



# Irish Association of Change Ringers

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Registered Charity No. 20018498

CHY (Revenue) No. 7917

**A Meeting of the Executive Council of the IACR was held via  
Zoom video-conferencing on Saturday 18th February 2023 at 11.00 a.m.**

## MINUTES

### ATTENDANCE

Julia Lysaght	President
Don McLean	Association Ringing Master, Trustee and CCCBR Representative
Fiona Chamberlain	General Secretary
Andrew White	Association Treasurer
June Kelly	Librarian
Cliff Jeffers	Vice President Southern District
Simon Chadwick	Northern District Ringing Master
Robert MacDonald	Eastern District Ringing Master and CCCBR Representative
Chiara McBrien	Northern District Secretary
Sorcha Duggan	Eastern District Secretary
Kieron Brislane	Southern District Secretary
Diana Pitcher	Southern District Representative
Robert Foulis	Northern District Representative
Jennifer Kirkpatrick	Northern District Supplementalist
Ian McCullagh	Trustee
Victor Ryan	Southern District Supplementalist
Stephanie Whittaker – Axon	Northern District Supplementalist

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Simon Walker	Vice President Northern District
Una Caulfield	Eastern District Representative and Treasurer
Vyvyenne Chamberlain	Vice President Eastern District
Michael Pomeroy	By special invitation
Alex Nelson	Northern District Supplementalist



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**The President, Julia Lysaght, welcomed all those present and opened the Meeting with a prayer.**

## **LOSS OF MEMBERS THROUGH DEATH**

Jean Jeffrey of Belfast died on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2022. Julia, Andrew and Don spoke in tribute to Jean, her ability as a ringer and her contribution to Irish bell ringing over a period of 72 years. She was a regular attendee at practices both North and South despite being a non driver. She was so popular that people were always keen to drive her to ringing events. She was the first female President of the Association. A large congregation was present at her funeral at St Donard's Belfast on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2022. A quarter of doubles was rung by her friends before the service and call changes rung as her coffin left the church. She is missed by her friends in the Association and at St Donard's.

John Kane died on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2022. June spoke in tribute to John. He joined St John's Lane in 1952 when he was 15 years of age. He later joined the Merchant Navy and travelled for a time before returning to Dublin. He was Chair of the Eastern District in 1983. John was renowned for his ownership of the tenor bell, was a huge character and always welcoming. John had a number of famous saying including "major to minor".

Words of tribute were said in memory of Harry Compton of St Columb's Londonderry who died on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2022. Harry was born in 1939 and travelled the length and breadth of Ireland to ring. He was a faithful member of the Northern District and travelled regularly to Belfast to ring and support towers.

A minute's silence was held in memory of Jean, John, Harry and all Association members who died in the last year. Julia expressed her condolences to their families.



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## MINUTES – May 2022 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Minutes of the May 2022 AGM, which had previously been circulated to all Council members, were proposed for adoption by Andrew White, seconded by Eric Thompson and passed without amendment.

### MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

#### *Association Website*

Kieron Brislane thanked members of the Website Committee for their work and support in the past year. He encouraged members of the Executive Council to provide information to the committee to update the website and ensure it is relevant. If anyone would like to give an hour each month to learn what the Website Committee does and to join the Committee they should get in touch with Kieron. Julia thanked Kieron and the Committee for all their work on the website which is a very useful source of information to members.

#### *Safeguarding*

Cliff Jeffers pointed out that safeguarding should be an agenda item at subsequent meetings and not appear under matters arising. He informed the meeting that procedures are in place and working well. He reminded those present that every time an Association event takes place there should be a record of attendees. If Districts are changing officers then he should be given notice so he can get the paper work initiated for vetting and safeguarding procedures.

Eric Thompson said he would be giving up his role at the end of 2023 so a new Northern District Safeguarding Officer would need to be appointed.

#### *Membership Certificates*

Niamh Hickey was not present at the meeting. Julia said she understood Niamh has the certificates and would bring them to the AGM in May.



