



Devon Association of Ringers Annual General Meeting Minutes

Held at North Tawton Town Hall, Saturday 12th November 2016

1. Chairman's Welcome

Chairman Mr Graham Sharland welcomed all members to the 82nd Annual General Meeting at 14:20.

2. Welcome and Prayers

The Rev. Nick Weldon welcomed the members and led the prayers.

3. Apologies for Absence

The secretary provided details of those that had sent apologies prior to the meeting.

In addition, there were the following apologies from the floor: Messrs Scott Adams, Jereme Darke, John Enderson, Chris Smallhound, Mike Pascoe and Mark Wonnacott.

4. Minutes of 2015 AGM & Matters Arising

There were no additional matters arising from the minutes of the previous AGM.

Mrs Julia Jarvis proposed that the minutes be signed by the chair as a true record; all were in favour.

5. Treasurer's Report

Mr John Barnes reported that he wishes to stand down at the next AGM in 2017 and asked for a vote of thanks to Gill Herniman for acting as the auditor of the accounts.

- Profits were up after an exceptional year
- Mrs Julia Jarvis was thanked for her hard work in producing a surplus of £4514.80 from the annual draw in her first year as Fundraising Officer.
- Mr John Barnes proposed that the full £4514.80 be transferred to the Devon Church Bell Restoration Fund (DCBRF); Mr Michael Adams seconded this.
- The treasurer informed us of a few financial adjustments on the accounts:
 - The hall hire rate was adjusted to fit the accurate costs
 - Certificate costs were down year on year due to the special 90th anniversary certificates the previous year
 - Devon Calls costs were down substantially, and the income from advertisements was up
 - The 6-bell Major Final collection was split with the air ambulance – this accounts for the expenditure in this regard
 - A display board was purchased for £207.

- Receipts-wise, affiliation fees and entry fees were both up.
- A donation was received from the family of Pat Johnson following her funeral and memorial services.
- Mr Samuel Massey queried in which year the rise in affiliation and competition entry fees would rise – Mr John Barnes informed the meeting that the rise, ratified previously, was effective immediately.
- Mr Stuart Bennie proposed that the accounts be adopted, seconded by Mr Robert Brown – all were in favour.

6. Devon Church Bell Restoration Fund Report

Mr Ian Smith presented the annual report of the DCBRF to the floor. A number of Association towers had benefited from the fund this year. Items to note included a 6.2% rise in the investment value of the fund, which stood at a health value at the meeting of £356,445.

The chair Mr Graham Sharland thanked Mr Ian Smith for all his hard work throughout the year and the president Mr Michael Adams presented a cheque from the Annual Draw to Mr Ian Smith on behalf of the Association.

7. Annual Reports from Officers and Matters Arising

Reports from the vast majority of officers of the Association had been circulated in advance prior to the meeting. Mr Colin Adams presented his Publicity Report to the floor.

There were no matters arising.

8. Election of President, President Elect & DCBRF Trustees

Mr Michael Adams ended his term of office as president by handing the sash to the new president, Mrs Christine Ley.

Mr Adams thanked the floor for all their support and said that he thoroughly enjoyed the year.

Mrs Ley's first act as new president was to present Mr Adams with a 'Past Presidents' badge.

She then proceeded to give a short statement outlining her vision for the twelve months in office, including her intention to have contact with as many Association towers as possible to discuss any issues.

The Committee put forward Barry Osbourne as the sole candidate for President-Elect for South Devon – all were in favour of his election and he will take up office in November 2017.

The Association representatives as DCBRF trustees were elected en bloc: Mr John Barnes, Mr Graham Sharland and Mrs Elaine Grant. Proposed by Mrs Christine Ley, seconded by Jonathan Bint – all were in favour.

9. Election of Officers

As the end of a triennium, all officers and committee posts are now vacant and require election:

- Under the constitution, the chair is required to step down. Mr Graham Sharland read a short report as chair.

