. Chairman opened the meeting

A vote of thanks was given to the members of the Coalpit Heath Church for the refreshments they had produced for us prior to our meeting. The vicar, Colin Lunt and the Organist John Lee were thanked for their contribution to our service.

2. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Edna Cause, Mary Taylor, Tony York, Henry Taysom Glynis Cowie, Rachel Parker and the Association Officers Hugh Evans and Steve Coleman.

3. Approval of the 2018 meeting minutes.

The minutes had been circulated previous to the meeting via the webpage. These were proposed by Gill Greef and seconded by Lucy Bailey as a true record of the meeting held at St. Mary's, Bitton on the 24th November 2018. This proposal was carried.

4. Matters Arising

40 year Membership – The Secretary reported that following the 2018 meeting it had been confirmed that of all the names suggested only one had been included in the Annual Report 40 years previous. As a result of this being the only qualifying rule she had tried to raise this matter with the Association but without success. As a result she had asked for her name to be removed from the list and she would now ask that any member who believed they had been members for 40 years, or more, tell her of this fact so that they can be included once the information is checked.

Training Aides – There was no update from the lead tower, Bitton, re the hand chimes they had researched. However, an update was given by Catherine White-Horne on behalf of Thornbury who were looking to fit a dumb-bell to assist with their learners' bell control. It was suggested that a formal application for funds be made in order that consideration could be given to this matter.

5. Approval of the Accounts

The audited accounts for 2018 had previously been circulated by the Treasurer and made available on the Branch website. They were proposed as correct by Brian Hardwick and seconded by Sue Elliott. This proposal was carried

6. Committee Members Reports

These had previously been circulated via the website for members to note. There were no questions forthcoming. The Chairman drew attention to his report with regard to the success enjoyed by Almondsbury winning the G and B Tower of the Year award and congratulated them on their hard work in relation to fund raising.

7. Election of Branch Officers

The Chairman reported that all of the officers were prepared to stand again except for the Treasurer (Lucy Bailey) and also the fact that the Branch still had no MC rep. There were no nominations from the floor with regard to either position however the Chairman had, in anticipation of this, spoken with Alison Holliday who had indicated that she would be prepared to take on the Office of Treasurer; this was seconded by Martin Pearson and there being no other nominations Alison was duly elected. With regard to the position of MC rep. Alison also indicated her willingness, after explanation of the role, to fill this position.

With regard to the roles of Chair, Secretary, Ringing Master, Deputy Ringing Master and Webmaster it was reported that all were willing to stand again, it was proposed by David Powell and seconded by Catherine White-Horne that they be elected en-bloc. There being no other nominations and no objections all other Committee members were elected.

8. Applications to the Belfry Repair Fund

The matter of the Thornbury dumb-bell had been previously noted.

There was no update with regard to Doynton. Martin Pearson had been given to understand that the bells were ringable and said that he would like to know when ringing was to take place. The Secretary updated him that she had been told that the current project was to achieve a safe entry/exit to and from the ringing chamber as the ladder that had been there left much to be desired. Also that such a matter as this had been an issue within a quinquennial report at a church within the Association and as a result the entrance to the bells had been closed until a harness was purchased in order to climb an upright ladder affixed to the wall and she suspected many such restrictions would follow elsewhere.

9. Membership

2 New members were elected.

Philip Owens (Pucklechurch) Senior Member - Proposed Angela Robb, seconded Glenn Lawrence

Sharon Newnham (Thornbury) Senior Member – Proposed Robin Shipp, seconded Catherine White-Horne.

10. Association Matters

The Chairman reported that the Association Chairman; Hugh Evans; has indicated that he will not stand for re-election at the 2020 AGM. All other Association Officers had indicated they were all willing to stand for office again in 2020 it was proposed by Val Johnson and seconded by Sue Elliott that they should be elected en-bloc. This was agreed by all present.

Steve Colman had indicated that he was willing to run courses in the Branch area and a suggestion of a 'Raising and Lowering in Peal' session was made by Sue Elliot.

A tower maintenance course has also been offered by Malcolm Taylor. The Secretary reported that she currently had 2 members interested and asked for names of any others to be forwarded to her ASAP in order that this could be arranged.

The Chairman also congratulated Jonathan Storey and Matthew Johnson on their achievement of becoming additional Bell Advisors to the Association.

Robin Shipp noted the importance of regular bell inspection/maintenance, and that this should be recorded. This was because a recent legal case had argued that the failure to inspect was a causal factor in an accident.

11. 2019 Programme

The Chairman reported that the Secretary had produced a basic programme for 2020 with some dates outlined. However, before the end of the meeting, in order to make Branch Practices and Branch Training relevant to the current membership, he asked that members use the 'sticky note' supplied to them to answer the questions:

What do you want to see in a branch practice?

What times do you want them?

What training provisions do you want

What social events do you want?

As a result of these answers the committee will try to put a full programme together that will suite the majority of the Branch.

The Secretary reported she had received 2 positive replies to date for the programme as it stood. One other positive reply was received at the meeting. (Filton, Alveston, Tytherington)

Striking Competition – It was reported that this had been a roaring success in February 2019 and the Deputy Ringing Master (Matt Johnson) agreed to organize the one for 2020.

Young person event – the Branch were informed that the suggestion had been received through its Management meeting that we should try to encourage the younger members of the Branch to hold an event aimed purely at themselves. Catherine White-Horne said she was willing to ensure a nucleus of young ringers was formed to try to encourage others to take an interest and join in. The Secretary drew attention to the article on the G and B website regarding the day organized by Ian and Carole Bucknell and the success this had had.

12. May Branch Outing 2020

The Ringing Master informed the meeting that she was thinking of trying for 3 towers within walking distance of each other in Salisbury and asking for 2 others to visit en-route. This met with the agreement of the Branch.

13. Tower of the Year Competition

There were no nominations from the floor.

14. Newsletter

The Chairman reported that this document would now become a by-monthly publication as he was struggling to get information to include. He asked that the Branch remember to send him items to include within it.

15.Branch CCTV Equipment

The Branch was reminded that it was there for their use and they were encouraged to take this opportunity to spread the knowledge of ringing. It had been used over the previous year to allow the public in general to safely see what happens in the tower when ringing is taking place. Robin Shipp asked if he could please book the equipment for the Heritage Weekend for Thornbury in September 2020 – dates to be confirmed.

16. A.O.B.

The Secretary reported that the Association had had a new badge commissioned and she was taking orders for anyone who wished to purchase the same. She also reported that a good number of our members had taken part in the 'First Fortnight' and these had been recorded on the Association website and members who took part were to be congratulated.

The Chairman informed the meeting that in April 2021 it would be the turn of this Branch to host the Association AGM.

There being no other business the Chairman declared the Meeting closed at 18.40 when ringing re-commenced and finished with a course of St Clements Major to mark the fact that this was St Clements Day and had been referred to by the Rev. Lunt in his address.