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## ASSOCIATION MATTERS

### *IACR 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*

Badges and umbrellas have been purchased and many sold already. Julia informed the meeting it was hoped there would be ringing in Bray on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2023 followed by a dinner that evening. A service of Evensong will take place at St Patrick's Cathedral on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2023 at 15.30pm to mark the Association's 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Sorcha invited anyone attending the Anniversary weekend to join the regular practice at Christchurch Cathedral on the evening of Friday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2023. June Kelly noted that it was appropriate the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary service is to be held at St Patrick's as Richard Cherry, a distinguished Irish Politician, Judge and former Lord Chief Justice of Ireland, who rang at the cathedral was the instigator, together with Gabriel Lindoff and Digby Scott, of the Irish Association in 1895 and is a past President. He donated the RR Cherry cup to the Association and presented two trebles to St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin in 1909, making it the first twelve-bell tower in Ireland. He was involved in the first peal on the twelve bells, which is believed to have been the first peal on twelve bells rung outside England. June was present recently at a small service in memory of Mr Cherry at St Patrick's attended by his family and the Dean on the centenary of his death. 10 bells were rung and 3 of his grandchildren were given the chance to ring on the Cherry bell donated by their grandfather.

### *Proposal to change the Association Rules*

A sub- committee formed as agreed at the May AGM has worked up draft changes to the Rules. The proposed changes to the Association Rules were circulated to members in advance of the meeting. In Mike's absence, Don gave a brief outline of the changes as set out in the explanation accompanying the proposed Rule changes. Discussion focused on the following proposed changes:



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- (a) Rule 3. Sorcha Duggan said she has trouble with the amendment in respect of Non Resident Members and NRLM. She thinks the position of Life Member is a rewarded one and a position for life. The language, she felt, is confusing. Don McLean explained that there is only 1 Non Resident Member and probably there should never have been that category at all. It is not the same as an Association Life Member.
- (b) Rules 6 and 9. Sorcha commented that there are a lot of changes at the same time.
- (c) Rule 11. Robert McDonald asked that some thought be given to the wording of this Rule. If an office bearer stands down at a district AGM then that district has, for example, no ringing master until the following year.
- (d) Rule 13 following changes to the way the CCCBR operates it is necessary to amend R13 to accommodate those changes. There was a discussion as to whether there should be a restriction on time served as a CCCBR representative set out in the Rules. The consensus was there should not and, in any event, Sorcha Duggan pointed out that the amended Rules explicitly say there is no restriction. Robert said he thought there was no need to include the word “loyally” in this rule and others where the same wording is used. Sorcha also commented that the re wording is very wordy. Don McLean responded on this point to explain that while the Rule may seem wordy in essence ideally there would be a representative from each district with no limit on how long they remain as such.
- (e) Rule 14. Robert McDonald stressed it is up to the districts to decide who they wish to nominate as President, Master, Librarian etc. Don McLean explained that the districts may not know who the potential nominees might be hence the suggestion of potential nominees. It is an important point that it is a suggestion only and the nomination is by the districts at their subsequent AGM. This is already clear in the Rule.



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(f) Murphy Cup. Robert McDonald reminded those present that it was agreed at the last meeting that it was for the Executive to decide the venue of the Murphy Cup. There is no need for this to be in the Rules. If a however a tower invites the Council to facilitate its AGM, that tower must now excuse itself from the Murphy Cup and that requirement should be in the Rules. He also thought it was unusual ( Rule 18) for there to be 3 judges, he recommended a change to 2. This proposal was not agreed. It is usual for there to be 1 judge from each district. Julia stressed that no team should have to excuse itself from the Murphy Cup. It should be easy enough to find another tower. She reminded everyone present that this amendment was discussed at the May meeting. Don McLean pointed out that Rule 4 makes it clear that the venue should be neutral.

Ian McCullagh suggested that either Mike or Don or both attend the district AGM's to explain the proposed Rule changes. Andrew White proposed the recommendation that the Rule changes and the discussion today on those changes are considered by the Districts. The proposal was seconded by Eric Thompson. Robert McDonald commented that they should be considered again by the Rules sub-committee, circulated to the Executive Council and then sent to the districts before their AGM's.

