

20<sup>th</sup> January 2024

# MINUTES – AGM

## PETERBOROUGH BRANCH

OF THE PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELLRINGERS

**Location:** St Mary's Church, New Road, Peterborough. PE1 1TT.

**Attended by:**

Lewis Abbot, David Banks, Deborah Bray, Steve Brown, Chris Burgess, Julian Burton, Andrew Christie, Gillie Christie, Bernie Clapp, Alex Dyer, Nick Elks, Hilary Hardie, Ian Larter, Katie Larter, Sue Marsden, Rob Peasnell, Clara Pedersen, Holly Pedersen, Jane Robinson, Judith Rogers, Robin Rogers, Taliya Rubendran, Michael Smedley, Diana Street, Helena Thorpe, James Thorpe.

**Guild Representatives:**

Helen Allton, Richard Allton.

### 1. WELCOME

Hilary Hardie welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### 2. VOTE OF THANKS

Julian Burton thanked Rev'd Michael Moore for leading the service, to all who have attended, Andrew Christie & Gillie Christie for hosting, and the committee for organising.

### 3. APOLOGIES

Helen Cornford, Jill Cowcill, Chris Edis, Yvette Halewood, Sally Hudson, Derek Jones, Sue Jones, Caroline Mould, Julie Nicholson, Joan Parker, Pamela Pohling-Brown, John Riley, Chrissie Roberts Lewis, Anne Russell, Gavin Simpson, David Teall, Pat Teall, Jane Webb, Elaine Wilkinson, Sylvia Upex.

### 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF 2023 AGM – 21<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY 2023

Proposed by Hilary Hardie and seconded by Jane Robinson. Approved as true record.

### 5. MATTERS ARISING

David Banks inquired about the status of the branch reorganisation. Hilary Hardie stated that Helen Allton, the Guild secretary, would share an update during the

latter part of the meeting, specifically at agenda point 14. There were no other matters arising.

## 6. OFFICERS REPORTS

The ringing master and steward's reports are attached to these minutes.

The treasurer's and branch accounts have been posted on the branch website.

## 7. ADOPTION OF ACCOUNTS FOR 2023

Proposed by Hilary Hardie and seconded by Nick Elks. Adopted by the meeting.

## 8. REPORT ON CASTOR RINGING SCHOOL

Attached to these minutes.

## 9. ELECTION OF NEW MEMBERS

The following have been nominated and accepted as new members to the Peterborough branch:

Steph Matthews	Castor
Lynne Thain	Castor
Gareth Kendall	Easton on the Hill
Shaun Sutton	Easton on the Hill
Jenny Smith	Kings Cliffe
Carol Mee	Nassington
Joseph Booker (S)	Peterborough, St Mary's
Katie Larter (S)	Peterborough, St Mary's
Ian Larter	Peterborough, St Mary's
Rob Peasnell	Peterborough, St Mary's
Emilia Pike (S)	Peterborough, St Mary's
Roy Snow	Peterborough, St Mary's

Jenny Smith's transfer from the Northampton branch, Nassington and Easton on the Hill members were proposed by Hilary Hardie and seconded by Deborah Bray. Castor members were proposed by Julian Burton and seconded by Hilary Hardie. Peterborough, St Mary's members were proposed by Andrew Christie and seconded by Hilary Hardie. All were approved at the meeting. Their welcome packs will be presented at an appropriate practice.

## 10. PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATES

James Thorpe reported the following and presented the certificates.

- **1<sup>st</sup> Peals** Deborah Bray, Hilary Hardie.
- **Quarter Peals** Clara Pederson, Holly Pederson.

Hilary Hardie presented a 50-year guild member certificate for John Riley, as he was unable to attend, Peterborough Cathedral members to present this to him at an appropriate time.

## 11. ELECTION OF BRANCH OFFICERS FOR 2024

James Thorpe, who served as the ringing master, Andrew Christie as treasurer and Helena Thorpe, a committee member, have resigned from their roles. Hilary Hardie expressed gratitude to all for their dedicated service and contributions throughout their tenure.

POSITION	NOMINATION	PROPOSED BY	SECONDED BY
Chair	H. Hardie	S. Marsden	L. Abbot
Ringing Master	E. Wilkinson	D. Banks	J. Robinson
Assistant to Ringing Master	J. Robinson	H. Hardie	D. Bray
Secretary	D. Bray	H. Hardie	N. Elks
Treasurer	S. Brown	A. Christie	J. Burton
Steward	N. Elks	A. Dyer	J. Robinson
Press officer and newsletter editor	Vacant		
Guild Management Representative	No longer required by the guild. Any branch committee member can attend with Chair.		
Branch Committee Members (3)	A. Christie S. Marsden C. Mould	H. Hardie	L. Abbot
100 Club Representative	H. Hardie	J. Robinson	D. Bray
Examiner of Accounts	J. Burton	D. Street	L. Abbot

The above were all elected, unopposed.

