

RINGING WORLD AND CENTRAL COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETINGS – NOTTINGHAM, 3 SEPTEMBER 2022

Both annual meetings were held at Nottingham Trent University's Clifton Campus. Fortunately that was within walking distance of a stop on the city's tram system, which made access extremely easy.

The main points to emerge were as follows.

Ringling World AGM on the year to 31 December 2021

- The Board reported on a much-improved financial position, with the 2021 deficit of £12.6K being much less than the previous year's loss of £28.7K. Current projections showed a surplus of approximately £10K in 2022, although this could only be achieved by voluntary donations continuing to be made.
- Costs had been controlled, with beneficial printing and mailing contracts having been entered into during the year.
- The number of subscribers to the printed journal had continued to fall, standing at 1912 at the end of 2021 with a further decline anticipated in 2022. However, there had been a modest increase in tower subscriptions.
- Ringling World Publications had done well, with some new products issued and updated versions of old ones also having been issued.
- For various reasons there had been a significant number of staff changes over the year, but this had not affected the company's core activities. The meeting was told that Will Bosworth, the Editor, was relocating to Dublin this autumn, but with modern technology his ability to continue to do his job was unaffected.
- The Ringling World National Youth Contest had continued to be very successful. The 2023 Contest would be held in York.
- An online survey would be held in the autumn of 2022 in the hope that guidance could be gained on future activities.

Central Council Meeting, 2022

- The meeting was held in the context of a weekend of activities including ringing at local towers and a Ringling Roadshow. I was able to attend. Unfortunately neither Hayley nor Ian were able to be present on this occasion. Approximately 150 members were present – this was an increase over the two meetings held remotely in 2020 and 2021, but even so was well down on the peak years when more than 220 people attended. A good number of new members were with us, but inevitably this was balanced by the death of members, some of whom had served the Council for many years.
- The Accounts showed that the Council had total assets of £459K. There was some criticism that the Council appeared to be hoarding a large amount of money, but the Treasurer (Fergus Stracey from Plymouth) did point out that £82K was the theoretical value of the Council's library and that a further £250K was held in restricted funds. In any event, the assets were due to reduce in 2022/2023 as future plans were put into effect.
- We received a series of reports on the activities of the Council in a wide range of ringing-related areas. The much-mooted suggestion that the overall size of the Council needed to be reduced is not currently being taken forward.
- Mary Bone (Essex Association) stood down after eleven years of service as CCCBR Secretary, and was warmly thanked for all that she had done while holding this post. Her successor is Ernie Runciman from the Isle of Man (Lancashire Association).
- The Guild will benefit from the new method of calculating affiliation fees payable by ringing guilds to CCCBR. From 2023, the fee will be 20 pence per Guild member rather than £40 per CCCBR representative entitled to be elected (£160.00 until now).

- A CCCBR call-change competition is to be held in the noted call-change heartland of Birmingham in June 2023. This is part of the initiative by Simon Linford, the current CCCBR President, to stress that progress in method ringing is not the only yardstick by which ringers should be judged. We were told that at least one of the judges would come from Devon!
- Over the next few months there would be a major survey which it was hoped would determine the likely future shape of ringing in 2030. There was also a brief discussion on the relationship between ringing and the Church (of England, in the main) and on the extent to which it was either possible or indeed desirable to brand ringing without reference to the churches in which most bells hang. And yes, there is to be a major branding initiative as a means of marketing ringing as a worthwhile activity.
- The 2023 meeting will be held in Ipswich, again on the first weekend in September. The 2024 meeting will be much closer to home, in Devon.

Robert Perry
CCCBR Representative, TDGR