

**Minutes of
SOUTHERN DISTRICT
Annual District Meeting at Rochford
Saturday, 20th January, 2007**

Welcome. The Master opened the meeting by asking all present to stand in silence to remember deceased members of the District, Janice Johnson (Leigh-on-Sea).

The Master then welcomed all present and invited everyone to sign the Roll Book. There were 72 members present including the following visitors who stayed for the meeting – Andrew Taylor (Coggeshall), David Learmonth (Felstead with the Association Bookstall), Vicki, Colin & Rachel Chapman (Chelmsford), Linda and David Lee (Bures), Richard, Sarah & Matthew Dunhill (Braintree), Jean Dunhill (Friend-Langdon Hills), Mary and Fred Bone (Sawbridgeworth). Other visitors who were present at the earlier ringing were Christine Drake and Marion Barrett (Tollesbury).

The Master thanked the Rector, Rev. Chris Cousins for taking the Service, Geoffrey Sleigh-Johnson for playing the organ and the Rochford Ringers for the use of the bells and for laying on an excellent tea. Thanks were also extended to the Service touch band, (*John Cousins, Gordon Lucas, Steve Hunter, Rowena Marshall, Penny Sloman, Peter Sloman, Stephen Nash and Mike Hallett*).

Apologies for Absence were received from Beth Johnson, Roger Dorking, Peter Knight, Holly Mifsud, Alex Underwood, Bernard Arcscott, Martin Newman and Clare Beech.

Minutes of previous meeting held at Downham on 18th November 2006 had been circulated in the last Newsletter (further copies were available) and were signed by the Master as a true record.

Matters Arising.

- The December District Newsletter is available on the Southern District page of the Association website.
- Beth Johnson, the Newsletter Editor, would like to distribute future Newsletters by email and requested contact emails from all towers.

Correspondence

(a) *Notices for Motion at the AGM. 7th May at Chelmsford Cathedral.*

At the time of this meeting none had been submitted. A reminder was given that any motions for the AGM, sponsored by at least two members, must be received by the Secretary by 1st February.

(b) *Nominations for Life Membership*

One nomination had been received: Gordon Lucas of Fobbing and Langdon Hills (Proposed by Richard Dunhill and Seconded by Andy Martin). The Secretary read out the proposal to the meeting.

(c) *Nominations for Association Honorary Officers*

Nominations for the posts were invited (to be received by 1 February). The current Master, Secretary, Property Trustees (3), Central Council Representatives (5) and Independent Examiners (2) are willing to stand for re-election but Andrew Taylor, the Association Treasurer, is not seeking re-election having served 15 years in the post.

Stephen Nash (Langdon Hills) said that at present there are 7 nominations for the 5 CCCBR posts. He also reminded the meeting that the Association was urgently looking for a new Treasurer to take over from Andrew Taylor in May.

(d) Notice had been received from Vicki Chapman, Association Training Officer, of a special Training Day on 10th February (see Any Other Business).

Election of New Members

Ringling Members. The following were proposed and unanimously elected to membership:

	<u>Tower</u>	<u>Proposed by</u>	<u>Seconded by</u>
Miss Kathryn Ash	Prittlewell	Peter Sloman	Martin Newman
Mrs. Elizabeth Coates	Prittlewell	Peter Sloman	David Sloman
Mrs. Doris Hobbs	Prittlewell	Peter Sloman	Martin Newman
Miss Hannah Kidger	Thorpe Bay	Phil Harrison	Judy Rolf
Mrs. Victoria Routledge	Rochford	Anne Banton	Donald Stoneman
Ms. Julia Jones	Downham	Paul Cammiade	Ann Dorking

Junior Ringling Members. The following were proposed and unanimously elected to membership:

William Wennell	Downham	Paul Cammiade	Roger Dorking
Elliot Hughes	Rayleigh	Julie Hunter	Steve Hunter

Friends of the Association. The following was proposed and unanimously elected to membership:

Mrs. Diana Lambourne	Leigh-on-Sea	Elizabeth Wycherley	Anthony Neale
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There were no nominations for *Non-resident* members.

All new members were reminded that their Annual Subscriptions were now due.

Master's Report. Andrew Beech presented the following report.

‘We held the usual four **business meetings** throughout the year with good attendance at all of them except the November one at Downham where the number attending the actual meeting did not reflect the number of people at the whole event.

‘The two **afternoon practices** at North Ockendon in February and Stanford-le-Hope in October were both well attended.

