

**Minutes of the Guild Week Meeting held in Seminar Room N, Tremough Campus,
Combined Universities in Cornwall on Monday 18th August 2008**

Members Present

President: C Y Barlow

Secretary: R T Backhouse

M J Bright	N Bright	S Darvill
A J Griffin	A Johnson	C M P Johnson
A Kirkman	T Kirkman	K Lebon
J R N Lebon	D Lynch	M Lynch
C H Northeast	A Parry	L Pelc*
T Ridgman	E Roberts	C H Rogers
P A B Saddleton	J D Shanklin	R Shipp
N J H Small	N Smith	N Sturgess
J Taylor	J Taylor	J Thorpe
M S Threlfall	S Threlfall	R Underwood
I G Vincent	S C Walters	T Watt
R H Youdale		

* Elected during the meeting.

The President was in the chair and opened the meeting at 8.07.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from:

P A Abbey	D G Andrews	T K Beadman
R A Bird	H E Bishop	L M Bland
T R Camp	E C Carter	P A F Chalk
N Chatfield	S Darvill	R E B S Day
D C Ford	A M Godfrey	C L F Haggett
R O Hall	T P Hearn	C R Hill
P W Hill	P B Hodson	J N Hughes-D'Aeth
R A G Inglis	B R M Johnson	M A S Jones
L A Jones	A J Kempton	G R D Lay
B I Le Gallez	A P J Limbach	H N Lockwood
B G Meads	H Muirhead	H Neill
V Nutton	C J P Price	D E Rothera
S J Rothera	P S Seaman	G P Shields
L T W Smith	B D Threlfall	G Turnock
H J Verity	P K Williamson	D A Winter
H Winter	J Wrenbury	

The President read out letters from P A F Chalk and P K Williamson and noted that J Wrenbury was thought to be recovering from major surgery, to whom it was agreed to send the Guild's best wishes.

2. Minutes of the 2007 Guild Week Meeting

The President noted that the minutes of the previous meeting had been available on the Guild website; it was agreed that the President should read out a précis of the central points. There had been news of plans to move the Guild Library and the completion of the peal board at Great St. Mary's commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the first tower bell peal on twelve bells rung by the Guild, as well as discussions surrounding projects for towers in Cambridge, principally concerning the decision to replace the bells at Great St. Mary's and the possibility of installing a new ring of eight in Michaelhouse.

The meeting accepted that the minutes were a true and correct record and these were subsequently signed by the President.

3. Matters arising

It was agreed that all matters arising were adequately covered in the agenda.

4. Matters relevant to the Guild Week Meeting raised during the academic year 2007 – 2008

The President commented upon a number of events and points of interest from the previous academic year:

- The Guild library had been sorted and catalogued by D F Hagon; there was an ongoing discussion concerning the possibility of distributing or selling some of the books.

Michaelmas:

- Five new life members were elected.

- The peal board commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Guild's first peal on 12 had been completed and put on display at Great St. Mary's.

- An EGM was held on November 11th to discuss the Michaelhouse project. It was initially agreed to proceed with an installation of 8 bells, but, following an engineering report on the tower that highlighted the costs entailed and the expression of ongoing concerns by Gonville and Caius College about the potential noise, it was agreed not to proceed. The project is currently dormant. Attention has subsequently been focussed on the possibility of a new ring of bells for the Guild being installed in the tower of St. John's chapel.

C H Rogers enquired whether there had been any progress on the valuation of books in the Guild library; the President confirmed that a list had been provided and followed up on.

5. Election of new members

L Pelc was proposed for annual membership by J Thorpe, since she had been at Homerton before the College became a fully affiliated member of the University and had therefore not matriculated at the time; A Parry commented that he had been in a similar position, having only matriculated at the end of his second year. C Y Barlow seconded the proposal and L Pelc was duly elected unopposed with a view to becoming a life member of the Guild if the status of Homerton undergraduates could be altered retrospectively.