- As the incumbent vice-chair, Mr James Steer was welcomed by president Mrs Christine Ley to become chair for the next three years.
- The now vacant position of vice-chair, now from the South of Devon, is to be discussed at the next Committee meeting to be elected from the South Devon committee.
- Mrs Margaret White stood down after several years' loyal service as honorary general secretary and Mr Sam Massey took over this position, as there were no other candidates for replacement. Mr Sharland, as outgoing chair, thanked Mrs White for her hard work and assistance over many years.
- Assistant secretaries with responsibility for the North and South Devon competitions were re-elected unchallenged as Messrs Stuart Bennie (North) and Jereme Darke (South)
- As indicated previously, Mr John Barnes agreed to stand for one final year as treasurer
- Mrs Victoria Tucker was re-elected unchallenged as Publicity Officer
- Mr Samuel Massey wished to stand down as Training Officer following his appointment as secretary – Mr Graham Sharland took this position unchallenged.
- The Devon Calls Editor continued to be Mr Colin Adams (assisted by a subcommittee)
- Guild Liaison Officer continued as Mr Ian Avery
- Dr James Kerslake agreed to continue as webmaster for the next triennium
- Central Council Representatives were willing to stand again – these are Mr Mervyn Way and Mr Robert Brown.
- This situation was proposed by Mr Roger Morely – all were in favour.
- Devon Ringers Council representatives from the Association continue as Messrs Colin Adams, Sam Massey, Ian Avery, Maurice Sharland, and Graham Sharland. All in favour.
- It was discussed that the Association might consider the position of a recruitment officer – Mr James Steer decided that this would be best discussed at committee level and it was added as an agenda item for the next meeting.

10. North & South Devon Committee

Mrs Margaret White informed the meeting that as well as the existing committee, willing to stand for re-election, there were two vacancies. Mr Graham Sharland proposed Mr Jonathan Bint and Mr Clive Ward. There were willing to accept the positions. Mr Sharland proposed that Messrs Bint and Ward be elected along with the remaining committee en bloc. All were in favour.

Mrs Margaret White informed the meeting that Mr Maurice Sharland had tendered his resignation. Mr James Steer (as newly-elected chair) thanked Mr Maurice Sharland for many years loyal service as a committee member. This meant that as well as the existing committee, willing to stand for re-election, there were now four vacancies. Mr Julia Jarvis proposed Mr Paul Hext, Mr Ian Avery proposed Mr Lee Avery and Messrs Sam Hext and Michael Adams were proposed by Mr Colin Adams. All were willing to stand, so Mr Graham Sharland proposed that all new members be elected alongside the existing committee en bloc. All were in favour.

The Committee for 2017 are as follows:

North: Messrs Gerald Arscott, James Steer, Clive Ward, Keith Bavin, Stephen Hernimann, John Lock, Jonathan Bint, Andrew Vincent and Mrs Margaret White.

South: Messrs Ian Avery, Paul Hext, John Dietz, Sam Hext, Lee Avery, David Trout, Scott Adams, Barry Osbourne and Colin Adams.

11. Competition Review

Mr Stuart Bennie gave his report to the meeting regarding the North Devon competitions from the previous year. Mr James Steer thanked Mr Bennie for his hard work over the past year and no further action was taken.

Mr Jereme Darke gave his report in absentia via Mr Graham Sharland regarding the South Devon Competitions from the previous year. Mr James Steer asked Mr Sharland to pass on his thanks to Mr Darke for all his hard work over the past year and no further action was taken.

12. Competitions 2017

Mr Stephen Herniman put forward Burrington as a venue for the Novice Competition on Saturday March 11th 2017. As there were no other proposals, this was adopted with all in favour and Mr Herniman was thanked by Mr Steer for his proposal.

Mrs Margaret White informed the meeting that she had received one proposal from Bishop's Tawton for the North Devon Six-Bell Qualifier on Saturday 13th May 2017. As there were no other proposals, this was adopted with all in favour.

No nominations had been received in writing for the South Devon Six-Bell Qualifier, so Mr James Steer asked for suggestions from the floor. Mr John Moody put forward Tedburn St Mary as a venue for the competition on Saturday 13th May 2017. This was seconded by Mr Colin Adams – all were in favour.

A written proposal for the Minor Six-Bell Final on Saturday 27th May 2017 had been received from Ashwater. As there were no other proposals, this was adopted with all in favour.

Mrs Margaret White informed the meeting that Dunsford had invited the Association to hold their Major Six-Bell Final there on Saturday 10th June 2017. As there were no other proposals, this was adopted with all in favour and Mr Maurice Sharland was thanked by Mr Steer for his invitation.

Mrs Margaret White had received two nominations for the 8-Bell Final competition to be held on Saturday September 16th 2017, from Hatherleigh and South Molton. All 8-bell tower captains present were asked to vote for their preferred tower – there was a tie with seven votes each. Mr James Steer asked for captains to reconsider and another vote was held. The vote was carried in favour of South Molton by eight votes to six.

Mr Stephen Herniman informed the meeting that the National Competition would be held again 20th May 2017, in conjunction with Mr Denzel Speare, venue to be confirmed.