‘The **consolidation training afternoon** in April was held at Rayleigh and saw Steve Hunter in his new role of District Education Officer coaching 5 students through Plain Bob Doubles, Grandsire Doubles and Plain Bob Minor. Thanks should be extended again to the ever-faithful helpers who help out on these worthwhile events.

‘A training day is planned this year for 21st April.

‘The **striking competition** at Great Wakering in May attracted four teams, which was fewer than previous years, and saw Prittlewell narrowly beat Downham to the trophy.

‘Both teams went through to the Association final at Inworth in July where Prittlewell were placed 5th and Downham 6th.

‘In the 8-bell inter-district competition at Goldhanger the district band were placed in =4th place.

‘Nineteen ringers travelled to East Sussex in June for the **district outing**, and were rewarded with five very good peals of bells. Although not as well supported as in previous years we were still able to raise over £40 for the BRF and the district officers thank all who supported that event.

‘The **quiz night** last year was held at Basildon in September where four teams enjoyed a fun evening which raised over £100 for the BRF. Many thanks to all of you who supported that event and to Rev. Esther McCafferty for allowing us to use the foyer of Basildon Church at short notice.

‘It was good to see six teams entering the **call change competition** at Downham in November. There were about 6 ringers for whom this was their first experience of entering a competition and it was a fantastic effort by them, and indeed all the teams who took part. South Weald claimed the trophy this time after narrowly missing out the previous year.

Master's Report, (Cont'd)

'The year ended with a good number of us at our **carol service** at Eastwood, which took on a slightly different format than in previous years but nonetheless was enjoyable and we left with tummies full of mince pies!

'We all know that **recruitment** of new ringers into our towers is the only way to maintain numbers to ensure that the bells in our towers are rung every Sunday to the glory of God, and to welcome people to church.

'It's therefore very encouraging to mention that during 2006 this district elected 26 new ringing members. That's over double the amount from the previous year and the highest number of new ringers elected in any one year over the past five years.

'However, we should not become too complacent, as there are still many towers, some in our own district, who have insufficient ringers to ring on a Sunday without help from other nearby towers. Therefore, we need to consciously recruit more ringers, make ringing more appealing and accessible to those people in our congregations and on the street who may not know anything about ringing but who would make ideal ringers, and of course most importantly to encourage, involve and maintain the interest of young people – who are after all the future of bellringing.

'Finally, I would like to **thank** all of you who have supported the various events of the past year and, as always, look forward to seeing you again during this coming year. Please support as many events as you can this year and encourage other ringers at your own tower and those you visit, who may not normally attend events, to come along with you.

And also, on behalf of everyone in the district, may I thank all the towers and local ringers where we held events last year for their welcome and hospitality.

'I would also like to thank the other **District Officers** for all their help and support to me during the past year.

'Lastly, may I wish you all a happy and peaceful 2007 and of course - enjoy your ringing and your fellowship'.

Secretary / Treasurer's Report Chris Bailey thanked those towers which had responded to the request to host District events. A copy of the District Income and Expenditure details had been circulated (copy in the Minutes Book).

Education Officer's Report

Steve Hunter delivered the following report:-

'Throughout 2006 no special requests have been made for any particular training needs. A consolidation day was organised on April 22 at Rayleigh where a number of students were able to practice Grandsire and Plain Bob Doubles. Thanks to all the more experienced ringers who gave their time and expertise to help others.

'A further training day has been organised for 21st April 2007. This year we will be looking at Plain Bob, Grandsire and Stedman with a view to extending the methods from doubles into triples. The course will consist of both morning and afternoon sessions. In the morning we will look at the doubles methods, ensuring that everyone understands fully what they are doing. Over lunch we will discuss the technicalities of extending the methods onto higher numbers, and in the afternoon we will hopefully put everything learned into practice.

Education Officer's Report (Cont'd)

'Volunteer helpers are needed for both morning and afternoon sessions, and a host tower is required (6 bell) for the morning. The afternoon session will be at Rayleigh. Please come and see me after the meeting if you are interested in the course or if you are available to help.

'Just to remind everyone, the first Tuesday of each month I run an eight bell practice at Rayleigh where the aim is to ring anything up to and including 8-spliced surprise major. Everyone is most welcome. Ringing for these practices is from 7.30 to 9.30pm'.

Nominations for Association Officers. Refer to ***Correspondence*** above.