6. 2008 (current) Guild Week

C H Northeast asked that any outstanding accounts be settled with her as soon as possible. The President noted that usernames and passwords for internet access should now be available to obtain from the porters' lodge.

C H Rogers proposed a vote of thanks for C H Northeast's organisation of Guild Week, which he declared had been excellent given the difficulties faced over accommodation and the disappointments concerning attendance levels. In particular, there had been a reduced interest in peal ringing; a planned six for the week had been reduced to four, with the band at Truro Cathedral having to be supplemented by local ringers. It was noted that certain members who often rang numerous peals (L D G Simpson, L T W Smith and B G Meads sprang to mind) were not present, partly due to the fact that the week had started on a Thursday for traffic reasons, although the meeting agreed that this had been the most sensible option. C H Rogers felt that a further point for concern was the lack of younger members, with the question raised as to how more undergraduates and recent graduates could be attracted; issues with work, finances and travelling distance had been cited by some who had attended in previous years.

J R N Lebon remarked that things had picked up after the weekend and that there was no need for panic without a longer trend of decline, while suggesting that the lack of camping may have contributed to the lack of younger members. T Kirkman felt that there was a significant risk that those not attending as undergraduates would consequently not attend in later years.

N Bright expressed that, as a recent graduate, cost was a concern and that Guild Week would not necessarily be first choice for a holiday.

S C Walters raised the idea of subsidising student rates, for which there was general support, although J D Shanklin noted that it was not clear where to draw the line. It was suggested that publishing a list of those attending in advance might allow people to cut transport costs by making car-sharing arrangements; the President proposed that such a scheme should be announced in future invitation letters. A Parry added that he used a car to travel to and from Cornwall, but did not actually need it during the week.

T Watt remarked that he had been on the earliest Guild Week of any in attendance when he was Master and had been the only undergraduate; he felt that value for money, especially in availability of camping and good facilities, should be very high on the list for any future organisers. C M P Johnson commented that the OUS tended to hire a church hall for undergraduates to sleep in, although suitable facilities and proximity to main accommodation were likely problems.

J R N Lebon asked about the possibility of colleges providing travel funds; the President noted that students were probably unaware of this option and that it should definitely be presented to undergraduates in the invitation. C M P Johnson suggested that not all colleges would be overly generous in this department and enquired whether the Societies Syndicate might provide a travelling fund. The President replied that the current strength of Guild funds would likely preclude this, but it could be looked into in the future if there were to be significant outgoings on bell installation projects.

7 Future Guild Weeks

2009

J D Shanklin noted that Guild Week in Cheshire would be from 15th - 22nd August; it was remarked that this was a week earlier than usual and it was agreed to double check the dates. He informed the meeting that the 2009 Guild Week currently faced a lack of camping, despite initial indications that it might be possible; he hoped that it might be possible to find a suitable site nearby, although this risked splitting the group. J D Shanklin enquired if alternative entertainment would be welcomed, suggesting a visit to a salt mine as a possibility.

Opinions were requested as to the balance of peals and quarter peals to organise, since there seemed to have been a preference for the latter this year. C H Northeast remarked that a number of people had mentioned that they would generally prefer to tour, while C M P Johnson thought that the current trend of one peal per day may only have been a fairly recent fluctuation. C H Rogers noted that the first occurrence of this practice was during the week spent in Surrey in 1990, when there had been a significantly increased demand for peals. M J Bright asked whether J D Shanklin could guarantee a minimum number of bells for peals. T Watt suggested that having a peal on the opening day should guarantee a core of peal ringers attending from the start, although the general mood of the meeting was that one peal per day, excluding the first and last Saturdays, would be reasonable.

2010 - 2012

The President asked for possible Guild Week venues for the next few years. R H Youdale proposed Rippon College for accommodation for a week in Oxford; he was slightly concerned about cost after the preceding discussion, but thought it likely that camping would be available. The President also mooted the possibility of Cambridge for 2010, having been previously rejected as a location; C H Rogers commented that he had heard favourable opinions and would be partial to it himself.