## 12. NOMINATION OF GUILD OFFICERS

Nothing to update.

## 13. DISCUSSION/NOMINATION OF BRANCH EVENTS & PROGRAMME FOR 2024 INCLUDING THE GUILD 100 YEAR CELEBRATIONS 2024

During 2024 there are several events being organised by the Guild, both as second Saturdays and to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The following events were proposed and agreed:

- Hilary Hardie had agreed with Diana Street to coordinate an afternoon tea and ring event again, likely scheduled for late September, although the exact date is yet to be confirmed.
- A proposal was made for a junior ringing group, with some junior members expressing interest in sessions where they could ring with their peers. Andrew suggested initiating these sessions at Peterborough, St. Mary's as an initial step to gauge the response from the junior members.
- Jane Robinson put forward the idea of organising socials focused on Minor and Surprise methods.
- Following the success of ringing for evensong at the Cathedral last year, Helena Thorpe offered to organise a similar event this year.

#### 14. ADDRESS BY VISITING GUILD OFFICER

Helen Allton, the guild secretary shared news on the branch reorganisation, revealing that the initial issue prompting the change had been resolved, rendering branch reorganisation unnecessary. However, a subcommittee, with representatives from each branch was established, producing a report advocating for the reduction of administrative tasks to boost volunteer time for ringing, recruitment, and training. Approval has been granted for two subcommittees to investigate these possibilities. These subcommittees will focus on reviewing member management and financial approaches.

I. Managing members includes options for members to manage their own information, to update changes directly, to consider payment by regular payment or direct debit and related areas. It will not remove the need for branches to have a local administrative presence, but it should reduce the effort at branch level.

II. Currently, each branch independently oversees its own bank account, resulting in challenges related to signatory changes, fees, and cash management, particularly with branch closures.

The address concluded with a mention of the guild's 100-year celebration events and an invitation for everyone to participate. Tickets for events are available from [centenary@pdg.org.uk](mailto:centenary@pdg.org.uk), and merchandise (mugs, puzzles and clothing) is available throughout the year to purchase. Finally, a thank you for excellent hosting of the first 100 year anniversary of the guild event – the evensong in the cathedral held the previous week.

#### 15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Sue Marsden stated that ringers should proactively express their desire to attempt any firsts, encouraging them not to wait to be asked. Deborah Bray will share an update regarding this on Petnet.

15.50 MEETING CLOSED

## RINGING MASTERS REPORT JANUARY 2023 – JAMES THORPE

This has been a year of social and inclusive ringing centred around a few particularly enthusiastic branch towers. As hoped branch members have regained much of the confidence lost during the pandemic break.

### Practice nights:

Happy news to report is that King's Cliffe have re-established their practice, moving to a Wednesday that had been vacated by Bulwick's practice stopping.

Glington and St Mary's continue to support each other.

The centre of enthusiasm that is the Warmington band now spread their ringing across their benefice and move their Friday practice night to include Cotterstock and recently Fotheringhay.

### Workshops:

Last year I was able to report the establishment of a new practice at Wittering. This year a striking workshop was delivered at Wittering for their band. The progress they are making is particularly impressive, given the difficulty that 2 of the most experienced branch ringers had in handling their small bells!

A spliced plain and little bob workshop was delivered at Cotterstock. This was a useful tool to develop understanding of lead structure and lead ends amongst ringers more used to thinking of the circle of work. Many thanks to Branch event stalwarts Nick Sue John and Helena for once again coming out to help me put this on - as they have done throughout my time as ringing master.

At the request of the Warmington band a Stedman workshop was a great collaborative success. It was encouraging to see what can be achieved with adventurous ambition and careful homework beforehand! Thank you for my lunch!

### Social ringing events:

My able assistant ran a very successful event at Stanground, initially marketed as Plain Minor, in the end it included treble Bob methods too, as well as a touch of Bastow of which reports tell of a ridiculous number of bobs! Reports also tell of the quality of the cake on offer.

There was a social surprise minor event at Bulwick that was also very well supported, with many ringers getting an opportunity to ring Cambridge and other surprise methods not often available at branch practices including touches of spliced. It was a busy practice with many people wanting an experienced band around them to help them achieve their target ring. Sorry, that not everybody got to ring everything they had hoped.

Diana organised what has become a now traditional event: the branch cream tea ringing afternoon. Whilst I wasn't present, I am told this was as popular as ever.

### Quarter peals:

This cannot possibly be a complete record of QP ringing and the many achievements this year worthy of mention, however I will just say that

St Mary's were once again far and away the most active quarter peal tower, I make it 39 quarters at home, with away fixtures arranged at Nassington, Barnack, Castor, Glinton, Stanground, West Deeping, Woodston, Wansford, Yarwell, Crowland, Maxey, Edith Weston, Old Fletton, and a date touch at Fotheringhay, which I can personally report was best appreciated whilst out walking off the new year's hangover.

