

Minutes of the Lent Term Business Meeting held in the Boys Smith Room, St. John's College, Cambridge on Friday 26th January 2001

Those Present

Senior Treasurer : Dr. C.Y. Barlow
Master : Martin Bright
Secretary : Charles Isitt

John Sturdy	Jill Galloway	Robert Johnson
Ian Wells	Andrew Tibbetts	Joanne Garner
Philip Earis	Lucy Weston	Clarke Walters
Richard Lewis	Liz Ford	
Mair Allen-Williams	Laura Hill	

The Senior Treasurer was in the chair and opened the meeting at 21:20.

1. Apologies For Absence

Apologies were received from:-

Dr. C.M.P. Johnson	M.B. Stacy	N. Romijn
W.J. Edwards	E.R. Hirst	R.A. Smith
T.R. Poole	J.D. Shanklin	R. Andrewes

2. Minutes of the Michaelmas Term Business Meeting

The minutes were read by the secretary. The meeting voted to accept them as read, and they were signed by Dr. Barlow as a true and correct record of the meeting.

3. Matters Arising

Following the complaints about last year's Ridgman Trophy draw, brought up at the Michaelmas Term Business meeting the Master said that he had received a letter of apology. The organisers would not let it happen again, and no action was required on the part of the Guild. He went on to say that this year's Ridgman Trophy Striking Competition will be held on 2nd June, at Kempston, Bedfordshire, with the draw being at 1300.

It was suggested by Dr. Barlow that the meeting noted that the initial remedial work of rebushing the clappers at St. Andrew the Great was completed as outlined in Chris Johnson's report to the Michaelmas Term meeting. Our thanks was extended to those who helped with the work, especially Chris and William.

There were no other matters arising.

4. Election of new members

The following were elected to membership of the Guild, proposed by R.P.I Lewis, seconded by M.J. Bright;

Mair Allen-Williams (Girton)

The following were elected to membership of the Guild, proposed by Dr. Barlow, seconded by C.H. Isitt;

Clare Gilmour (New Hall)

Both were accepted by majority vote of the meeting.

5. Remedial Work at St. Andrew's

Following the recently completed work at St. Andrew's indication had been given that the bearings on all eight bells were badly worn, and in need of replacement. Chris Johnson contacted White's with regard to obtaining a quote for bearing replacement works. A report covering the findings and comments from White's has been produced, and was circulated both prior to, and during the meeting. The secretary received a quote from White's by e-mail shortly before the meeting.

Dr. Barlow brought Chris' report to the attention of the meeting and briefly summarised the situation. The quote by White's was presented to the meeting. Clarke Walters said that given the information it seemed a good idea to consider replacing the bearings at St. Andrews. He said that when bearings become noisy, they don't have long to live, but catastrophic failure was very unlikely. We should plan to do something. The work is straightforward and would involve lifting the bells using jacks, taking out the bearings, cleaning if necessary or put in a new bearing if worn out.

Clarke said he had recently been involved with work at a tower in Nottinghamshire where four bearings were replaced. If work was to be done, it is worth putting new bearings in anyway, but the quote from White's sounded expensive, even with the reductions for local labour. He said it was definitely worth looking for several other quotes, especially as companies should be able to quote, without visiting the tower, for replacing bearings from a Taylor's 1958 installation.

The meeting agreed that further quotes should be obtained. Dr. Barlow questioned why the bearings were no longer available. Clarke stated that for the work in Nottinghamshire, the bearings were found within a day, from local bearing suppliers. He said it was worth contacting Hayward Mills who did that job. He also said Taylor's may have a stock of old bearings, and we should contact them.

Clarke said it is quite easy to get the size of the bearings, by either measuring the external diameter of the housing, or by taking the end cap off the bearing. White's had commented that they think there are only two sizes of bearing from this era. Clarke felt that we should seek further quotes, for presentation and discussion at the AGM.

The Secretary asked if the work could wait that long. Clarke said that ideally the work would be done this year, but at this price we should look at other options before doing the work.

Dr. Barlow asked from whom we should seek quotes. Clarke suggested sending a standard letter to Hayward Mills, Whitechapel, Taylor's and Eayre & Smith, asking for a quote initially without visiting the tower. Dr. Barlow suggested we could then review the responses at the AGM, which will give us time to contact the church to discuss the work and the cost.

Dr. Barlow suggested passing a hat round at the dinner, if additional funds would be needed. The meeting accepted this as a good idea, the Master suggested the loving cup when empty, as being appropriate.

John Sturdy suggested spreading the work over a couple of years. Clarke said we could in principle but it would probably cost more in the long run for two visits of the professionals. The Master said if spreading the cost helps, another option was for a professional to replace the bearings in four bells – say the middle four 1,8,4 and 5, for the helpers to see how it's done, and then the Guild to replace the bearings in the other four 2,3,6 and 7, which are around the edge and easier to access.

The Librarian commented that it would be dangerous if we got it wrong, and Ian Wells said that we need not commit to doing the work ourselves until we had seen what it involved.

The Master suggested that an honorary member of the Guild, Johnny Gibson, who is a qualified mechanic, may be prepared to supervise. He has lifting gear, which could be used. Laura reminded the meeting that Tom Ridgman is involved in Bell restoration, and may be prepared to act in a supervisory role. Dr. Barlow was not taken by the idea of the Guild working unaided but said that the Guild working under the supervision of an experienced person, such as Johnny Gibson, could be a good solution. She suggested talking to Johnny, and comparing the overall price with the quotes obtained for the complete works.

The Master suggested it would be in the Guild's interests to go with the cheapest route. Clarke said that someone such as Hayward Mills may quote to remove, clean and inspect the bearings, allowing us to say which ones we want to replace, hence re-using any that are okay. Dr. Barlow said that if this allows the bearings to last another 20 years, then we might save the cost of several new bearings.

Clarke said it was best to get further quotes, contact the people suggested and see what they advise. The meeting concluded that quotes should be obtained from several companies. Dr. Barlow said that she hoped Chris would be happy to continue to make the necessary contact, and to liaise with the church. A decision could hopefully be taken at the AGM in May.

6. Diary Dates

The only diary dates were those listed on the agenda. Dr. Barlow asked how the dinner was progressing, and who had been invited as a guest. Martin Bright said that no past-master had yet been invited, he didn't know who the Cambridge Youth guest would be – at which Robert Johnson commented that surely he was sending out the invitations, to which Martin replied that it was up to the Master of the Cambridge Youth's to decide. The Guest speaker was David House from Brighton, clergy guest he suggested would be the new vicar of St. Benedicts, although he was not likely to say grace in the same way as brother Anslem. Martin also informed the meeting that the past master would be getting a free ticket this year.

7. Any other business

There was no other business, and the meeting was closed at 21:45.