### *Code of Conduct of Trustees*

Ian McCullagh said he was happy with the draft code. On a separate issue, he queried whether a Trustee should have a vote. For example, Don McLean is Ringing Master and Trustee and so has a vote. Robert McDonald was strongly of the view that a Trustee should not vote. Julia suggested that if it is decided that Trustees can vote that concludes the issue. Don McLean commented that a Trustee probably should not hold a post. Robert noted that it is an unusual position to have 3 separate districts coming together with Trustees sitting above in the hierarchy who have a vote. He was of the view that care needs to be taken about how votes are allocated. Don McLean said he would resign. Cliff Jeffers stressed that it is solely about anyone who is a Trustee and the role of Trustee. It will be difficult to find another Trustee in a small organisation.



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Don insisted he would resign forthwith. With great reluctance Julia accepted Don's resignation. She asked that anyone who would like to suggest someone from the Northern District as Trustee to contact her.

Robert Foulis said he has experienced a difficulty with the Association being a charity registered in ROI when he tried to move the Northern District's bank account to another bank. He suggested the Association should also be registered in Northern Ireland. There was no objection or particular comment raised.

Accounts

Julia said clarification was required on the auditing of district accounts. Una Caulfield has stepped down as Treasurer of the Eastern District because she does not agree that there is a requirement that the district accounts are audited. Andrew White explained that the term has always been used loosely, he suggested the words "independently reviewed" is adopted instead moving forward. After discussion it was agreed the words "internally reviewed" are used. The title Auditor would be replaced in the Annual Report by "Internal Reviewer of the Accounts". Julia will speak to Una Caulfield.

## *Murphy Cup Rotation*

Julia asked those present if there is a desire to rotate the venue of the Murphy Cup. Diana Pitcher pointed out that it might be difficult to host the competition in the Southern District as only a few towers have 8 bells. Julia thought it best to hold the competition in the Eastern District. Don agreed that the Eastern District is the logical venue. He commented that Ireland is a small place yet fewer people now travel to other districts to ring which is a great pity and to the detriment of the Association and bell ringing in Ireland generally. Julia concluded the discussion on this item by stating that it is for the Ringing Master to decide the venue. It was agreed that the matter should be sent to the districts for their consideration.

## *Report from District and Association Safeguarding Officers*

Nothing arising.



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## DISTRICT MATTERS

### Northern District

Robert Foulis reported that district practices are going well as is recruitment of new ringers.

### Eastern District

Robert MacDonald reported that he is stepping down as Ringing Master at the AGM. He thanked Ian McCullagh for organising the district practice in Kilkenny which was well supported and he hoped would be repeated. Christchurch has 2 new ringers and recruitment is going well at Taney.

### Southern District

Diana Pitcher reported that things are going well in the district. Cliff Jeffers has done a good job getting the tower going at Roscarberry. Diana has some new recruits and Dunmanway continues to hold its Method Mondays. The Doneraile bells are with Matthew Higby for refurbishment.

## ASSOCIATION OFFICE BEARERS

Of the four Office Bearers eligible for re-election, all agreed to stand for re-election and their names will be forwarded en bloc as suggestions to the Districts. There were no further suggested candidates for these offices. Andrew White is no longer eligible for re election. No possible nominees were suggested. Robert McDonald recommended that pragmatism should prevail and that Andrew should remain in post until a replacement can be found. Andrew said he was agreeable to this course. The Districts will be asked to nominate a Treasurer.

Office	Present Holder	Eligible for Re-Election	Year of Election	Nominations Required
President	Julia Lysaght	Yes	2019	
Ringing Master	Don McLean	Yes	2023	
Gen Secretary	Fiona Chamberlain	Yes	2022	
Gen Treasurer	Andrew White	No	2018	Yes
Librarian	June Kelly	Yes	2015	





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## *Correspondence*

Nothing arising

## **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Robert McDonald noted an inconsistency in the Annual Report between the reports of the President and the General Secretary in terms of Association numbers. He said this did not create a good impression for those reading the report. The Annual Report is an agenda item at the May meeting.

Date of the Annual General Meeting  
27<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at a venue to be confirmed

## **VOTE OF THANKS**

Cliff Jeffers was thanked for hosting the meeting on zoom.

**Fiona Chamberlain**

**General Secretary**

**President's signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date :** \_\_\_\_\_