Many firsts have been scored including Julian Burton's first PB minor inside, Holly and Clara Peterson rang their first QP together. Gavin Simpson first of treble Bob. First inside Geoff Bridges. First as conductor Deborah Bray.

### The Guild events:

Branch ringers featured strongly at the guild Spring festival 6 bell striking competition, the cathedral band rang a very tidy course of Cambridge minor finishing a close second with only 14 faults.

The Guild is 100 years old this year. This was marked by a service at the cathedral on 14th January. Ringers from 5 of the 10 branches, including ours, were represented in the quarter peal of Cambridge Max there. On the same day a quarter of Century Little Bob Triples was rung at St Mary's.

### Ringling for the King:

It isn't often that we get to ring for the coronation of a monarch, and branch ringers did not miss the opportunity. Quarters were rung at Castor, St Mary's, The Cathedral and Woodston. Peals were rung at The Cathedral and Castor - which included a first peal by the secretary of the branch, and Nassington - this was the first on the bells since augmentation and just happened to include a first peal for the branch chairperson. General ringing for the coronation was also reported from, St John's, Wansford, Warmington, Barnack, Cotterstock, Easton on the Hill, Fotheringhay, King's Cliffe, Ufford, Wittering, Yarwell, Bulwick, Glinton

### Eight Bell Practice:

This practice has enormously benefited from support that is not limited to the branch. The highlight of complexity was definitely a touch of spliced Glasgow and Double Norwich. However, the purpose and vision of the practice has always been to help people to make the leap from 6 to 8 bell ringing. 3 ringers have successfully used this practice to move on into surprise major ringing - they all happen to be ringers from Rutland.

The last 2 practices were organised as development 8 bell quarter peals, both of which were scored. The last one being a first on 8 inside for my assistant ringing master Jane, who has been an enormous help throughout this year, my final year as ringing master.

## STEWARDS REPORT JANUARY 2023 – NICK ELKS

For those who might not be sure about what the 'Branch Steward' does, the role is to support towers with advice regarding tower maintenance, and provide help where possible with inspection of bell fittings and general preventative maintenance. I try to concentrate my limited resource on helping towers where there is no active band, or where the ringers are not sure or able to do maintenance themselves.

It is important that the bells are well looked after - neglecting to check them regularly can lead to bells becoming unringable.

During the past year, the following has taken place...

Maxey - I spent a day with locals from Maxey cleaning down and repainting the headstocks and recoating the wheels with preservative. The bells are currently unringable due to problems with the roof and ingress of water affecting the tower.

Cotterstock - they have been inspected a couple of times.

Peterborough Cathedral - there are problems with the clapper and crown staple on bell #11 which are due to be resolved shortly

Yarwell - have been augmented from four to five bells in December - I spent two days providing assistance alongside locals.

Polebrook - preparing and repainting of the frame is needed - a work party has yet to be organised

If anyone requires assistance with checking or maintaining their bells then please let me know.

Nick Elks - Branch Steward





# Castor Ringing School

## Annual Report for 2023

It has been another busy year at the Ringing School and we have continued to hold sessions most Saturday mornings, apart from various weekends over Christmas and New Year, Easter and in August.

A number of new learners started in early 2023, many recruited via Ring for the King. In addition, a number of ringers who wanted to improve their handling and move onto methods have also joined the sessions. Some of our learners have chosen to progress their ringing at their own tower once they are safely handling and have mastered rounds. We continue with the progression from handling through rounds and plain hunt to various methods.

Total number of sessions in year - 48.

Total number of pupils attending - 429.

Total number of Tutors/Helpers attending - 340.

Over the 12 months we had a total of 10 new recruits.

A particular thank you to Terry Wright who has made sure we have sufficient help to run the School each week. We have recruited some new and returning helpers, which means we have sufficient experienced ringers to give our pupils a solid band for methods, but some weeks there have been fewer available. Thank you to all those experienced ringers who give up their Saturday mornings to support us. It is much appreciated by the learners.

Alex Heaton has been a regular helper over the last couple of years, and we will miss her now she has left the area. Three ringers who learned to ring at the Ringing School graduated in the year having rung their first QP inside, and have returned as helpers.

In the year, two of the helpers attended an Association of Ringing Teachers Module 1 workshop on teaching handling and are being mentored by us as they progress.

### **LtR achievements 2023**

Over the last 12 months there has been a healthy number of Learning the Ropes achievements. The table below shows the number of passes made from Levels 1 to 5. Well done everybody and a big thank you to all teachers and helpers.

LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
11	6	2	3	3

Particular congratulations to Jane Robinson, Deborah Bray and Alex Heaton for completing level 5 in the year.

**Hilary Hardie, Head Tutor**  
**Terry Wright, Administrator**