I G Vincent had looked into arranging a week in Nottinghamshire in 2011; although he had yet to find suitably cheap accommodation, he stated that he had not yet explored all options. The President suggested that Cambridge might then be considered for 2012, suggesting that the possibility of obtaining cheap floor space could make it a more amenable location for students. It was remarked more generally that any 2012 Guild Week should be careful to avoid clashing with the Olympics.

The meeting voted 12 - 3 in favour of Oxford as the venue for 2010, to be organised by R H Youdale.

N J H Small offered to arrange a week in Cambridge for 2011, with Nottingham in 2012 to be organised by I G Vincent, to which the meeting agreed.

8. Cambridge city centre towers

8.1. GSM

The President read out a report from Liz Orme regarding the proposal for an installation of a new ring of twelve at GSM [attached in full]. The intention was for the project to be carried out as part of the University's 800th anniversary celebrations, although C M P Johnson felt it was unlikely to meet this deadline.

T Kirkman enquired about sound control and the likely availability of the bells for ringing; C M P Johnson and J D Shanklin replied that sound control would be improved, but that the bells were already generally very available.

T Watt asked who the ultimate owners of the bells would be; C M P Johnson stated that the bells would belong to the parish, while J D Shanklin remarked that the University might have some obligations towards their maintenance.

8.2. St John's

The President invited C M P Johnson to speak about St John's. It was revealed that the new Master was keen on the idea of the installation of a ring of bells in the chapel tower as part of the college's 500th anniversary celebrations in 2011 and a college committee existed to deal with the proposal. Three main issues were highlighted as needing to be addressed: engineering, in particular sound control; finances; and college politics. C M P Johnson provided a brief history of St John's chapel tower, noting that it contained a large, 90ft space that was deemed suitable for a ringing chamber, void and belfry. The proposal was that a ring of ten bells weighing in the region of 22-25cwt be installed (this being the maximum size that could practicably be lowered through the tower roof), with space potentially left for two extra pits.

The louvers were identified as being problematic, extending down into what would be the ringing chamber, possibly necessitating the construction of an inner wall in the lower two rooms. The louvers would need to be blocked off in the belfry, as the location within college made effective sound control the primary concern; the lantern tower at St Buryan was presented as a good example of the ability to diminish noise in close proximity to the tower. Having spoken to both the University and St John's development officer, C M P Johnson felt that monetary issues would be fairly straightforward in comparison to the GSM project. College politics were more complicated, with the suggestion of installing a ring of bells in the chapel tower having been rejected twice before by the governing body, in 1979 and 1988, on each occasion by a single vote. C M P Johnson noted that very few fellows were currently aware of the project so that politics could be dealt with tactfully and that information was therefore somewhat restricted.

T Watt suggested that Ebbsfleet was an excellent example of the 19cwt ring of ten in a lantern tower.

8.3. St Bene't's

J D Shanklin reported that Whites had done some work on the 4th headstock and treble bearings April, making the bells less odd struck. Although this actually seemed to make the tenor more difficult to ring, the front five were felt to go much better.

8.4. OLEM

C H Rogers enquired about the situation at the Catholic church. J D Shanklin replied that the bells had all been re-hung on ball bearings, with ongoing consideration as to the installation of rope guides.

9. Diary Dates

It was noted that the Michaelmas meeting would be on 17th October, rather the 10th as indicated on the agenda. The London outing would be on 22nd November and the Annual Dinner on 14th March, although a college had yet to be finalised.

10. Any Other Business

J R N Lebon remarked that it had been very pleasant to see people aboard *Surprise Royal* on Sunday and that there was a quantity of alcohol remaining for consumption for those who were interested.

With no other business, the President closed the meeting at 21:32.