Fixed Penalty System for Ringing Under Time

An idea was brought to the meeting as an amendment to the current rule regarding disqualification for ringing under time. A proposal, brought forward by Mr James Steer under the proviso of encouraging teams, is that if a team is less than 10 seconds under time, that they should not be disqualified. Instead, a fixed penalty fault system be employed followed by an extra fault added for every second under time up to including 10 seconds. If this is exceeded, then the current disqualification rule should apply. Mrs Margaret White seconded this proposal.

Mrs Christine Ley spoke strongly against the motion, and discussion followed on both sides.

The motion was put to the vote. Nine members voted for it, with the remainder voting against, therefore the motion was not carried.

13. Correspondence

Item 1 – Stokenteignhead

Stokenteignhead had written to the previous secretary asked for assistance with ringers on 4th December 2016 at 5pm. Mr Ian Avery agreed to contact the captain of ringers to discuss this further.

Item 2 – Certificates

Mr Bob Robinson wrote to the committee to suggest that all teams to reach the Major Six and Eight Bell Final competitions should be given a certificate.

This was agreed unanimously amongst the meeting and should be put into action for the 2017 competition season – competition secretaries to action this.

Mr Robinson also suggested that the Association become a registered charity. The meeting felt this was a matter for further discussion at committee and was therefore postponed to be included as an agenda item on the next committee meeting.

Item 3 – Mendip Ropes

Ms Becky Dunnett from Mendip Ropes had written to the secretary to ask the Association to spread the word amongst members about her business.

Item 4 – Association Training Day

Mr Jonathan Bint proposed inclusion of a Training Day for individual ringers, perhaps on the same day as the Association Open Competition. There was much support from the floor, but Mr James Steer suggested it be added as item for the agenda for the next committee meeting to promote wider discussion.

Item 5 – 2017 AGM Venue

Mr Jonathan Bint proposed Chagford as a venue for next year's Annual General Meeting. This was seconded by Mrs Suzanne Driscoll.

A proposal of North Tawton was given by Mr Brian Drake, seconded by Mr Mervyn Way.

The motion was put to the vote, with North Tawton carried with 22 votes to 13 in favour of Chagford.

14. AOB

Publicity Update

Mrs Victoria Tucker gave a short update on publicity, including the Rope In A Mate campaign, asking ringers to bring a friend to bell-ringing practice during January 2017. Mrs Tucker informed the meeting of a number of available posters and clothing items, and of Devon Association Appreciation Awards to Mr Ian Avery and The Parish Of Dartmouth Bellringers.

Devon Bellringers Carol Service

Mr Ian Avery, in his capacity as Clerk to the Devon Ringers Council, informed the meeting of the Devon Bellringers Carol Service to be held on 10th December 2016 at Buckfast Abbey.

Devon Bellringers Lunch

Mrs Julia Jarvis expressed her intention to organise a Devon Association Bellringers Lunch in South Devon during April.

The Next Generation

Mr Sam Hext informed the committee of work that his wife Mrs Jackie Hext is doing with children with schools in her federation, and expressed an intention to talk about the next generation as part of a wider discussion. After a short update of projects of a similar kind around the county, it was decided by Mr James Steer to add this as an agenda item at the next committee meeting.

Buckfast Abbey

Mr Paul Hext informed the meeting of the current situation at Buckfast Abbey with a request for support in dealing with the Buckfast Abbey employees. Mrs Chris Ley informed the meeting of her intention to contact or visit Buckfast Abbey and their authorities in the coming months in her presidential year and would discuss this further at this point.

Brampton/Hunsthram

Ms Kathy Wyke informed the meeting that the Troyte Ringing Centre were planning a programme of call change ringing between 10am-12pm on the third Saturday of each month and requested help from the Association in delivering this.

Mr Graham Sharland agreed to talk further to Ms White in his capacity as Training Officer.

8-bell Competition Entries

Mr John Kelly BEM expressed his concern at towers with greater than eight bells having an unfair advantage over eight bell towers when entering the Devon 8-Bell Final competition. Although this point was taken, as there are no other opportunities for these towers to enter any other Association competitions throughout the year, it was felt the current rules are sufficient and would be reviewed at the end of the quinquennium.

South Devon 8-Bell Competition

Mr Barry Osbourne made an appeal for the meeting for more entries for the South Devon Bellringers Association annual 8-bell competition.

15. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

Saturday 11th November at North Tawton Town Hall.

The chair declared the meeting closed at 16:49.

Mr Samuel C Massey

Former Hon. Secretary at time of meeting

Devon Association of Ringers

22nd September 2017