

## CENTRAL COUNCIL MEETING REPORT – SEPTEMBER 2019

It seems a lifetime ago, and it was certainly in a different, pre-Covid age, but for the sake of completeness I report on the Central Council meeting held in Goldsmith's College, New Cross, London on 7 September 2019. Ian Self was unable to attend, but Helen (at her last meeting as a Representative) and I were present.

This was the first meeting of the Council for many years not to be held on the Late Spring Bank Holiday weekend, and was also the first one since the major changes to the Council's structure and governance agreed at previous meetings had been implemented. Accordingly, after an informal supper and quiz on the Friday evening for those attendees who had already arrived the formal business began on the Saturday morning with the Annual General Meeting of The Ringing World Limited. Although the circulation of the printed copy of the magazine had continued to fall its financial position was much improved, with a surplus recorded thanks to the continued generosity of those supporters who had sent in donations with peal and quarter peal reports and on other occasions as well. The routine business of an AGM continued without any great incident, with the only (slightly) contentious issue being a change to the owning company's charitable objects which lessened the linkage between the charity and the advancement of religion. A good and constructive debate saw this change approved.

The Council's annual meeting itself followed in the afternoon. As a result of the changes mentioned above, the seemingly endless procession of committee chairmen and women coming to the podium to report at length or mercifully less which had been such a feature of previous CCCBR gatherings was replaced by much shorter presentations by the workgroup leaders who although fewer in number had replaced the committee chairmen. Perhaps because this was the first meeting in this new format there was little of note to report, although this is not in any way to decry the enormous amount of voluntary work which the committees in their time and workgroups which replaced them had been undertaking throughout the year. At the end of the meeting the President, Christopher O'Mahony, who had found it necessary for work reasons to relinquish his office a year before his term was due to end, confirmed that Simon Linford from Birmingham had been elected to succeed him. Simon thanked the Council for his election by means of a pre-recorded video message, it not having been convenient for him to be present in person. So one of the shortest Council meetings I can recall ended after approximately three hours.

In the evening the new President, having caught a train to London from Birmingham that afternoon, was able to join many of the members at a Reception and Dinner which brought the day's proceedings to a close. On the Sunday a fascinating mini-Roadshow featuring displays and presentations on all aspects of ringing was held, and during this I was delighted to receive on behalf of the Guild the Highly Commended award given to Mary Jones for her entry in the competition for the inaugural Westley Award for new entrants to the world of bell maintenance. Steve Coleman, familiar to many for his various ringing books and articles, then led a team in an interesting presentation on the wartime ban on ringing. How topical that now seems in the light of what has happened this year!

It had been planned to hold the 2020 meeting in Nottingham, but that, and our chance to explore the city's modern tramway system, has now been postponed to September 2021.

Robert Perry