District Programme for 2007. Details of the District Programme had been circulated at previous meetings and is on the Association website:-

- All meeting venues had now been confirmed.
- The Training Consolidation Day on 21st April (see the Education Officer's Report above).
- The District Outing (16th June). Andrew asked for suggestions as to where we might go this year, otherwise he would look to either Suffolk or Kent.
- The Quiz Night with Ploughmans Supper will be held at North Ockendon.
- Andrew asked if members would like to resume the monthly Minor practices or anything similar.
- Andrew also asked the membership to let him or any of the District Officers know of any other events they might like included in the calendar.

Discussion Paper – "The future and where are we going"

The Master reminded the meeting that the paper had been circulated last February and a discussion was held on it at the September District meeting. A summary of the observations made at that meeting was published in our October Newsletter and included in the Minutes. It will now be forwarded to the Association Secretary as representing our Districts views. Members had been encouraged to either voice their opinions or write to the Association Officers if they so wished.

Election of District Officers. Colin Chapman (Chelmsford and Life Vice President) took the Chair for the election of the District Officers. He also thanked all of the current Officers for all of their work during the past year.

Master	Andrew Beech	Proposed by	Chris Bailey	Seconded by	Stephen Nash
Deputy Master	Phil Harrison	"	Peter Sloman	"	Stephen Nash
Secretary / Treasurer	Chris Bailey	"	Alison Nash	"	Roger Hobson
Committee Rep.	Lyn Benson	"	Phil Harrison	"	Mo Venus
Education Officer	Steve Hunter	"	Julie Hunter	"	Lawrence Beal

All were elected unopposed.

Both Andrew and Chris informed the meeting that they did not intend standing for election next year.

Any Other Business.

- The Secretary reminded members that subscriptions were now due and asked that where at all possible the Gift Aid Declaration should also be completed. Some members still had Covenants in place which cease when the member attains 65 years of age whereas the Gift Aid declaration has no age limit and it also applies to any donation made to the Association, not just the subscription. The Secretary has plenty of forms for those who are interested.
- The secretary asked for any changes to Tower Correspondents or tower facilities to be notified to him as soon as possible. An email contact would be most useful so as to cut down on postage.
- The Master reminded the meeting that our first afternoon practice would be at Ingatestone on 17th February – 3.00 to 5.00pm. A good chance to ring at a tower outside of the District.

Any Other Business, (Cont'd)

- The Master reminded members to let Beth Johnson (South Weald) have 'copy' for the February Newsletter by the end of January. As decided at the last District Meeting, all future Meeting Minutes will be published in full in the Newsletter rather than reading them out at the following meeting. It is also the intention to disseminate the Newsletter via email where at all possible.

Any Other Business. (Cont'd)

- The Master also asked towers to send any details of ringing they did for The Children's Society Peal Appeal ringing to Beth Johnson as soon as possible for inclusion in the District Newsletter.
- Articles for the Association Newsletter would also be gratefully received by the Editor, who was Bryan Morrissey – his details were on the back page of the December 2006 issue of *Rounds and About*. In order to save ever rising printing costs, it had been decided that in future towers would receive just one copy of the Association Newsletter. It can always be viewed on the website.
- The Association Annual Dinner currently held in Chelmsford in October has seen a fluctuation in the number of people attending in recent years. Members were being asked to consider what alternative Association-wide social event might be considered. The item will be on the Agenda for the Association AGM in May.
- Vicki Chapman (Chelmsford and Association Training Officer) reminded the meeting of the Teaching the Teachers workshop which is to be held on 10th February. The event has been over subscribed and it is proposed to run it again in the near future. Anyone interested should contact Vicki.
- Vicki Chapman, as Essex Ringing Course Convenor, urged members to apply for a place on the course which will be held at Coggeshall between 12th – 14th April. Full details of courses available were published on recent tower posters and can be viewed on the website. As usual helpers are always required, contact Vicki or Yvonne Towler if you can assist.
- Andrew Taylor (Coggeshall) spoke about a range of short courses available at the Coggeshall Ringing Centre. A handout with full details was available for each tower.
- Phil Harrison asked the meeting to show its appreciation for the work undertaken by Andrew Beech as Master and Chris Bailey as Secretary/Treasurer. He felt that the District benefited from their work behind the scenes. (*Applause*).

Finally.

- The Service Collection raised £98.85
- The profit from Teas donated by the Rochford Ringers was £173.00
- The profit from the raffle was £91.00

Further ringing was available after the meeting.

There being no other business the meeting was closed at 7:15pm.

Signed as a true record: (Master)

Date: