## Minutes of the Witney and Woodstock Branch AGM held at Wootton on 13 February 2010

**Present:** Mel Leggett (Chair), Anthony Williamson (Secretary), Louise Brown (Ringing Master), Jean Richards (Treasurer), Lindsey Thornton (Deputy Ringing Master), Terry Hester, Kate Targett, Lorna Smale, Jeannie Tognola, Alison Merryweather-Clarke, Ian Davey-Wilson, Jenny and Simon Haviland, Barbara and Stephen Pix, Richard White, Jane Collier, Melanie McGregor, Edward Johnson, Penelope Fisk, Sylvia Dolan, Hilarie Rogers, John White, Marilyn Floyd, Jane and Ron Burgess, Alan Hillsdon, Kate Austin, Sue Ross.

1. **Apologies.** Robert Newton, Brian Gatward, Liz Lawrence, Rachael Sherlaw-Johnson, Roger Barnes, Mark Wastie, Brian Curtis, David Thornton, Neil Merryweather-Clarke, Chris Putt.

2. **Chairman's welcome and minutes from 2009 AGM**
   a) Corrections and signing.
   b) Matters arising

   Mel Leggett thanked Rev Stephen Jones for the church service and welcomed Hilarie Rogers and John White. Last year's minutes were approved and signed. There were no corrections or matters arising.

3. **Ringing Master's Report - Louise Brown, Ringing Master**

We are continuing to hold two branch practices a month on a rotation basis whereby we try to get to every tower in the Branch. This year we have changed to having one of these branch practices on the towers' practice night and the other on a Saturday morning; this alternative has been a success and it is lovely to see some new faces who obviously find a Saturday morning more attractive. Our Branch practices continue to give the regular band an opportunity to ring with more experienced ringers and hopefully to make progress and consolidate in whatever they are working towards.

We encourage progress and interest by promoting one or two 'methods of the month' on the Branch news poster, and we make sure these methods are attempted at Branch practices.

The annual Striking Competition held at Alvescot this year is still popular and is a good opportunity for tower bands to concentrate on how they ring as a team to produce good consistent rhythm and striking, and to learn from the feedback given by the judges. John White kindly judged for us again. We had a barbecue, making it a good social evening too.

We had a very enjoyable outing arranged by Richard White around Wiltshire with some great towers.

A number of keen ringers have attended Guild courses, in particular the Steeple Aston course, which is very popular, and this is followed up with further practice leading on to a Quarter Peal when the ringer is ready.

We have held several tower open-days to encourage more interest, at Witney, Combe and Stonesfield. And we have a reasonable number of new recruits, also some ringers returning after a break.

Anthony Williamson has spent hours of his time teaching new recruits from Freeland, who are coming along very well.

*Teaching the Teachers.* Several of our Branch officers have been on the ODG training 'Laying the Right Foundations' one day seminar which has given greater expertise and confidence to those involved with bringing on new recruits and developing ringing skills, following best practice. Hopefully in the long-term this will also improve retention of new recruits.

I'd like to thank Anthony and my deputies Lindsey and Liz for their help throughout the year.

4. **Treasurer's Report – Jean Richards, Hon. Treasurer**

The branch accounts for 2009 show a profit of income over expenditure of £60.97.

There is, however, an outstanding amount of £69.52 still to be paid for the refreshments for the striking competition. This amount will be carried forward to 2010 but if it had been included in the 2009 accounts, it would have resulted in a very small net loss for the year of £8.55.

No costs were incurred for the 2009 outing because there was no coach hire. The quiz night made a profit of £67.76.

The branch donated £200 to the usual bell funds and an additional £50 to the Freeland appeal.

Low interest rates meant that the amount of interest received for the year was significantly reduced.

My thanks to Mel Leggett for auditing the 2009 accounts.

5. **Election of New Members**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Alvescot** | Sarah Wheeler | **Tackley** | Martin York |
| | Nick Jones | **Wootton** | Amanda Fay |
| **Aston** | Sharon Wilcox | | Amanda Salter |
| **Standlake** | Claire Harrison | **Woodstock** | Stephen Pix |

The election of all eight new members was proposed by Sue Ross, seconded by Ian Davey-Wilson, and agreed by those present at the meeting.

| | Name | Proposed | Seconded |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Chairman** | Mel Leggett | Anthony Williamson | Lorna Smale |
| **Hon. Treasurer** | Jean Richards | Lorna Smale | Jenny Haviland |
| **Hon. Secretary** | Anthony Williamson | Alison Merryweather-Clarke | Simon Haviland |
| **Ringing Master** | Louise Brown | Sue Ross | Kate Austin |
| **Deputy Ringing Master** | Lindsey Thornton | Jean Richards | Alison Merryweather-Clarke |
| **Deputy Ringing Master** | Liz Lawrence | Jean Richards | Alison Merryweather-Clarke |
| **Branch Rep.** | Rachael Sherlaw-Johnson | Lorna Smale | Mel Leggett |
| **Branch Rep.** | Ian Davey-Wilson | Richard White | Alison Merryweather-Clarke |
| **Newsletter Editor** | Richard White | Anthony Williamson | Jane Burgess |
| **Website Editor** | Ian Davey-Wilson | Alison Merryweather-Clarke | Lorna Smale |

6. **Election of Officers**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Ducklington** | Ian Craig | **Freeland** | Marie Middleton |
| **Freeland** | Sue Hall | **Stonesfield** | Jane Collier |
| **Freeland** | Emma Hewitt | **Stonesfield** | Sylvia Dolan |
| **Freeland** | Margaret Hewitt | **Stonesfield** | Penelope Fisk |
| **Freeland** | Melanie McGregor | | |

7. **Presentation of Guild Certificates to members elected on 1 January 2010**

8. **Donations**

Anthony Williamson proposed that the Branch give £100 to the Bell Restoration Fund and £100 to the Bell Fund, seconded by Jenny Haviland and approved by the meeting. Jean Richards confirmed that the Branch had sufficient funds for these donations.

9. **Programme for 2010**

**Branch Outing:** 9 October. Richard White to arrange. Ian Davey-Wilson suggested London.

**Striking Competition:** 12 June 2010

**Social Event:** "Firsts week" with a social event at the end of the week, on Saturday 10 July, to present certificates. This is an opportunity to ring something for the first time; it can be anything from ringing in a new tower, ringing something you haven't rung before or ringing a quarter peal.

10. **Branch Website.**

Ian Davey-Wilson would like to move the website to the Guild server which is cost free and would save the branch about £70 a year. This was agreed by the meeting. The new address http://witneyandwoodstock.odg.org.uk/ will run in parallel with the old site until the present domain account expires. Towers were invited to contribute more photos, video and audio content. Ian asked for contributors to check their pages and notify him of corrections.

Lorna Smale asked if the present domain name, http://witneyandwoodstock.org.uk/, would be lost. Ian was requested to ask Roger Barnes, who had registered the original website.

11. **Any other business**

Reminder: Quiz night Saturday 20 February.

Lorna Smale thanked the members of the committee for their work over the past year.

*Anthony Williamson*
*Branch Secretary*

Next AGM: Saturday 12 February 2011